

BOUNDARY OPTIONS COMMITTEE (BOC) REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

July 11, 2023

Brian Conley
Boundaries and Planning Director



**SALT LAKE CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Your Best Choice

Excellence and Equity: every student, every classroom, every day



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OUR OBJECTIVES TODAY

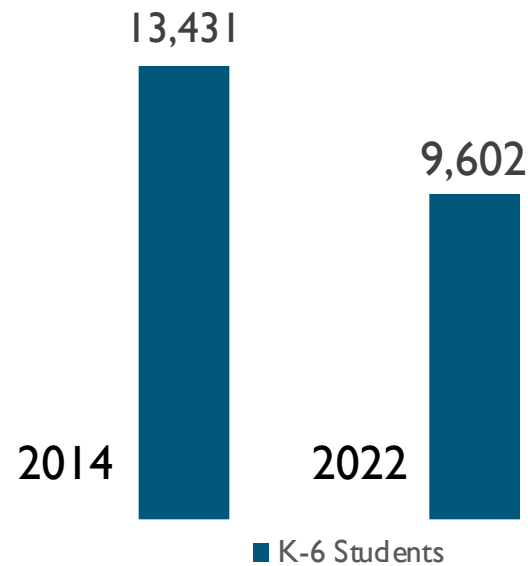
- Summarize the process
- Summarize the input received from all stakeholders
- Present the list of schools recommended for further study
- Recommend Board action

DISTRICT COMMITMENTS

- Provide quality district programs and opportunities that students can access and enjoy
- Provide ongoing educator learning so classrooms reflect best teaching practices
- Exercise fiduciary responsibility
- Demonstrate sustainability and environmental responsibility

DECLINING STUDENT POPULATION IS AN INDICATOR THAT ACTION IS NEEDED

- In the fall of 2014, the district had **13,431** K-6 students.
- In the fall of 2022, the district had **9,602** K-6 students, almost a 29% drop in eight years



Area 1:
7 elementary schools

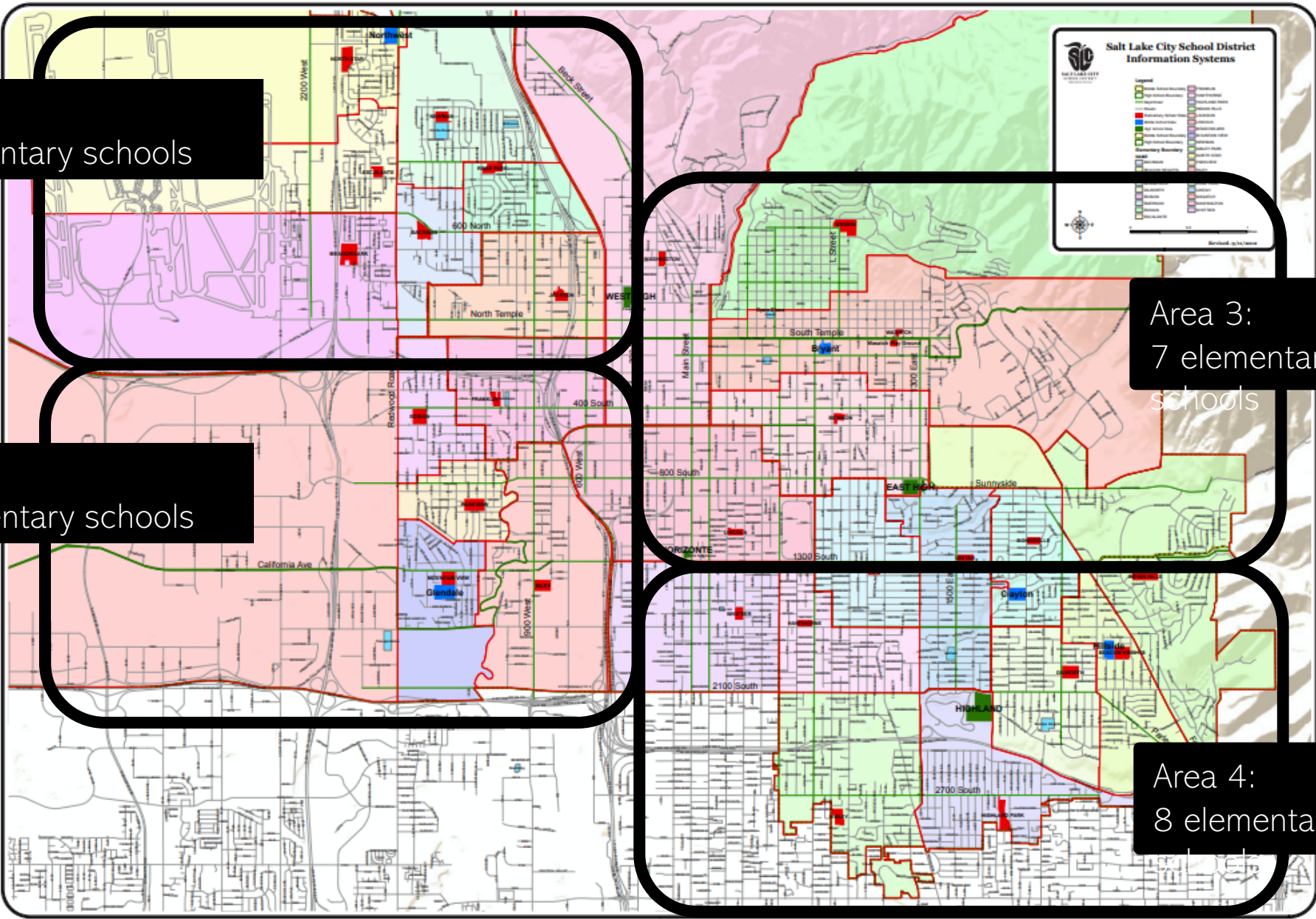
Area 2:
5 elementary schools

Area 3:
7 elementary schools

Area 4:
8 elementary

Map Key:

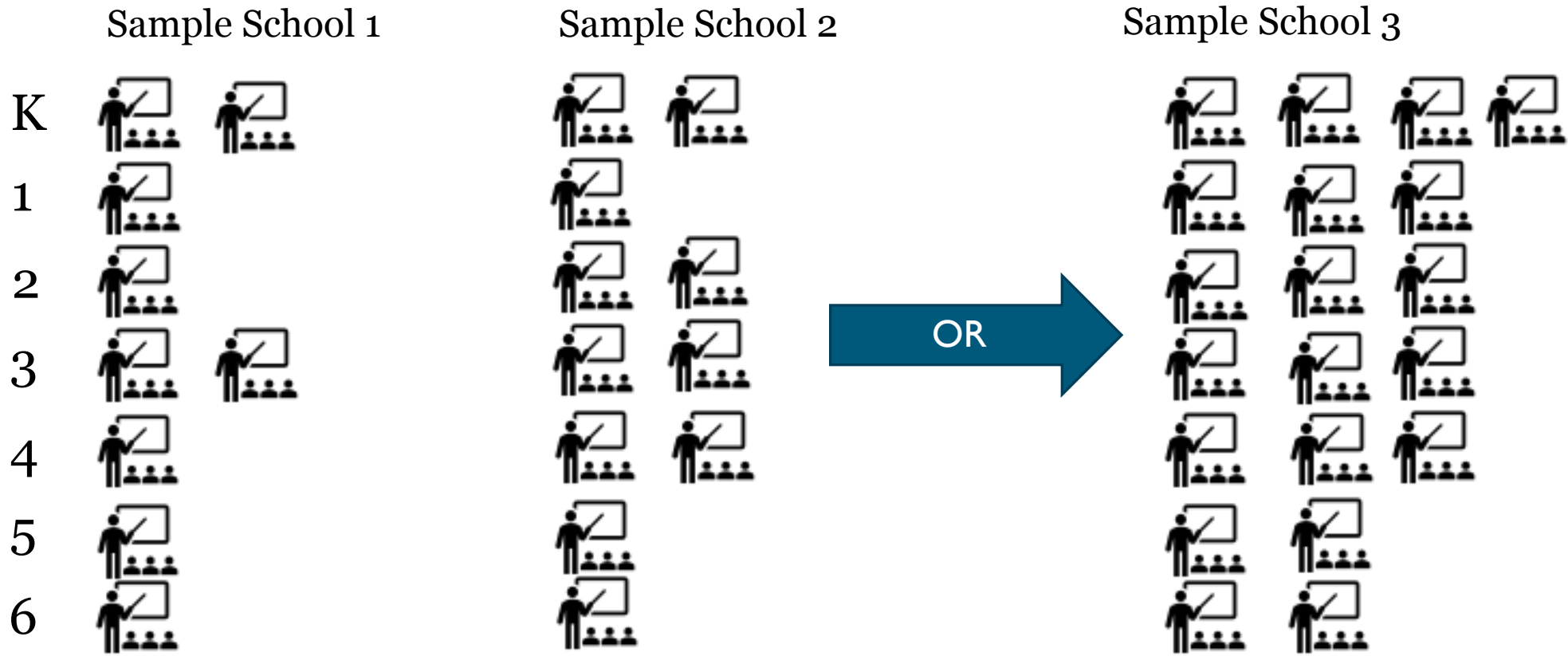
-  Elementary
-  Middle
-  High



WHAT IS A 'RIGHT-SIZED' SCHOOL?

- A school that has between three and four teachers per grade in early elementary and two to three teachers per grade in upper elementary can provide:
 - options for student classroom groupings,
 - teacher collaboration to support student learning, and
 - choices for families at each grade level
- A school that has room for special programs and can sustain a variety of support and enrichment activities

RIGHT-SIZING SCHOOLS DOESN'T MEAN BIGGER CLASSES



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BENEFITS OF RIGHT-SIZED SCHOOLS

With about three teachers per grade level, we can:

- Increase within-school choices for students and families
- Increase collaboration for teachers during professional learning opportunities to improve instruction and student success
- Minimize the number of unintended split-age/multi-grade classes
- Reduce the number of teachers having to change grade levels each year

BENEFITS OF RIGHT-SIZED SCHOOLS, CON'T

- Ensure space is available for music, arts, special education support, and other programs
- Increase the availability of specialized programs, such as dual language immersion
- Promote a balance between our district's standard educational plan and unique neighborhood programs

BENEFITS OF RIGHT-SIZED SCHOOLS, CON'T

- More opportunities for support and enrichment can be included in a building
- More parents increase the support for School Community Councils, Parent-Teacher Organizations, and other parent volunteer efforts
- Schools are funded on a per-pupil formula; school funding in a right-sized school can make a more meaningful difference using state and federal funds

WHEN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IS TOO SMALL

- Student and family choices within the school are compromised
- Teacher collaboration to support student learning and success becomes more challenging
- Efficient use of support educators is compromised
- One grade level with an ineffective classroom can greatly impact grade-level data when there are only one or two classrooms



POPULATION & BOUNDARY STUDY (2022-24)

(Dates are approximations and may be modified in extenuating circumstances.)

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FEBRUARY 2023

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MARCH-MAY 2023

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MAY-JUNE 2023

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G-5: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

JULY 2022-FEBRUARY 2023

COMPLETED STEPS

- Information was gathered between July 2022 – December 2022 and presented to the Board regarding possible long term school closures and potential school boundary adjustments based on the considerations outlined in the district's administrative procedures
- In February 2023, an official study list that included all 27 elementary schools was approved by the Board for study

G-5: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

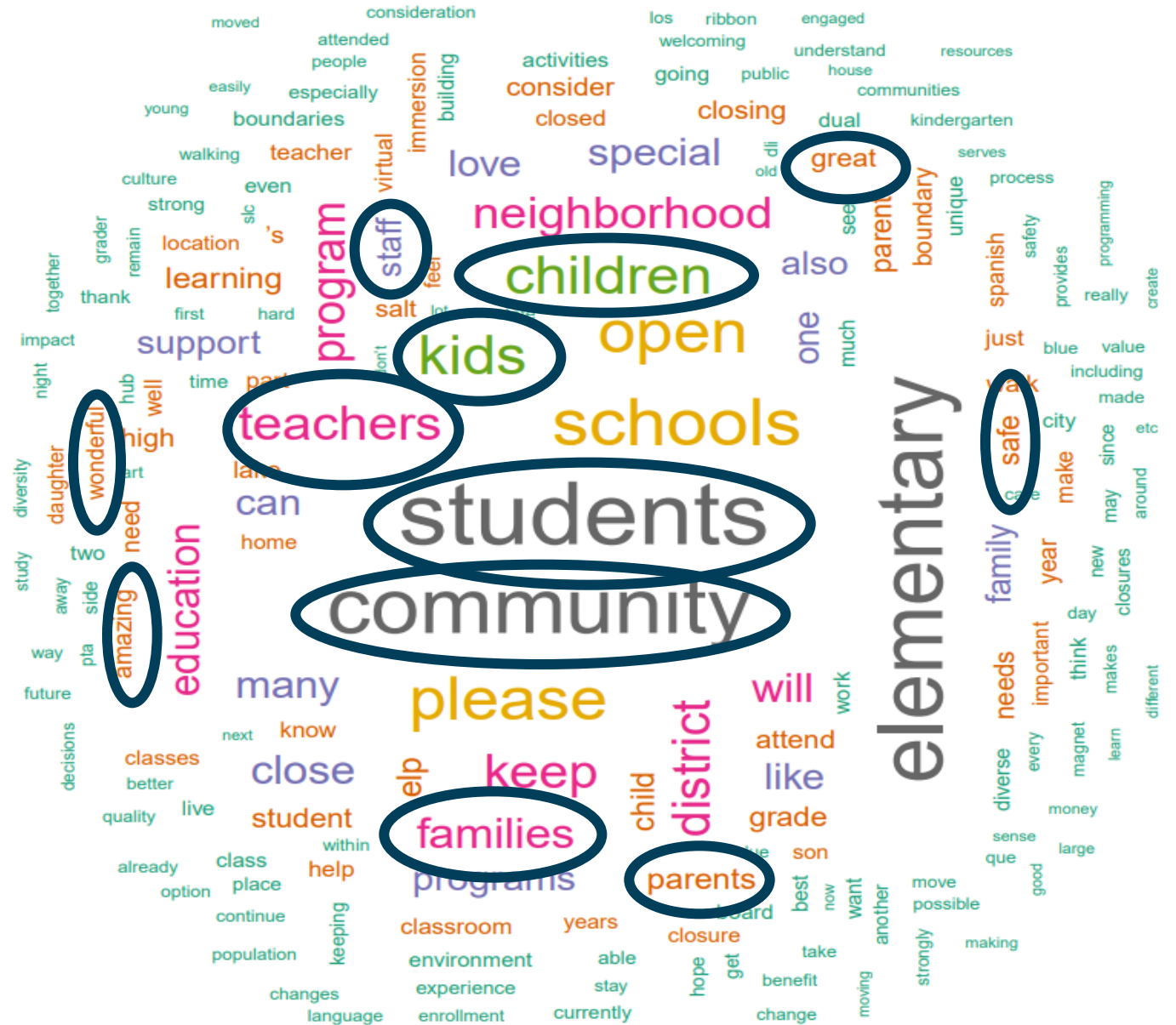
MARCH 2023 - JUNE 2023:

COMPLETED STEPS

- Met with each School Community Council (SCC) in person or on Zoom. Shared the district's process. Took notes regarding questions and comments.
- Returned to each school and met with the principal and SCC chair to share notes to check the accuracy of what was captured. Gathered additional input that may have surfaced.
- Held four community meetings to share the process and gather questions/comments. The meetings were livestreamed and recorded. Links to these recordings were posted on the district webpage.
- At each meeting with SCCs, demonstrated how everyone could share their input with the Board through the online form.
- Met with 700+ people in 58 meetings. More than 300 people watched the meetings online.

WHEN WE LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE, OUR STAKEHOLDERS:

- Focused on our learning communities of students, families, and staff
- Shared what they loved about our schools and staff
- Provided far more positive comments than negative comments



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INPUT RECEIVED FROM STAKEHOLDERS

- **600+** people attended the School Community Council (SCC) meetings
- Met with **27** principals and SCC chairs after these SCC meetings and added additional notes
- **80+** people attended Boundaries & Planning Community Meetings
- **300+** views of recorded meetings posted on district website
- **500+** comments were gathered after soliciting feedback via the district website. Specifically, we heard from:
 - **375+** parents, guardians, and students
 - **70+** employees
 - **20+** other community members

These meetings provided significant insight into the feelings and issues about which the community wanted the Board to be aware



COMMON COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- In certain areas of the city, mobility as a family unit or modes of transportation are concerns. How are their needs for getting children to school and participating in the school community being considered?
- Should we consider closing old schools and not the new schools?
- Will district special programs be more evenly distributed across the district when this shift happens?
- How will all communities, especially those who have been historically underrepresented, have a voice during this process?
- Is the speed of this process appropriate?

ISSUES TO ENSURE SMOOTH TRANSITIONS IF SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED

- Helping students get to know new future classmates
- Ensuring that transitions for changed communities going to new school communities are supported
- Ramifications for students on student special permit
- Implementing a process for forming new parent groups
- Schedules for new or more varied start times if more students are being bussed to fewer schools

SOME DISTRICT-LEVEL NEXT STEPS IF SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED

- Outline our communication strategies to ensure everyone has access to timely and accurate information
- Define Human Resource Services' process to determine how employees are placed if a school is closed
- Determine what happens to a school property when it is closed so we continue to be good neighbors in our communities

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR

- This process is hard, emotionally and mentally, and there will not be any decisions that make everyone happy
 - BUT in nearly every one of the meetings, people voiced that they **understand the logic behind the need** to consider school closures and boundary changes,
 - AND **they love their schools**. Most people didn't want their school to be studied for potential closure.

THE BOUNDARY OPTIONS COMMITTEE (BOC)

Per the G-5: Administrative Procedures, Interim Superintendent Bates appointed a 13-member boundary option committee representing the following departments:

- School Leadership & Performance
- Educational Equity & Student Support
- Transportation
- Teaching & Learning
- Special Education & 504
- Early Childhood
- Information Technology
- Auxiliary Services
- Business Services

BOC ACTIONS

Over the past six weeks, the BOC spent over 20 hours engaged in:

- Discussing and implementing the process outlined in the G-5: Administrative Procedures
- Reviewing the stakeholder comments and questions
- Studying district maps and layouts of school properties
- Analyzing extensive data on all 27 schools
- Developing an understanding of how much it costs to operate each school this past year

BOC ACTIONS, CON'T

- Reviewing the recent legislative state audit summary
- Speaking with city and public officials about the dynamics of operating schools in our urban district (safety of children and coordination of where they could go to school)
- Reviewing the Board's 5-year *Strategic Plan for Student Achievement*

BOC DISCUSSED THE PHYSICAL SPACES NEEDED FOR RIGHT-SIZED SCHOOLS

It will be important for schools to have adequate space for:

- Three general education classes per grade level
- Music and arts classes
- Neighborhood and/or Magnet Extended Learning Program classrooms
- Special education programs and services, including HUB, Essential Elements, Resource classes, and other services
- Pre-K classes

BOC RANKINGS OF SCHOOLS AFTER STUDY

Schools were ranked, low to high, based on the following criteria:

- a. Safe:** e.g., safe walking routes avoiding major thoroughfares and geographic considerations for transportation purposes, such as City Creek Canyon and freeway divisions
- b. Reasonable:** e.g., school enrollment trends, school capacity and number of classrooms, special programs, and ADA access considerations
- c. Simple:** e.g., proximity to other elementary schools, feeder pattern proximity, audit recommendations, demographics, and community input
- d. Cost-Effective:** e.g., condition of facility, utility costs, and sustainability costs

CONCLUSIONS

After ranking all 27 schools, we discovered there was a notable break in the distribution of scores:

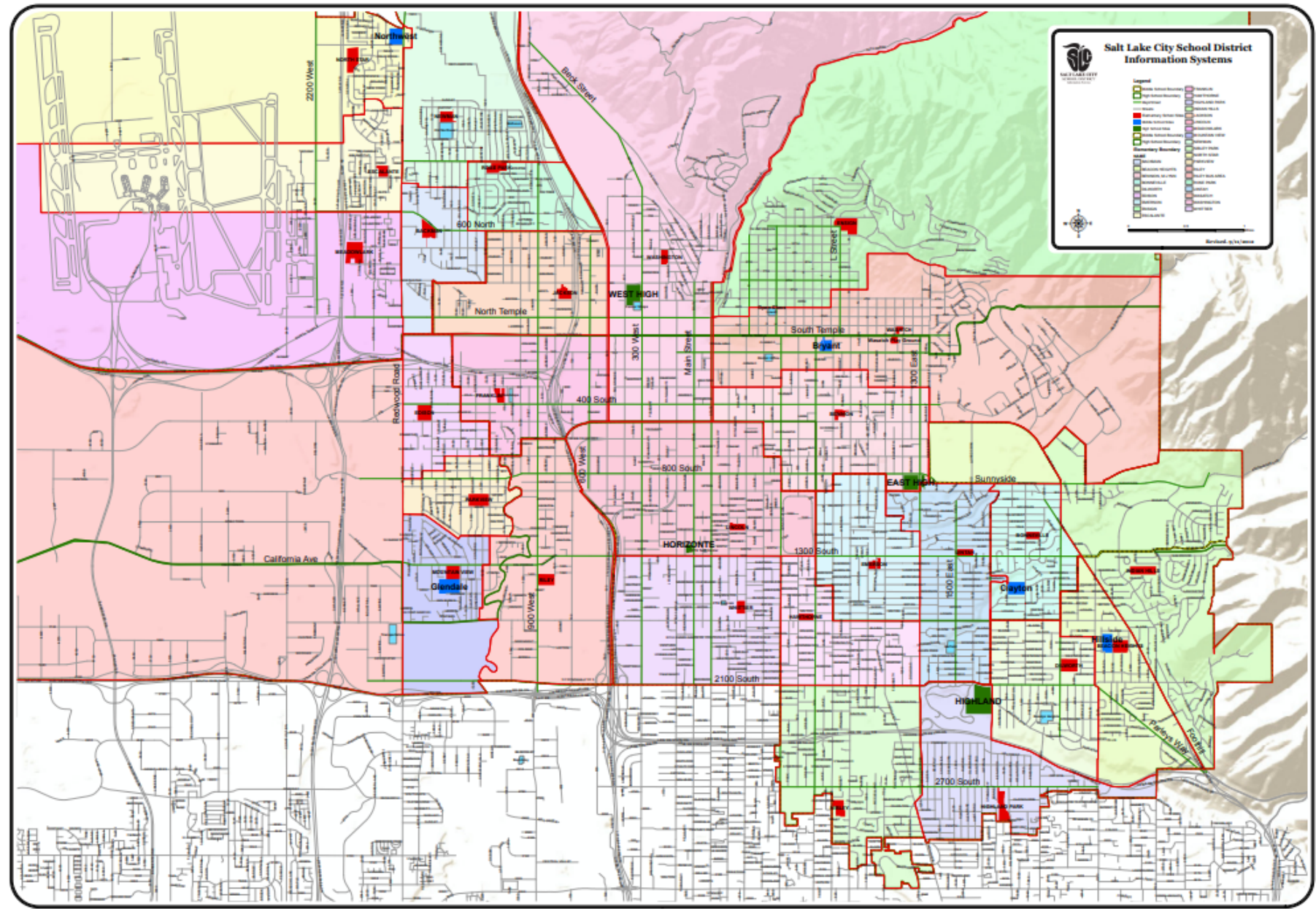
- The break occurred between the seven lowest scoring schools and the remaining 20 schools
- The lowest scoring schools are those we are recommending for further study for potential long-term closure

Map Key:

 Elementary

 Middle

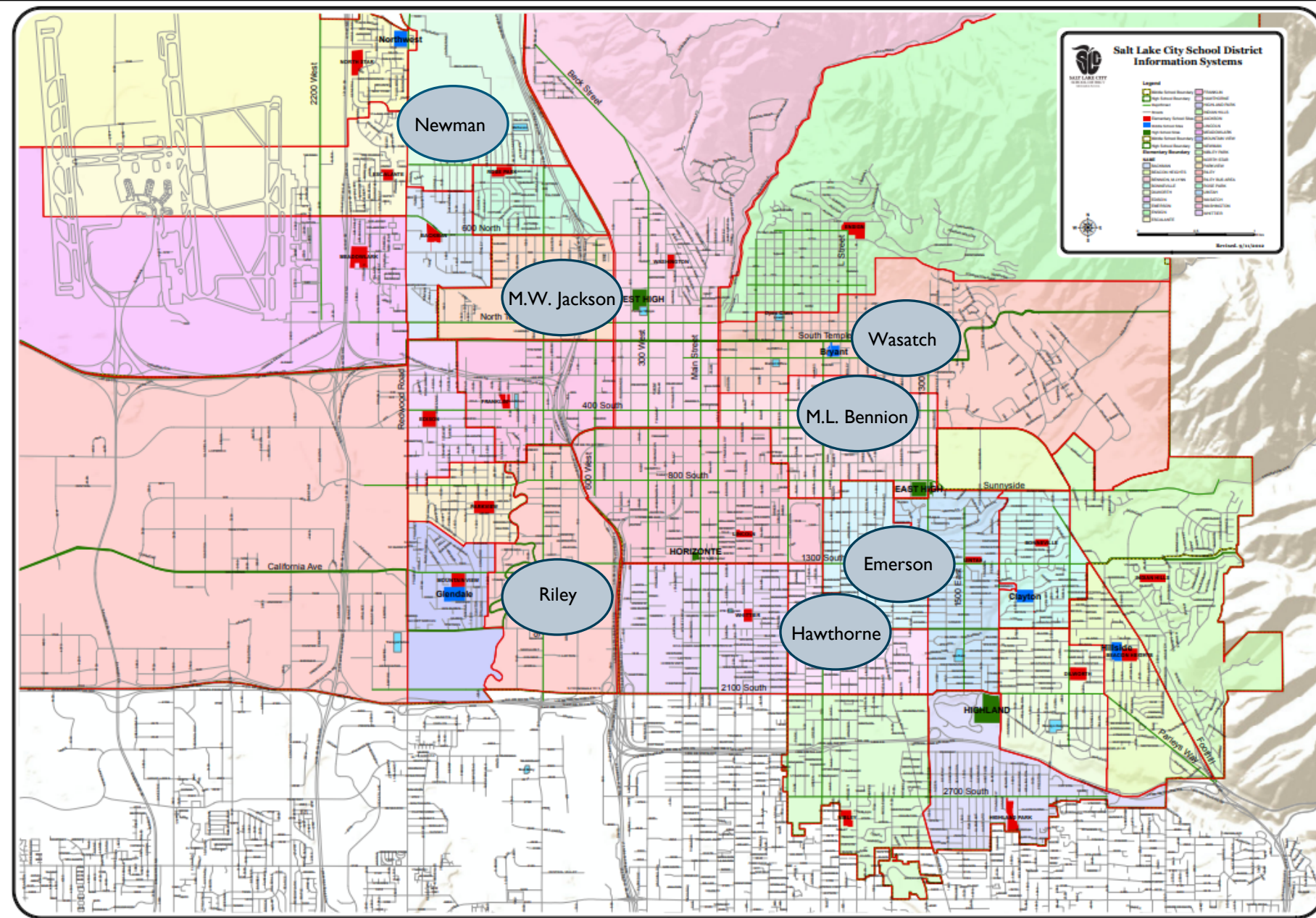
■ High



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SCHOOLS RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY FOR POTENTIAL LONG-TERM CLOSURE

- Emerson
- Hawthorne
- M. Lynn Bennion
- Mary W. Jackson
- Newman
- Riley
- Wasatch



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THE REMAINING 20 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY OF POTENTIAL BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Backman | 8. Franklin | 15. North Star |
| 2. Beacon Heights | 9. Highland Park | 16. Parkview |
| 3. Bonneville | 10. Indian Hills | 17. Rose Park |
| 4. Dilworth | 11. Liberty | 18. Uintah |
| 5. Edison | 12. Meadowlark | 19. Washington |
| 6. Ensign | 13. Mountain View | 20. Whittier |
| 7. Escalante | 14. Nibley Park | |

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD ACTION

1. The Board approves the following seven schools for further study for potential long-term school closure:

Emerson	M. Lynn Bennion	Newman	Wasatch
Hawthorne	Mary W. Jackson	Riley	

2. The Board approves the remaining 20 district elementary schools for further study for potential boundary adjustment.
3. The Board approves the district holding four information sessions in September and October throughout the city (e.g., Glendale, Sugarhouse, Rose Park, Avenues/Downtown).

DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND TIMELINES

- At least 120 days before approving a long-term closure or boundary adjustment for a school, the district will notify stakeholders (families and community leaders) who may be affected by the proposed changes
- The procedures indicate that information sessions will be held in September and October, two public comment periods will be placed on the board agenda in the two November board meetings, and a public hearing will be held in December
- The procedures enable the Board to make a final decision in December or January

HOW THE TIMELINE SUPPORTS FAMILIES' AND STUDENTS' TRANSITION

This schedule was designed to ensure that our families have **sufficient notice** of any final decisions. This will ensure they can learn about their school, programs, transportation, and services before the end of the year and have the **time and information needed to prepare for the following year.**

Our goal is to ensure that families and students feel welcome, included, and valued in every educational setting









HOW THE TIMELINE SUPPORTS FAMILIES' AND STUDENTS' TRANSITION, CON'T

- Immediately after any decision, the district will **design a transition plan** for the schools and communities that are changing. This will include determining services and programs, schedules, and transportation for the new configuration. *Estimated 1-3 months*
- To **reduce uncertainty and stress** for all families affected, schools will work to build relationships to welcome new members of the community. Transition teams will schedule joint social and learning activities to make necessary transitions as smooth as possible.



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COMMENTS QUESTIONS
