



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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*Superintendent of Schools*

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September 7, 2023

Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker  
CT Department of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103-1841

Dear Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker,

This is to provide the regular update on Fairfield Public Schools' Racial Imbalance Plan, as requested at the November 2, 2022, State Board of Education meeting. We continue to make progress on the components of our plan as outlined below. There has been significant work to report since my last quarterly report. The SLAM consultants presented 3 possible scenarios for the Fairfield Board of Education to consider on June 13, 2023. We have worked tirelessly since that meeting to engage the public in meaningful discussion. There has been a working group made up of the SLAM consultants and the administration meeting regularly to gather and analyze all the information being collected from staff and the community.

I must once again remind the State Board there are many factors that contribute to the current demographic enrollment at McKinley Elementary School. These include current housing and development, affordability, and the positive climate and culture that students and families experience at McKinley School which was evident during a recent visit by the Commissioner in the spring. I cannot say enough how many communications we have received from McKinley families about the school's climate and culture as being one of the many factors which contributed to them seeking to move into the district specifically to enroll their children at McKinley. Families do not see a racially imbalanced school but rather an inclusive school community where their children are learning, growing, and thriving.

The timeline below is a chronological account of the actions taken to date by the Fairfield Board of Education to begin the process of redistricting:

**November 2, 2022:** Fairfield Board Finance Committee: Costs/savings estimates from closing an elementary school, as discussed in September.

**November 15, 2022:** Fairfield Board Discussion of Updated Facilities Planning Principles from 2010

**November 29, 2022:** Fairfield Board First Reading of Revised Facilities Planning Document

**December 13, 2022:** Fairfield Board adopts revised Facilities Planning Document. Review of 2019 Charge to Milone and MacBroom (SLAM) and Discussion of Updates, Timeline and Associated Budget

**December 15, 2022:** Fairfield Board holds Community Conversation regarding racial balance, academic excellence, and facility utilization in person.

**December 21, 2022:** Board Facilities Committee follow up on seating needs capacity for special programming and ECC, review of November enrollment and capacity data report from SLAM.

**January 4, 2023:** Fairfield Board held a Facility Planning Workshop. Review of Specialized Programming Request, First Reading of 2023 Board of Education Charge to Consultant, Timeline related to Facilities.

**January 5, 2023:** Fairfield Board holds Community Conversation regarding racial balance, academic excellence, and facility utilization virtually.

**January 10, 2023:** Fairfield Board meeting discussion on facilities capital planning, board follow up questions and amendments on the draft charge from January 4th the Board voted to postpone the vote on the charge to the consultant to the January 24, 2023, Board meeting.

**January 24, 2023:** A Fairfield Board meeting was held where the Board adopted the charge to the consultant to assist in identifying redistricting scenarios to balance elementary school utilization and resolve racial imbalance.

**May 24, 2023:** The Board participated in the first of a series of training opportunities on equity with facilitators from the Partners for Educational Leadership.

**June 13, 2023:** Fairfield Board meeting was held to receive a comprehensive presentation on the recommended scenarios from the SLAM consultants.

**June 27, 2023:** A Fairfield Board meeting was held where supplemental information was presented by the SLAM consultants to the community.

**July 20, 2023:** A special meeting of the Fairfield Board of Education was held to solicit feedback on the SLAM presentation from the community.

**July 25, 2023:** A virtual meeting of the Fairfield Board of Education was held to provide another opportunity for input from the community of the redistricting scenarios presented by the SLAM consultants.

**August 23, 2023:** A special meeting of the Fairfield Board of Education was held to hear a presentation from the SLAM consultants on additional scenarios for the Board of Education to consider based on the feedback received from the public.

**August 29, 2023:** A Fairfield Board meeting was held to discuss the enormous amount of information gathered by the Board and the administration. It was determined by the Board to set racial imbalance the highest priority in the redistricting process. The Board directed the Superintendent to work with SLAM prioritizing racial imbalance over building utilization and placement of specialized programs.

**September 5, 2023:** The district held a public community conversation to provide the public another opportunity for input on the redistricting process.

During the summer months, the administration collaborated as part of a working group with SLAM to refine the scenarios to best redistrict the school community. In trying to comply with the racial imbalance law, the district must overcome many challenges in the process. We must consider the increased need for space for specialized programs which serve our students with specialized needs. The district also will need to add additional early childhood classrooms to serve the students who will not be moving onto to kindergarten because of the change in legislation.

Our next update to you will be provided prior to December. The Board has set aside several dates in the coming weeks to come to a final decision and vote prior to a change in membership in the November election. Please feel free to contact with me questions on our progress or any of the details above.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Testani  
Superintendent of Schools

*c: Laura Anastasio, CSDE Legal and Government Affairs  
Michael McKeon, CSDE Legal and Government Affairs  
Fairfield Board of Education*

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