



## ***Board of Education Column***

***By Jim Johnson, Board of Education***

### **Planning Committee Update ~ 2022-23 School Year**

The Planning Committee of the Fargo Board of Education typically meets monthly throughout the calendar year. The committee's goal is to make sure the Board as a whole has all the information it needs to make sound, sustainable decisions regarding our resources and physical assets. One of the main focuses of the Planning Committee is to work with our administration in developing and updating our long range financial and facilities plans.

At a Board meeting earlier this fall, we approved an update Long Range Facilities Plan. Several future potential building projects are identified in the plan; the Planning Committee, along with administration, will be working to determine potential timelines and funding sources for those future projects.

One area of focus at this time is to find long term homes for our programs that are currently housed at Agassiz. Agassiz has been a District facility since 1912. At this point, further investment into this facility doesn't appear to be fiscally responsible for FPS, and our long range plan includes its decommission.

Our current plan for the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program includes a potential addition to Hawthorne Elementary School to serve as the central location for the ECSE program. Longfellow Elementary serves as our northside location and a southside location will most likely be addressed when we build our next elementary building in south Fargo.

We are actively exploring potential buildings and or properties that could become the future home for Dakota High School and our adult education program. I would expect a formal recommendation for a future home for these programs to come before the Board as soon as a suitable location is found.

Our student numbers continue to grow in the southern portion of our District and we will soon be at student capacity at Bennett Elementary School. The attendance numbers at both Discovery Middle School and Davies High School are growing as well. One potential solution that we will be exploring would be the construction of a new middle school on our property to the east of Davies High School. This building could initially be used to house fifth grade students from Bennett, 8th grade students from Discovery and 9th grade students from Davies, as we wait for attendance number to justify the building of our next comprehensive high school and our next southside elementary building.



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In closing, let me stress that while the Planning Committee is working with our administration to identify our brick-and-mortar needs, the quality of our district isn't measured by our buildings or their location. but, rather, it is the incredible staff and the programs they offer inside those wall that matter!

