

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625  
Saint Paul, Minnesota  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
360 Colborne & Online at <https://spps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents>  
360 Colborne Street  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102**

**December 1, 2021  
6:05 PM**

**A G E N D A**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA**
- IV. **ENVISION SPPS: Align School Facilities with Well-Rounded Programs** **2**
- V. **ADJOURNMENT**

#BoldSubject#



**Saint Paul**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# **Envision SPPS:** **Align school facilities with well-** **rounded programs**

**Board of Education - Special Meeting**

***Board vote***

Jackie Turner, Chief Operations Officer

December 1, 2021

# Agenda

1. Envision SPPS objective and process
  - The Why: A well-rounded education for all students
2. Program closures, mergers and relocations
3. Summary overview and systemic impact
4. Recommended resolution to adopt Envision SPPS

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# Envision SPPS

## Objective and Process

# SPPS Achieves: Envision SPPS

## Strategic plan priority: Program Evaluation / Resource Allocation

Objective 5: Allocate resources based on program effectiveness and organizational priorities.

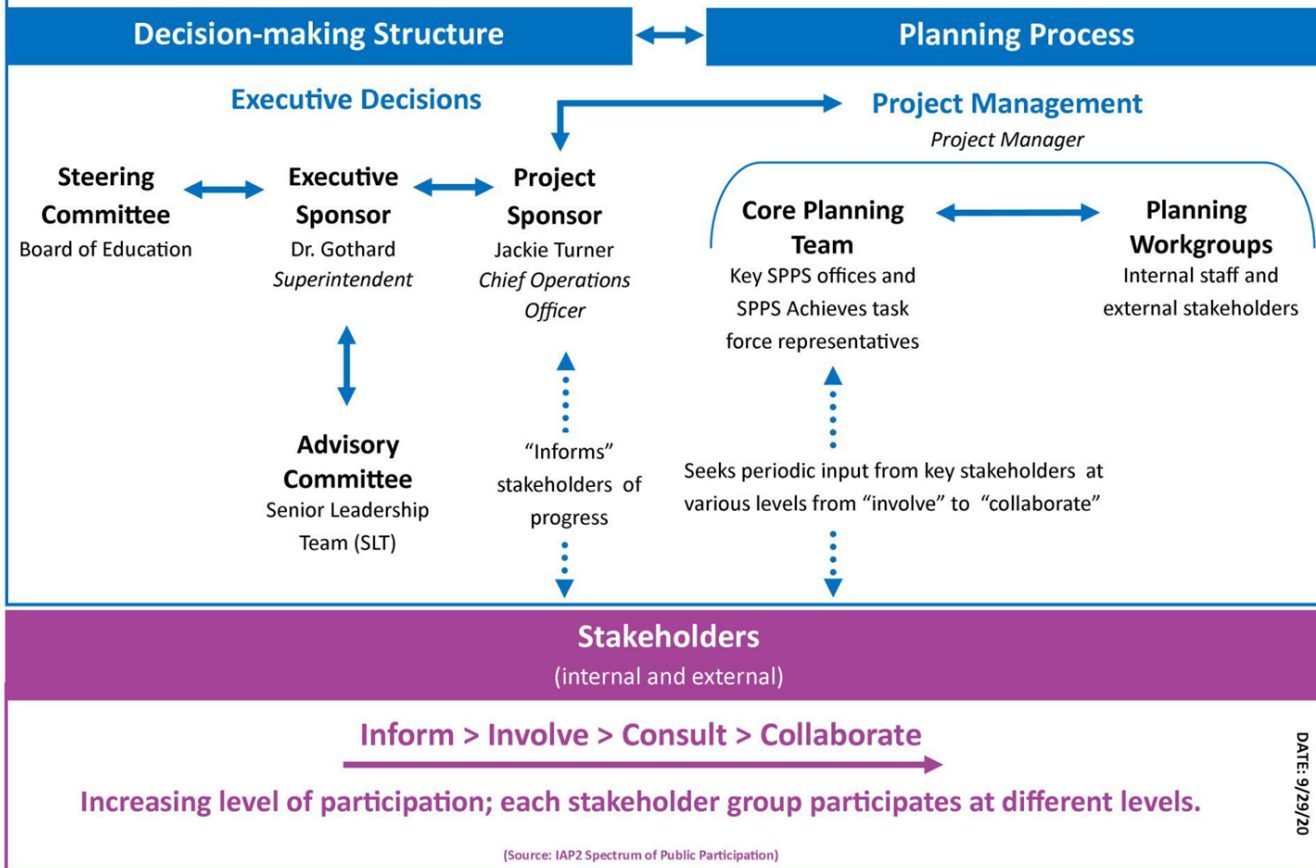
### Objective: 5.3 Align school facilities with well-rounded programs<sup>5</sup>

- Develop operational measures to assess building utilization, virtual connectivity, transportation costs, and equitable access to well-rounded programs
- **Align well-rounded education program measures, ideal school sizes, and parent demand for programs to determine facility allocations and major capital investment decisions**
- Adjust capital investments to ensure they meet the District's equity policy goals.

# Rationale for closing and merging schools:

- At SPPS, we believe all students deserve the full range of educational opportunities and student support that a robust, well-rounded education affords.
- A well-rounded education is one that meets the Minnesota state's educational standards by providing students with learning opportunities that give them the skills to succeed in school, college and career.
- Barriers to providing all SPPS students with a well-rounded education at every<sub>6</sub> school include declining birth rates and increased competition from schools outside of SPPS.
- This has resulted in an excess of 8,000 empty seats across Saint Paul Public Schools making many school programs unsustainable.
- As a result certain school programs have been identified to be closed so that students can be relocated to programs that provide access to a well-rounded education.

# Decision-making Structure and Planning Process



# Collaborative Workgroups

## 1. College and Career Paths

Co-Led by: Leah Corey, Anna Morawiecki

## 2. \*Early Childhood Education

Led by: Lori Erickson

## 3. \*Enrollment

Led by: Jayne Williams

## 4. Facilities Utilization/Alignment

Led by: Tom Parent

## 5. \*Language Immersion

Led by: Dr. Efe Agbamu

## 6. \*Integration

Led by: Sherry Carlstrom

## 7. Middle School Model

Led by: Amanda Herrera-Gundale

## 8. \*Montessori Pathway

Co-Led by: Jayne William, Andrew Collins

## 9. \*Special Education

Led by: Marcy Doud

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## 10. \*Talent, Development and Acceleration Service Pathway (TDAS)

Led by: Benjamin Lacina

## 11. Well-rounded Education

Co-Led by: Megan Dols Klingel, Craig Anderson



# Filtering relevant findings through these CRITERIA:

- Data
- Facilities
  - Operational efficiency
  - Retain capital investments
  - Requires new capital investments
  - Spatial alignment
- Equity
  - Avoid unintended consequences
  - Integration
- Accessibility:
  - Physical
  - Program accessibility (transportation)
- Location and density of students and schools
- Enrollment
- Market demands
- Pathway programming
- Financial/funding
  - Sustainability
- State statutes/legal (known)
- Unknowns
  - Legislative (state/federal)
  - Cruz-Guzman

# Engagement: Inform > Consult

## Information meetings

- 19+ school-based information sessions: Oct. 20-Nov. 10
- 5 multilingual-specific information session - Hmong, Karen, Somali, Spanish: 1st week of Nov.
- 2 Public information sessions: Oct. 26 and Nov. 8
- 2 BOE listening sessions: Oct. 28 and Nov. 11
- 1 Public Hearing: Nov. 30

## Board of Education meetings:

1. BOE Special Session - Nov. 29, 2021
2. BOE Special Session - Nov. 15, 2021
3. BOE Committee of the Board - Nov. 9, 2021
4. BOE Special Session - Nov. 8, 2021
5. BOE Special Session - Nov. 1, 2021
6. BOE Special Session - Oct. 25, 2021
7. BOE Special Session - Oct. 18, 2021
8. BOE Special Session - Oct. 11, 2021
9. BOE - Committee of the Board - Oct. 5, 2021
10. BOE Special Session - Oct. 4, 2021
11. BOE Special Session - Sept. 20, 2021
12. BOE Regular Meeting - July 20, 2021
13. BOE Regular Meeting- January 19, 2021
14. BOE Regular Meeting- February 18, 2020

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# Program closures, mergers and relocations

# Envision SPPS program changes, closures, relocations and/or expansions effective SY22-23

## Area A:

- L'Etoile du Nord French Immersion (LNFI) lower merges at the LNFI upper campus
- LNFI lower site reopens as early childhood education hub
- Parkway reopens as Hmong Language Immersion and Culture program upper campus (to Phalen Lake lower campus)

## Area C:

- J. A. Johnson merges at Bruce Vento

## Area D:

- Cherokee Montessori program relocates and merges at J.J. Hill
- Cherokee reopens as a community school
- Riverview community program closes and merges at Cherokee

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## Area E:

- Galtier merges at Hamline
- Gatliter reopens as early childhood education hub

## Area F:

- Jackson community merges at Maxfield
- Jackson Hmong Language merges at Phalen Lake

# Envision SPPS program changes, closures, relocations and/or expansions

## Area F:

- J.J. Hill Montessori relocates to the Obama site once remodeling is complete (either fall 2024 or fall 2025) and reopens as the Barack and Michelle Obama School and will also house a middle school (grades 6-8)<sup>3</sup>

## At the start of school year 2025-26:

- Capitol Hill's pathway will be expanded from Highland Park High School to other high schools so that students pathway to their community high schools

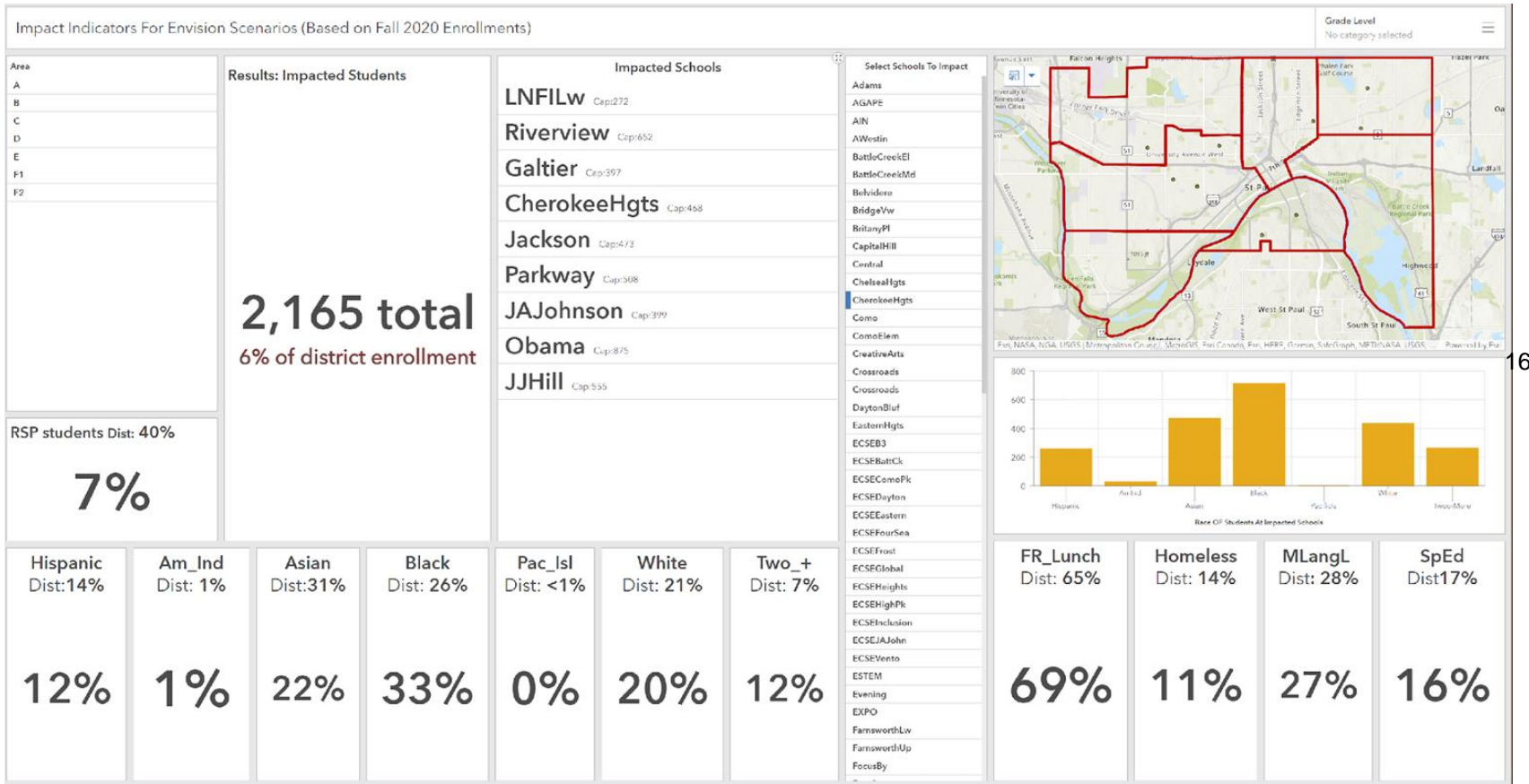
# Summary overview and systemic impact

# Recommendations overview

- **11 school programs will have expanded or changed** due to parent requests or program consolidations
  - Bruce Vento
  - Cherokee
  - Galtier
  - Hamline
  - J.J. Hill
  - LNFI Lower
  - LNFI Upper
  - Maxfield
  - Parkway
  - Phalen
  - Riverview
- **1 high school pathway change** due to neighborhood expansion: Capitol Hill
- **6 sites** will be available for future programs, community partnerships, early childhood expansion or temporary space during construction, or other district needs
  - Galtier
  - Obama
  - J.A. Johnson
  - Jackson
  - J.J. Hill
  - LNFI Lower

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# Total Systemic Impact





# Recommended resolution to adopt Envision SPPS

# School Closures:

## At the end of school year 2021-22:

1. **Galtier Elementary School**, 1317 Charles Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104
2. **Jackson Preparatory Elementary School**, 437 Edmund Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55103
3. **John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary**, 740 York Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106
4. **L'Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower**, 1305 Prosperity Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106
5. **Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School**, 1363 Bush Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106

## At the end of school year 2022-23:

6. **Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary**, 707 Holly Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104

# Board of Education: VOTE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RESOLUTION

Board File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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RESOLUTION  
ADOPTING ENVISION SPPS AND  
CLOSING SCHOOLHOUSES

WHEREAS, Independent School District No. 625, Saint Paul Public Schools, has engaged in a process, entitled Envision SPPS, for providing its students with the full range of educational opportunities and student supports that a robust, well-rounded education affords.

WHEREAS, a Notice of Public Hearing on the question of the necessity and practicability of closing the following schools: Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School; Galtier Elementary School; Highwood Hills Elementary School; Jackson Preparatory Elementary School; John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School; LEAP High School; L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower; Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School; and, Paul & Sheila Wellstone Elementary was published in the legal newspaper of the School District for two successive weeks on November 15, 2021, and November 22, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the time and place of the Public Hearing was set forth in the Notice; and

WHEREAS, Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School; Galtier Elementary School; Highwood Hills Elementary School; Jackson Preparatory Elementary School; John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School; LEAP High School; L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower; Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School; and, Paul & Sheila Wellstone Elementary were identified in the Notice as schools considered for closing; and

WHEREAS, the reasons for the proposed closing were set forth in said Notice; and

WHEREAS, numerous opportunities were provided for members of the community to learn about the proposals and to be heard whether for or <sup>20</sup>against the question of closing Barack and Michelle

Obama Elementary School; Galtier Elementary School; Highwood Hills Elementary School; Jackson Preparatory Elementary School; John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School; LEAP High School; L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower; Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School; and, Paul & Sheila Wellstone Elementary including: Regular meetings of the Board of Education on February 18, 2020, January 19, 2021, July 20, 2021, October 19, 2021 (public comment), and November 16, 2021 (public comment); Special Meetings of the Board of Education on September 20, 2021, October 4, 2021, October 11, 2021, October 18, 2021, October 25, 2021, November 1, 2021, November 8, 2021, and November 15, 2021; Board of Education Committee of the Board meeting October 5, 2021; more than 19 school-based information sessions held between October 20, 2021 and November 10, 2021; five multilingual-specific information sessions in Hmong, Karen, Somali, and Spanish during the first week of November 2021; two public information sessions on October 26, 2021, and November 8, 2021; two Board of Education listening sessions on October 28, 2021 and November 11, 2021; and one Public Hearing on November 30, 2021.

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing on said closings was conducted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 123B.51, subd. 5 pursuant to said notice by the Board of Education beginning at 5:30pm on November 30, 2021 at 360 Colborne Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102; and

WHEREAS, testimony and materials were received during the course of the Public Hearing by anyone in favor of or opposed to said closings and the Public Hearing was not deemed closed until everyone who requested to speak had the opportunity to do so; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has considered the following: presentations and materials from Administration at Regular Meetings of the Board of Education on February 18, 2020, January 19, 2021, and July 20, 2021; presentations and materials from Administration at Special Meetings of the Board of Education on September 20, 2021, October 4, 2021, October 11, 2021, October 18, 2021, October 25, 2021, November 1, 2021, November 8, 2021, and November 15, 2021, and November 29, 2021; presentations and materials from Administration at the Board of Education Committee of the Board meeting October 5, 2021; public comments conducted prior to Regular Meetings of the Board of

Education on September 21, 2021, October 19, 2021, and November 16, 2021; public comments provided at Board of Education listening sessions on October 28, 2021, and November 11, 2021; emails and other communications from various stakeholders; and, public testimony at one Public Hearing on November 30, 2021.

WHEREAS, through the course of the many presentations, public comments, and listening sessions, the Board of Education directed School District Administration to remove LEAP High School, Highwood Hills Elementary School, and Paul & Sheila Wellstone Elementary School from the list of schools being recommended for closure; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2021, the Board of Education heard and considered the final recommendation of Administration to close Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School; Galtier Elementary School; Jackson Preparatory Elementary School; John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School; L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower; and Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that after considering the materials in the record, the testimony presented at said Public Hearing held pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 123B.51, Subd. 5, and the recommendations of Administration, the Board of Education, Independent School District No. 625, hereby determines:

1. That the Board of Education, Independent School District No. 625, hereby approves and adopts the Envision SPPS Plan dated December 1, 2021. In doing so, the Board of Education determines it is necessary and practical:
  - a. That Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School, located at 707 Holly Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104 shall be closed as of June 30, 2023, or as soon thereafter as practical.
  - b. That Galtier Elementary School, located at 1317 Charles Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104 shall be closed as of June 30, 2022, or as soon thereafter as practical.
  - c. That Jackson Preparatory Elementary School, located at 437 Edmund Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55103 shall be closed as of June 30, 2022, ~~or~~ as soon thereafter as practical.

- d. That John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School, located at 740 York Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106 shall be closed as of June 30, 2022, or as soon thereafter as practical.
  - e. That L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower, 1305 Prosperity Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55106 shall be closed as of June 30, 2022, or as soon thereafter as practical.
  - f. That Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School, located at 1363 Bush Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106 shall be closed as of June 30, 2022, or as soon thereafter as practical.
2. The closure of Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School; Galtier Elementary School; Jackson Preparatory Elementary School; John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School; L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower; and Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School is necessary and practical based upon the following:
    - a. The School District's enrollment is declining:
      - i. Birth rates in the City of Saint Paul have declined over the past six years from approximately 5933 births in 2013-14 to approximately 5059 births in 2019-2020.
      - ii. Saint Paul resident kindergarten enrollment has declined from approximately 4452 students in 2018-19 to approximately 4150 students in 2020-21. Based on current birth rate projections, this number is expected to be approximately 3677 students in 2025-26.
      - iii. The percentage of Saint Paul resident K-12 children enrolled in a Saint Paul Public Schools school has decreased from 67% in 2013-14 to 62% in 2019-20.
      - iv. In 2019-20, approximately 16,058 Saint Paul resident students enrolled in other public school options.
      - v. The School District currently has an excess of 8000 empty seats across the School District.
    - b. The decline in School District enrollment has resulted in underutilization of certain School District elementary and middle schools.
      - i. The School District currently has an excess of 8000 empty seats across the School District.

- ii. At Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School only 40% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2020).
  - iii. At Galtier Elementary School only 61% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2020).
  - iv. At Jackson Preparatory Elementary School only 71% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2020).
  - v. At John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School only 79% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2020).
  - vi. At L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower only 79% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2021).
  - vii. At Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School only 69% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes (analysis from school year 2019-2020).
  - v. The School District's ideal utilization for its elementary and middle schools is that 85% of the building's capacity is being used for educational purposes.
  - vi. Underutilized schools produce negative consequences for both finances and academic programming. By closing these schools, the School District can optimize the utilization of its remaining school buildings and align school facilities with well-rounded programs.
- c. The schools designated for closure are not sustainable, meaning that they have less than the School District's ideal student enrollment (450 to 599 students at the elementary school level and 720 students at the middle school level).
- i. At Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School enrollment for kindergarten to grade 5 for school year 2019-20 was 294. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 266.
  - ii. At Galtier Elementary School enrollment for kindergarten to grade 5 for school year 2019-20 was 204. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 157.
  - iii. At Jackson Preparatory Elementary School enrollment for kindergarten to grade 5 for school year 2019-20 was 296. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 269.



- iv. At John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School enrollment for kindergarten to grade 5 for school year 2019-20 was 286. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 280.
  - v. At L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower enrollment for kindergarten to grade 2 for school year 2019-20 was 242. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 183.
  - vi. At Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School enrollment for grades 6 to 8 for school year 2019-20 was 353. For school year 2020-21 enrollment was 290.
  - vii. The remaining school sites in the School District have sufficient space to accommodate these students.
- d. Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. In addition, the facility was initially constructed and designed to house a larger elementary program or secondary program.
  - e. Galtier Elementary School has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. The school facility has limited capacity to grow as compared to other nearby School District elementary schools.
  - f. Jackson Preparatory Elementary School has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. The school facility has limited capacity to grow as compared to other School District schools that can consolidate a District-wide dual language immersion program.
  - g. John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. The school facility configuration is not ideal to house an elementary program because it was initially constructed to house a secondary program.
  - h. L' Etoile du Nord French Immersion Lower has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. The school facility has limited capacity to grow as compared to other School District schools that

can consolidate a district-wide dual language immersion program.

- i. Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School has a consistent pattern of being underenrolled and underutilized. The program is not able to generate funding to provide a well-rounded education. Montessori is not sustainable as a middle school program.
- j. By closing these underutilized and unsustainable schools, the School District can optimize its resources to provide all students the full range of educational opportunities and student supports that a robust, well-rounded education affords.
  - i. A well-rounded education is one that meets the Minnesota state's educational standards by providing students with learning opportunities that give them the skills to succeed in school, college and career.
  - ii. Building on a deep understanding of the core essentials of reading, writing and math, students are taught by educators with expertise in science, arts, social studies, world languages, physical education and health while having access to an array of enrichment opportunities.
  - iii. As a team, educators work together to deliver culturally relevant lessons personalized to each student's specific needs.
  - iv. A holistic, well-rounded education also provides a broad range of school-based services such as a full-time counselor, social worker and nurse to address students' social, emotional, mental and physical health. There may also be other specialized staff dedicated to family engagement and to address the needs of students and families from specific cultural backgrounds.
3. The Board of Education selected schools for closure based on the following data points and parameters:
  - a. Facilities; including operational efficiency, retention of capital investments, requirements for new capital investments, spatial alignment.
  - b. Equity; including avoiding unintended consequences, furthering integration.

- c. Accessibility; including physical accessibility, and program accessibility (transportation).
  - d. Location and density of students and schools.
  - e. Enrollment.
  - f. Market demands.
  - g. Pathway programming.
  - h. Financial/funding.
  - i. Sustainability.
  - j. Legal requirements.
4. School District administration considered all data compiled through the Envision SPPS process and public and staff feedback at various meetings and the public hearing. The School District considered alternatives to the closing of schools, but determined that the closures were necessary to address effectively the identified concerns that have arisen due to declining enrollment, the underutilization of school buildings, and the unsustainability of the schools identified for closure. The School District set a goal to minimize disruption to students by establishing a 10% cap so that no more than 10% of School District students would be disrupted from school closings.