



## **Butler Area School District Community Committee for School Organization**

### **REPORT**

The committee was tasked with making a recommendation to our School Board regarding the future organization of our Butler Area School District schools. This report is a summary of the committee's efforts and its recommendations.

### **Committee Meetings**

The committee met four times.

October 23, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. @ Butler Middle School

October 30, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. @ Intermediate High School

November 6, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. @ Intermediate High School

November 16, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. @ Intermediate High School

## **Presentations**

The committee work began with a presentation on current trends and the future of education by Dr. Bart Rocco and Dr. Bille Rondinelli. Dr. Rocco and Dr. Rondinelli are both outstanding educational leaders who are currently serving as fellows with the Grable Foundation.

The following are the topics of presentations provided to the committee members:

- Overview of Facility Issues at Butler Middle School - IKM Architects/Tower Engineers
- Overview of Options, Statement of Task
- Presentation on Enrollment Trends
- Presentation on What Makes Butler Middle School Special
- Presentation on the 6-8 Model
- Presentation on Budget and Finance
- Presentation on the K-5 Model
- Presentation on a 9-12 Model
- Facility Implications of Each Option - IKM Architects

## **Process**

The process used to develop a recommendation involved both human centered design activities and survey/questionnaires completed by the committee members. The intent was to allow for discussion and dialogue through human centered design activities while still providing an opportunity for individual input through surveys/questionnaires.

The human centered design activities were facilitated by Aaron Altemus and Heather Brooks from the Consortium for Public Education. Both Aaron and Heather are trained Human Centered Design Facilitators. In addition, Dr. Bart Rocco and Dr. Bille Rondinelli were present to provide insights and expertise to the committee members.

# **Committee Members**

## **Parent Representation**

Brandi Garbinski, Center Township Elementary School  
Nina Babay, Connoquenessing Elementary School  
Kaleena Lauer, Emily Brittain Community Partnership and Demonstration School  
Susan Dankovich, McQuiston Elementary School  
Jessica Cancilla, Northwest Elementary School  
Tara Huntsman, Summit Elementary School  
Lisa Binus, Middle School  
Sarah Kubiak, Middle School  
Shannon Capriotti, Intermediate High School  
Jeneane Sintz, Intermediate High School  
Jenny Chapla, Senior High School  
Dan Slomers, Senior High School  
William Humes, Center Avenue Community School

## **Student Representation**

Paris Brown, junior  
Mark Collins, freshman  
Olivia Collins, junior  
Christian DePolo, sophomore  
Sarah Fiorina, junior

## **Faculty and Staff Representation**

Tanya Kriley, Elementary Faculty  
Nicole Munko, Middle School Faculty  
Scott Stoner, Intermediate High School Faculty  
Jill Maier, Senior High School Faculty  
Carrie Morgan-Davis, Elementary Principal  
Josh Hundertmark, Middle School Principal  
Doug Ford, Secondary Principal  
Brian Slamecka, Central Office Administrator  
Susan Geibel, Staff Member  
Joyce Rauschenberger, Staff Member

## **School Board Representation**

Jennifer Cummings, School Board Director  
Mary Waggoner, School Board Director

## **Community Representation**

Scot Covert, Chamber of Commerce Rep (Penn United Technologies)

Tom Knights, Township Manager, Butler Township  
T.J. McCance, Chamber of Commerce Rep. (Hefren-Tollotson, Inc)  
Patrick McCurdy, Community Rep. (Counterintelligence and Security Agency)  
Brian Opitz, Community Rep. (BC3)  
Leslie Osche, County Commissioner, Butler County  
Joe Saeler, Community Development Corporation  
Peggy Sherman, Community Rep.  
Ben Smith, Mayor, City of Butler

## Scenarios Considered

- A** six K-4 Elementary Schools | one 5-6 Middle School | one 7-9 IHS |  
one 10-12 SHS \* *current configuration*
- A Modified** seven K-4 Elementary Schools (Reopen Broad Street) | one 5-6 Middle  
School | one 7-9 IHS | one 10-12 SHS
- C** seven K-5 Elementary Schools | one 6-8 Middle School |  
one 9-12 High School
- C Modified** eight K-5 Elementary Schools (Reopen Center Ave) | one 6-8 Middle  
School | one 9-12 High School
- D** seven K-4 Elementary Schools | one 5-8 IHS | one 9-12 High School

## Recommendations

The committee came to a unanimous recommendation that the district should not renovate the existing Middle School (old junior high building).

The committee came to a unanimous recommendation that the district should not construct a new Middle School.

The majority of the committee recommended that the district should proceed with developing detailed operational plans that should be presented to the community and school board for further consideration of the scenario titled “C Modified.”

**C Modified**    eight K-5 Elementary Schools (Reopen Broad Street and Center Ave) |  
                         one 6-8 Middle School | one 9-12 High School

The committee also recommended a number of stipulations that they believe are needed to make this school configuration successful. An example of a stipulation is that students in grades 6-8 should ride on a separate bus run than students in grades 9-12.

## Next Steps and Operational Planning

The next step will be to begin operational planning and further develop the recommended scenario for formal consideration. This will take some time. It will also require meeting of additional stakeholder groups to develop plans based on our strategic plan, curriculum requirements and best practices in education. We are currently developing a list of the plans and decision points that need to be made to determine how long this process will take.

## Background and Process to Date

Butler Area School District is in the process of assessing our school configuration and determining the best way to organize our schools. With significant structural repairs needed at the Middle School (the old junior high building), it's important that we plan for our future. Our goal is to organize our schools in a way that meets the needs of our students and families while also staying within an attainable budget.

In order to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and families, community feedback is essential. During the last school year, the district hosted numerous School Organization Community Forums to gather community feedback.

Based on feedback from the School Organization Community Forums, four scenarios were presented to the community in June 2019. The scenarios presented in June included:

- A six K-4 elementary schools | one 5-6 middle school | one 7-9 IHS | one 10-12 SHS (current configuration)
- B six K-4 elementary schools | two 5-6 middle schools | one 7-9 IHS | one 10-12 SHS
- C seven K-5 elementary schools | one 6-8 middle school | one 9-12 high school
- D seven K-4 elementary schools | one 5-8 IHS | one 9-12 SHS

Of these four scenarios, the superintendent recommended scenario D (seven K-4 elementary schools | one 5-8 IHS | one 9-12 SHS) in June.

However, school organization is a process and it is important to have feedback from our community every step of the way. Following the presentation in June, community members were invited to participate in a survey to share their feedback. The results of that survey showed a preference for scenario C (seven K-5 elementary schools | one 6-8 middle school | one 9-12 high school).

The feedback we received from the School Organization Community Forums as well as the community survey was very helpful in guiding this process and narrowing down our options. However, before a final decision could be made, it was important to take an in-depth look at each possible scenario so that a final decision was not made based on assumptions.

Our Community Committee for School Organization was convened primarily by vote. The members of the Community Committee for School Organization are listed earlier in this report,

which details their journey to making a recommendation on how our Butler Area School District Schools should be organized to best meet the needs of our students and families.

After four meetings, the Community Committee for School Organization has recommended scenario C Modified (eight K-5 elementary schools (Reopen Broad Street and Center Ave) | one 6-8 middle school | one 9-12 high school).

As previously pledged, the administration is committed to making the school organization successful for all students regardless of which scenario is selected.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process and be a part of Butler Area School District's future!