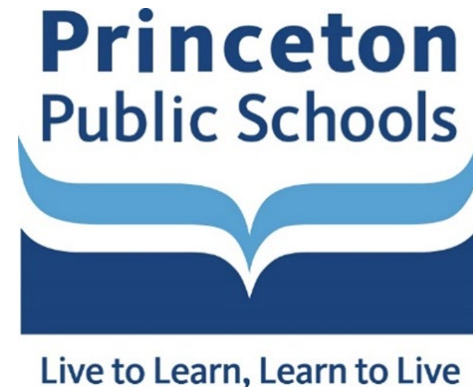


Princeton Public Schools

Elementary School Capacity Planning
Community Discussion #1



April 27, 2023

PPS Elementary Capacity Planning

▪ Welcome/Goals of Tonight:

- Review elementary enrollment **challenges** & 2021 Master Plan **proposed solutions**
- Receive **parent input** as to how to best meet the needs of all elementary students and PPS community as a whole

▪ Format:

- Short presentation, followed by parent ideas/questions
- Please use chat, or comment tonight or before **May 19th** through a google survey at the following link: <https://forms.gle/XB9GthtHXMTKe7fK7> and added to chat
- *Please address tonight's agenda only; we want to hear from as many people as possible*
 - *We are seeking the best solution for all of our children*
 - *Break-outs not feasible with large group: there will be future opportunities for conversation in smaller settings*
 - *Please model respect, kindness and empathy in listening and sharing*

Tonight's Agenda

- Agenda for Elementary Capacity Planning Conversation
 1. Background
 2. Where We Are Now
 3. What's Next
 4. Our Collective Challenge - Enrollment Data
 5. Some Elementary Planning Options from 2021
 6. Questions and Ideas

1. Elementary Planning: Background

- Background
 - Our community is growing (about 1,100 new residential units planned)
 - Future PPS students need appropriate school facilities, reflecting community values, e.g. inclusive learning environment & flexible, collaborative spaces
 - Current planning conversation began in 2019
 - 2019/20 → community meetings, planner presentations, then COVID (enrollment dips)
 - 2021 → planner recommendations to Board, no action
 - 2023 → updated demographics, Board restarts planning
 - In March 2023, Board directed administration to prioritize elementary and middle school capacity solutions, sufficient for next 5-10 years
 - *“Solution” means sufficient classrooms, specialized spaces (special education, STEM labs and spaces, fine arts and athletics) and core spaces (i.e. gymnasium, cafeteria)*
 - *See [princetonk12.org](https://www.princetonk12.org), “Board,” “Future Planning,” for past planning documents.*
<https://www.princetonk12.org/district/planning-our-schools-future>

2. Where We Are Now

Board Perspective (as elected representatives)

▪ What's Best for Our Children?

- Strategic Plan Goals

- Focus on Early Years (ages 3- Grade 3)
- Wellness, Inclusion and Supports for All
- Opportunity and Achievement for All
- Successful Transitions/Foundation to Thrive Post-PPS

-- *see Strategic Plan on PPS Website for the full plan*

▪ What Can the Community Afford?

Cost-Effective Use of Existing Facilities

Financially Prudent Renovations/Construction

Fiscally Sustainable Facilities

-- *see March 23, 2023 Long Term Planning Committee meeting for Board discussion*

2. Where We Are Now *cont.*

Data-based Solutions: What Does the Board Consider?

- Updated Demographic Studies
- Strategic Plan Goals = Community Values
- Multiple inputs, including
 - Questions, perspectives, suggestions from *community engagement*
 - Lived experience and ideas of *students*
 - Experience, suggestions, concerns of *teachers and staff*
 - Recommendations of *PPS internal planning team (educators, staff and administrators)*
 - Advice of *outside professionals*, ie. demographer, planners, architects and engineers

3. What's Next

- **Elementary Capacity Planning: What's Next**
 - **Spring/Summer 2023**
 - In-person and virtual stakeholder meetings for input and suggestions
 - Internal working group of educators/admins develops recommendations
 - External professional advise on design, cost and budget implications
 - **Late Summer/Early Fall 2023** decision re: which elementary option to pursue
 - **March 2024** detailed plans for Board deliberation/approval
 - **September 2024** referendum vote
 - If approved, 1-3 years to completion of construction work

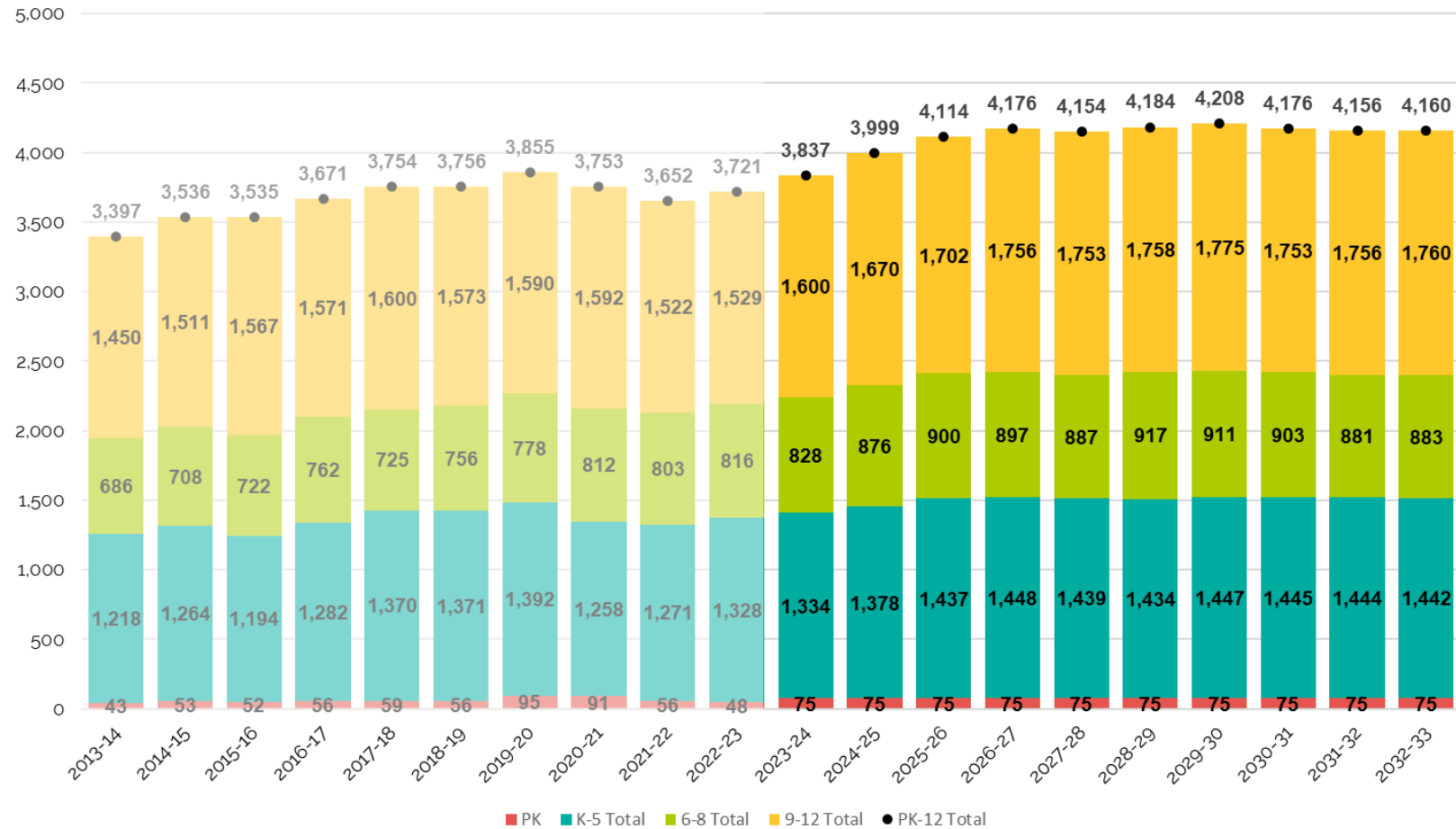
4. Our Collective Challenge - Enrollment Data

- Selected Data from Planning Consultants (“SLAM”)
 - Projections
 - Capacity
 - Out of Zone Placements
 - 2021 Master Plan
 - Elementary Challenges
 - Some Elementary Options

Districtwide Projections

- Enrollment projections updated in January 2023.
- Growth projected across all grade levels over the next five years:
 - Elementary School 8.4%
 - Middle School (PMS) 8.7%
 - High School (PHS) 14.7%
- Does not account for future housing obligations as part of upcoming Fair Share Housing agreement and zoning changes.

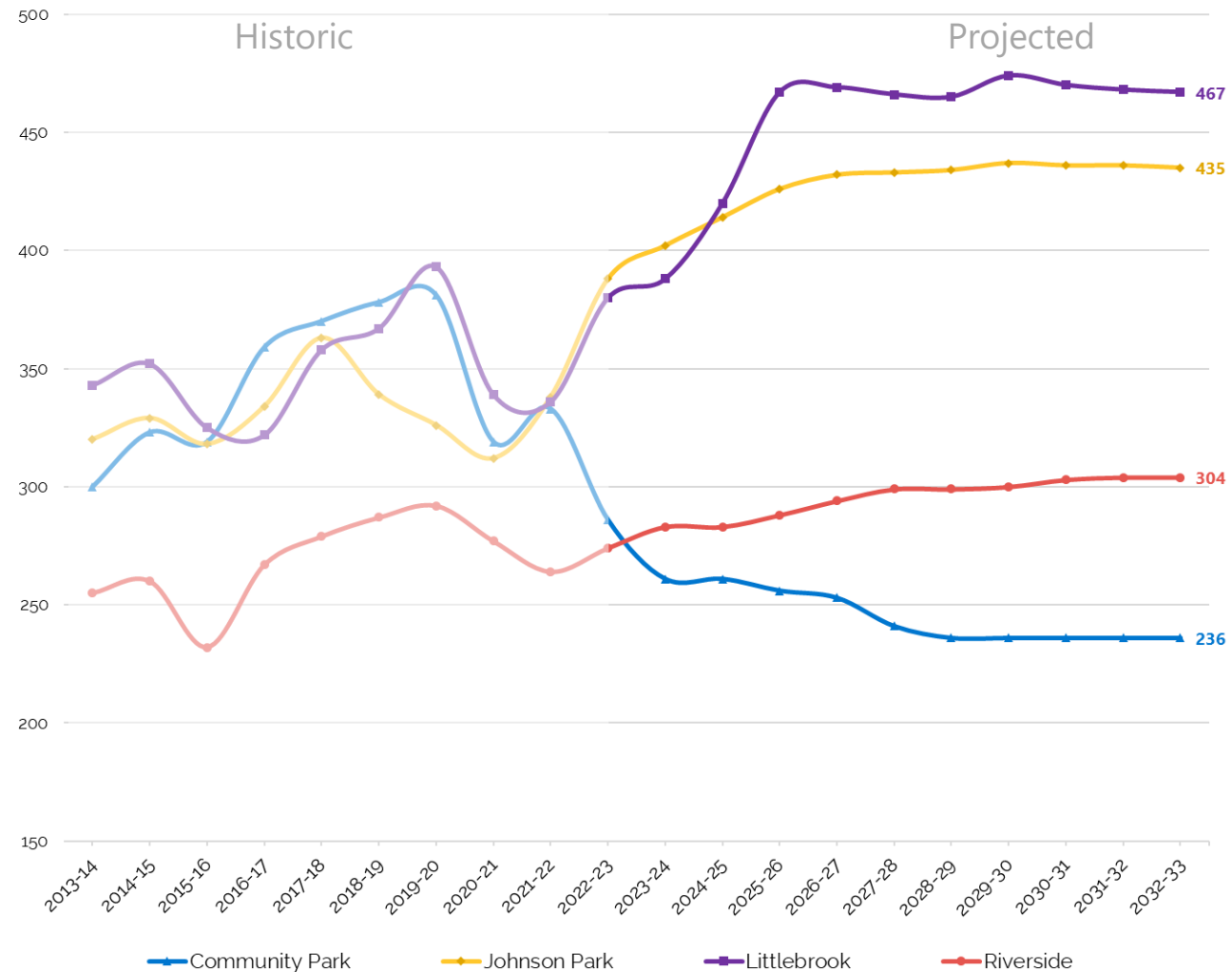
Princeton Public Schools Actual and Projected Enrollment: 2013-14 to 2032-33



Individual Elementary School Projections

- Individual elementary school projections are predicated on the “status quo” continuing over the next ten years.
- Enrollment growth in the elementary schools disrupted by the pandemic.
- DLI program and associated “opt-outs” in the Community Park attendance zone have had a significant impact on individual elementary school enrollment.
- As of October 2022, just 45% of students who live in the Community Park attendance zone attend Community Park, while the remaining 55% “opt out” and attend one of the other three elementary schools.
- Projections assume no parallel track at Community Park with that school functioning as a DLI-only school.

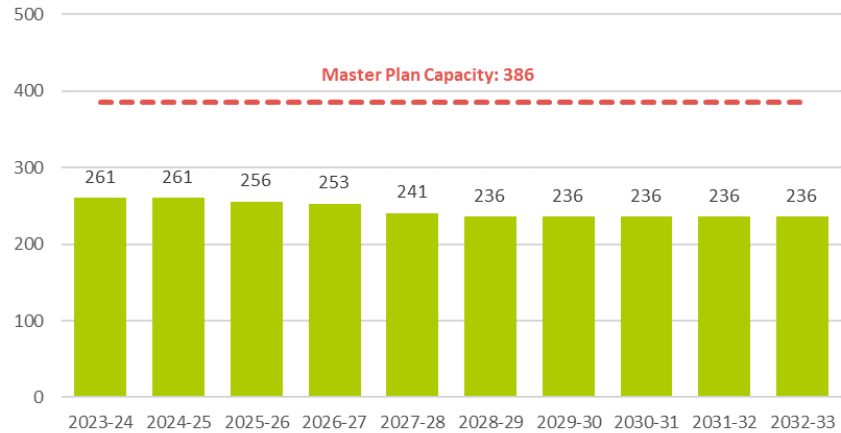
Princeton Public Schools Historic and Projected K-5 Enrollment by School



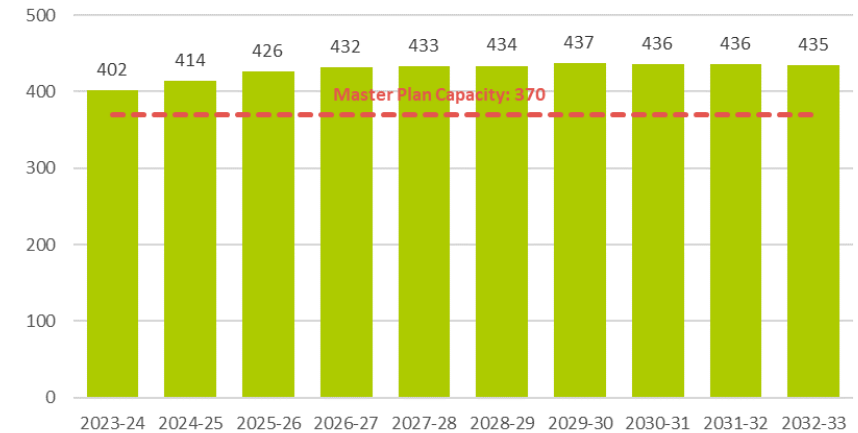
Capacity and Projected Utilization

- Capacity determined as part of the 2021 Master Plan was compared to projected enrollment.
- Uneven enrollment and utilization among schools.
- Community Park projected to be underutilized due to DLI Program.
- Projected enrollment exceeds capacity at Littlebrook and Johnson Park.

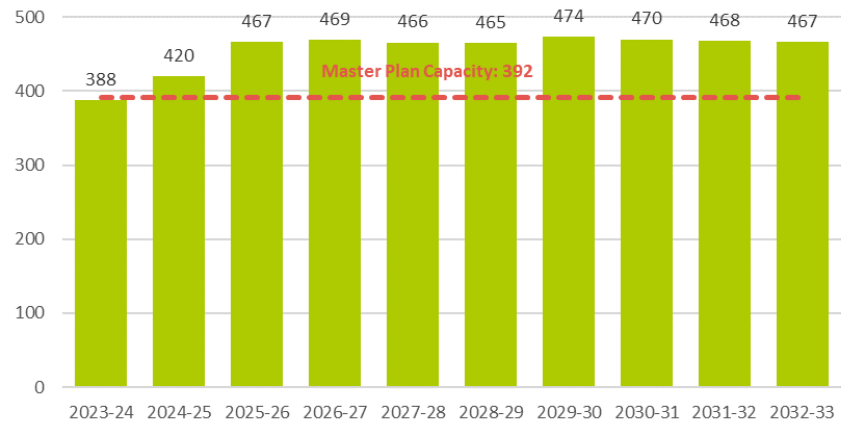
Community Park Projected Enrollment vs. Capacity



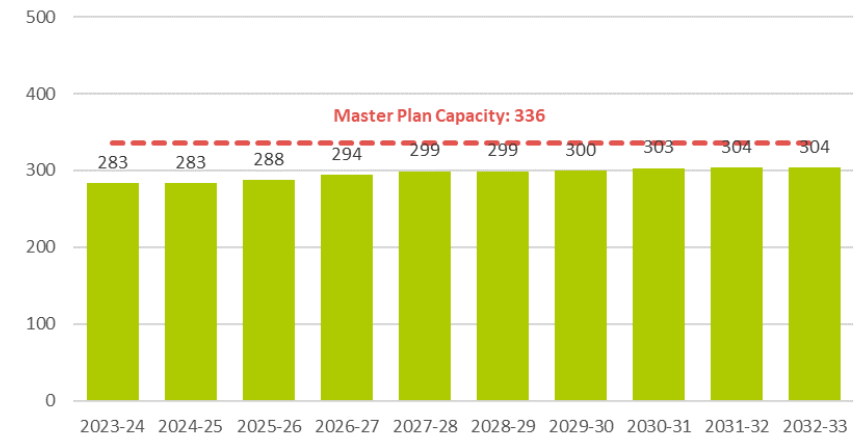
Johnson Park Projected Enrollment vs. Capacity



Littlebrook Projected Enrollment vs. Capacity



Riverside Projected Enrollment vs. Capacity



Out of Zone Placements

Out of Zone Placements: 2022-23

- Overall, about 70% of elementary students attend their zoned school.
- Out of area placements are most common in the Community Park attendance zone, due to the number of students who opt out of the DLI Program.
- As of October 2022, only about 50% of students who live in the Community Park zone attend Community Park. Most of the remaining students attend Johnson Park.
- Less than half of Johnson Park students live within the Johnson Park attendance zone.

Recap of 2021 Master Plan

- In May of 2021, a Master Plan was completed for Princeton Public Schools.
- The Master Plan provides the framework to support the educational vision, improvements and investments needed to maintain PPS facilities for the years to come.
- The Master Plan serves as a starting point for deeper discussions and as a roadmap for the next steps in the process for pre-referendum feasibility study and schematic design.
- Planning is a continuous process, and the Master Plan will provide a foundation for future decision making and plan refinement.

A succinct recap of the 2021 Master Plan pertaining to elementary schools is provided on the following slides

ELEMENTARY PLANNING CHALLENGES:

- Class Size Break-Points
- Scheduling Flexibility
- DLI Capacity and Growth
- Adequately Sized Classrooms & Resource Rooms
- Uneven Enrollment Pressure
- Need Flexible, Collaborative Spaces
- Provide Space for Inclusion
- Parity Across Buildings

--planner summary of challenges named in 2020

2023 High-Level Planning Considerations

▪ Value-based Planning

- Mission Statement
- New Strategic Plan
- Facilities Must Support Mission/District Goals

▪ Taxpayer Affordability

- What Can the Community Afford?
- Princeton's Property Taxes Are High
 - School tax levies = 50% of property taxes
- Taxpayers Vote on Any Solution via Referendum
- A minority of Taxpayers Have PPS Students

▪ Financial Sustainability

- PPS Operating Budget has Structural Gap (approx. \$700K - \$1 million per year)
- Reason - 2% levy cap; fixed and other costs rising faster
 - Transportation, Salaries & Benefits, Charter School, Inflation...
 - Need to find new savings every year
- Solution Must Consider Operating Budget Impact

Strengths/Challenges: What Do You Think?

- **PPS elementary school facilities/program -> serving needs of more than 1,400 children**
 - What are **strengths** to be celebrated and preserved?
 - What are **challenges**/things that could be done better?

- **Four unique, nurturing elementary schools**
 - Special traditions and culture of each school to be celebrated
 - Planning ahead ensures students continue to thrive in these supportive learning spaces!

- **Please share your thoughts** - via chat, comment or google survey <https://forms.gle/XB9GthtHXMTKe7fK7> until May 19th.

5. Some Elementary Planning Options

Finding Solutions: Examining Options Presented by 2021 Master Plan

- **Status Quo - Do Nothing**
- **Scenario 1 - Redistrict and Rebalance**
- **Scenario 2 - No Redistricting, Build Where Growth**
- **Scenario 3 - No Redistricting, Sister School Model (recommended by planners)**

We will explore these options and potential new ideas, in the months ahead.

2021 Master Plan: Elementary Options

Status Quo
(Do Nothing)

Scenario 1

Four PK-5
buildings at
370 student
model

- **Redistrict** attendance zones to better balance enrollments
- Better balance programming – Pre-K, Self-Contained and Pre-K Sp. Ed. in all buildings
- 370 student model relies on 90% utilization, with some buffer to accommodate fluctuations
- Renovate all schools to “right-size” core spaces and enable configuration

**REDISTRICT
&
REBALANCE**

Scenario 2

Four PK-5
buildings; LB
and CP larger-
other 2 smaller

- **NO Redistricting**
- Enlarge LB to accommodate growth and CP to accommodate dual-track DLI
- 370 student model relies on 90% utilization, with some buffer to accommodate fluctuations
- Renovate all schools to “right-size” core spaces and enable configuration

**BUILD
WHERE
GROWTH**

Scenario 3

Two sets of
paired PK-2/3-5
buildings

- Pair JP as PK-2 with CP as 3-5 school
- Pair RS as PK-2 with LB as 3-5 school
- Attendance zones are merged rather than redrawn
- Renovate and reconfigure all elementary schools to accommodate grade configurations

**SISTER
SCHOOL
MODEL**
*(recommended
by planners)*

Comparing 2021 Options: Summary

Scenarios	Pros	Cons
Status Quo - Do Nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change in zones No renovation/construction cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing disparity: class size, enrollment Increasing class sizes (no new classrooms) Inclusion challenges not solved Approaching 100% capacity Disruption/displacement of programs CP not fully utilized, at least short-term
1. Redistrict & Rebalance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment parity Keeps current K-5 model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Renovation of all 4 schools? Approaching 100% capacity Inclusion challenges not solved Doesn't solve DLI (4 class/grade)?
2. Build Where Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No redistricting, but need to rebalance CP/JP Keeps current K-5 model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No enrollment parity (big/small schools) Renovation of at least 2 schools (LB and CP) Inclusion challenges not solved Doesn't solve DLI (4 class/grade)
3. Sister School Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No redistricting Better class size parity Facilitates improved inclusion More flexibility for future enrollment DLI has room to grow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds a transition (grade 2 to 3) Potentially more busing on balance Some renovation at all 4 schools Change from existing model
4. TBD?	Solves challenges? Supports goals?	Challenges and costs?

Feedback Received -- 2023 To Date

- **Some priorities from recent Board/Administrator/Community discussions:**
 - Current elementary programming continues (including DLI)
 - **Parity** of educational experience across elementary schools
 - **Smaller class sizes** in early years
 - **Walk-to-school** preferences vs. **fairness of which children are bused**
 - Consider **impact of transitions** on elementary students
 - DLI ideally has **room to grow** (3 sections of K next year)
 - **DLI full immersion** valued by some parents, but **challenging** given district size, enrollment and enrollment pressures, configuration of schools
 - **Traditional (non-DLI) track** at zoned schools important (at least one traditional/grade)
 - Where dual track, **at least two sections** per track, per grade, important

What Do You Think?

➤ Your Ideas?

➤ Thoughts on Strengths/Challenges?

➤ Questions?

➤ **Google Survey <https://forms.gle/XB9GthtHXMTKe7fK7>**
open until May 19, 2023

What's Next

- **Next Opportunity for Discussion:**
 - **Complete google survey (two earlier slides and in chat) by May 19th**
 - **Individual School Meetings**
 - **CP PTO: May 5th 8:30 a.m.**
 - **JP PTO: May 11th 8:45 a.m.**
 - **LB PTO: May 19th 8:45 a.m.**
 - **RS PTO: TBD**
 - **District Wide In-Person June 5th 6:30 pm PHS Cafeteria**
 - **May 18, Long Term Planning Committee Meeting, 4:30 PM via Zoom link on district calendar: <https://www.princetonk12.org/district/calendar>**
 - **Other opportunities to come**

What's Next (continued)

- **Big Picture: Elementary Capacity Planning**
 - **Spring/Summer 2023**
 - In-person and virtual stakeholder meetings for input and suggestions
 - Internal working group of educators/admins develops recommendations
 - External professional advise on design, cost and budget implications
 - **Late Summer/Early Fall 2023** decision re: which elementary option to pursue
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