

Public Engagement Session
Board of Education / Members of Strategic Planning & Advisory Council
Tuesday, November 10, 2009
Facilities Usage Committee Options

Sue Marinelli Table Discussion	
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In this economy, can we resell property? ▪ How much do we really save for a temp? ▪ How do we make sense of approving charters when looking at closing schools? ▪ Will ideas other than what is in the packet be considered?
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neighboring school districts seem to successfully have 6-8 middle schools. See research on both sides of the issue. ▪ Community worry is implementation plan – want and need details (example – after school care). ▪ As a general rule – like the idea of K-8 schools.
Alameda	<p>Idea in Alameda area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Move an elementary school into a middle school to make a K-8, close the elementary consensus. Could live with moving 6th grade to middle school. ▪ Consensus: No to moving 7th and 8th grades to high school. ▪ No to closing middle school.
Arvada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use first one-half of proposal 3B and make one of the elementary a dual language. ▪ Keep idea of a larger dual language program to create opportunities for more kids. ▪ Can there be a transition for Arvada Middle School? For example, keep the 7th and 8th graders there knowing they will be gone in two years; add the K-8 dual language program and let it grow as 7th and 8th graders move out.

Dave Thomas Table Discussion	
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are some schools in areas that are restricted, i.e., flood plain? Can they be zoned for commercial uses? What is the value of the properties? ▪ How does this process affect charter schools? Can the district force charters to absorb kids? ▪ Did the committee look at where kids would end up in high school? There is comfort for parents to know that the district was thinking about kids K-12.
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Light rail and schools – don't sell them but lease them near light rail – don't immediately sell them – hang onto them because we can't predict what will happen in the future. Keep them in the district's inventory. Let the impacted parents have first choice of schools to move to. ▪ Option 20 – not a good idea. Doesn't make sense. ▪ It's hard to know what criteria went into the options based on what the public sees. ▪ There's a feeling it's all about the money. ▪ Information on capacity of schools would help. ▪ Make the tie to the bigger picture. It's not just about individual schools. Could accomplish some education about the budget and the future for the district. What is the ultimate goal of this process? ▪ 6-12 model – have they looked at different successful models? Research is mixed. Typical model of 7-8 isn't good. K-8 is a better model – adding more problems by adding 6th graders – that will cause the most angst in the community. ▪ Moving all 6th graders to middle school district wide isn't possible. ▪ Some of the changes will restrict choice for families. ▪ In schools like Pennington, there's an effort to reach out to the families and make them feel connected – will seem like the district is singling out the struggling families. ▪ The transition can be smooth or rough depending on how it's handled. ▪ The kids adapt – it's the parents who will struggle with the changes. ▪ The community knows the work is hard but doesn't know about the bigger picture. Need to help people check their emotion. Have to help them know it's the best for the future of the district – don't understand the scary message. ▪ It's hard to close schools that have just been renovated. ▪ What is the message from the election when two incumbents lose? The general public thinks its scare tactics. ▪ Student involvement needs to be a part of the process. ▪ Public needs to hear about the state funding model and how it works/doesn't work.
Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerns about haphazard moving of students. Needs to be a district policy if it's done. Will force parents to choice enroll. The choice could create more chaos.
Arvada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arvada Middle School – kids would have to be bussed. These are some of the poorest kids. ▪ Arvada Middle School – the efforts to close it a few years ago wasn't proactive. When the decisions are made, make sure the community is involved.

Jane Barnes Table Discussion	
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there something better than selling off larger schools in case demographics change? Smaller parcels like cottages and temps make better business sense to eliminate. ▪ What would north boundaries be? ▪ Is there a document that shows “efficiency” in terms of revenue (per pupil) brought in compared to expenses at each school? People don’t see sense in one time sales revenue relative to ongoing costs and revenue the school generates. ▪ Is there a savings in staffing larger schools more efficiently? ▪ How do charter schools factor into these decisions? Are there charters not near capacity? ▪ What if Arvada Middle closes and a charter school wants to move in? In Denver, they have so many charters that it has cut down on ability of neighborhood schools to make it. ▪ Are there any charters waiting to move into our facilities? ▪ Aren’t charters more interested in coming into areas where education is seen negatively? Jeffco is one of the best and seen so positively. ▪ Is there more passion from community if closing our elementary schools or middle schools? ▪ Is it about the neighborhood or the school?
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whatever you do, do it equitably across the district – everyone needs to “take a hit” – maybe not equally, but to some degree. ▪ Show educational rationale along with budget benefit. ▪ Gut reaction to moving 6th grade? Mostly (two-thirds) say “yes” (two-thirds of table group). Think about doing it across the district or prepare yourself for choice enrollment (same with 7-12 configuration). ▪ A lot of literacy and math programs are K-5 because most districts in nation are K-5, so it would align better if 6-middle school. ▪ Consider the costs of repurchasing/building facilities if populations change and require more space some day. ▪ Other than opening new schools, the biggest thing we have done was 16 years ago when we moved grade 9 to high school. ▪ Yes, but 7-8-9 was much better. Nobody sees that as a good move. In middle school, no “buy in” like in high school. Athletics proved incentive for junior high sports. ▪ Others expressed that they do like middle school “norm” – moving to 6-7-8 makes sense. ▪ Extra grade level (6th) makes sense for middle school program. ▪ Academics are great at middle school, but without inclusion of 9th grade in middle school, something is missing. Huge difference between grade 6 and grade 8. As they get older, it gets more equal – 6 through 9 might be a good idea. ▪ Campus approach with elementary and middle school in same facility. ▪ Jeffco has historically gone out of their way to separate middle schools from high schools. (Yet, Lasley, O’Connell, and Alameda are an exception.) ▪ Some temps are needed – let’s not just say eliminate <u>all</u> temps. ▪ There is a real need to consider the loss of community support when you close a school. Is it worth the \$300K-\$800K? ▪ Community expects and deserves due diligence on the part of the Board to make the difficult decisions, be accountable, and run the business well. ▪ The biggest thing to address the uproar is to educate people about the necessity of not wasting and double spending on maintenance, food provider, transportation. ▪ Alternative uses of some facilities may be commercial, offices, community college, or technical school. ▪ The district should sell off their more lucrative properties. We can’t worry about what will move in. If there are extremely valuable properties, they probably need to go. ▪ Closing schools is about change and the unknown. ▪ A neighborhood doesn’t want to have a vacant school. ▪ It would help if the district could tack on a potential plan. ▪ “Do the whole thing.” If you are going to restructure, do it so it fits educationally.
Alameda/Lakewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesitation to move 7th and 8th graders into high school (Alameda) – not a great idea. ▪ Lasley is packed – O’Connell has a lot of space. Creighton is way over. A lot is based on ages of families and kids.
Alameda/Bear Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consolidating schools (O’Connell/Carmody) makes sense instead of having half-used building.
Arvada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arvada people are saying there is a lot of action. ▪ Group represents Green Mountain, Ralston Valley, Pomona, Lakewood, Columbine, Chatfield, Jefferson.
Ralston Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ralston Valley area is looking at Sierra boundary moving. What about Candelas area? Won’t that seem lop-sided?
Bear Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It doesn’t make sense to close Carmody – just renovated. ▪ Closing a newly renovated building will infuriate people.