

Fairfield Board of Education Resolution

Whereas, the Fairfield Board of Education ('the Board'), with our Superintendent and Executive Directors, has engaged in an 11-month process to address elementary school utilization, special programming needs of students, and a state-identified racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School; and

Whereas, the Board contracted with a consulting firm to analyze our enrollment projections, housing development, in-migration, population density, and student demographics; and

Whereas, the Board has held 26 Board and committee meetings, including several community conversations, to evaluate potential redistricting scenarios and to engage the public on the potential scenarios provided by the consultant; and

Whereas, based on these extensive efforts, the Board has concluded that it is not reasonably possible to implement a plan at the start of the 2024-2025 school year to balance elementary school utilization and correct racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School through redistricting, and

Whereas, the Board's inability to complete these efforts for the start of the 2024-2025 school is due to several challenges within our district at the present time, including the locations and variations in the sizes of our elementary schools, significant differences in the capacity and conditions of our buildings, challenges and uncertainties in providing transportation to our students with the current shortages of bus drivers, population density centers, the growth in the need for space to provide support services and specialized programming for students, and the recent legislative change to the Kindergarten admissions cutoff date.

Therefore, let it be resolved as follows:

1. The Board of Education has diligently studied the viability of potential redistricting scenarios, the ongoing needs of our school facilities, as well as the short- and long-term needs of all students under current conditions to provide learning environments and academic programming to ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed.
2. The Board of Education has determined that, based on the factors listed above, there are no viable options for redistricting that may be implemented for the 2024-2025 school year without a significant and adverse impact on Fairfield Public School students, especially on students at McKinley Elementary School.
3. The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to create an interim report describing the facts that underlie this conclusion, based on the work that the District and Board has engaged in over the last 11 months, to share with the public, other town bodies, the State Department of Education, and State Board of Education, which interim report will include the documents and analysis that has been reviewed during our process.
4. The Board of Education and Superintendent will continue our work on behalf of the Fairfield school community to identify and address our short- and long-term facility and special programming needs, school climate initiatives, and work to update and/or amend our Racial Balance Plan to submit to the State Department of Education and State Board of Education when conditions permit.

5. In the interim, the Board of Education will continue to work collaboratively with our Superintendent and his Administration, community stakeholders, and town bodies. The Board of Education also stands ready to work directly with representatives of the State Board of Education to consider suggestions such representatives of the State Board of Education may have for a plan in the future that will benefit, not burden, our students.

In adopting this Resolution, the members of the Fairfield Board of Education acknowledge and commit to fulfilling our responsibility to provide for adequate and healthy facilities, to provide the academic resources and supports necessary for all students to explore their passions and develop their full potential, and to ensure our staff has the work environment and resources needed to deliver upon this responsibility.

Adopted: 10-24-2023

Appendix of Documents

1. 10-year enrollment projections presentation from the consultant dated June 28, 2022
2. Board of Education adopted Racial Imbalance Plan dated August 30, 2022
3. Board of Education adopted Facility Planning Principles dated December 13, 2022
4. Board of Education Charge to the consultant dated January 24, 2023
5. An updated Master Document from the Consultant containing all the scenarios and associated information
6. Elementary School Classroom Inventory by Scenario dated September 26, 2023
7. Special and Early Childhood Education Programming Presentation dated September 26, 2023
8. Dates of Board of Education and relevant Committee Meetings and Community Conversations November 2022 through October 2023.
9. Superintendent submitted updates to the Commissioner: February, May, September 2023