



EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: DISTRICT 65 BOARD OF EDUCATION
CC: DISTRICT 65 CABINET
FROM: DR. DEVON HORTON, SUPERINTENDENT;
SARITA SMITH, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS;
RAPHAEL OBAFEMI, CHIEF FINANCE & OPERATIONS OFFICER
DATE: MARCH 14, 2022
RE: APPROVAL OF STUDENT ASSIGNMENT AND SCHOOL PLAN

Based on the accompanying memo entitled 'D65 Student Assignment Planning Process' the District 65 administration recommends the Board approve the Student Assignment and School Plan as outlined in this document.

The components of the plan are as follows:

Elementary and Middle School Boundary Changes

In conformity with Appendix A, the District recommends revisions to student attendance boundaries for the following elementary schools, effective for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Dewey
- Kingsley
- Lincolnwood
- Orrington
- Walker
- Washington
- Willard
- Addition of a 5th Ward school boundary

There are no recommended changes to attendance boundaries for Dawes, Lincoln, or Oakton elementary schools at this time.

In conformity with Appendix B, the District recommends revisions to student attendance boundaries for the following middle schools, effective for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Chute
- Haven
- Nichols
- Addition of a 5th Ward school boundary

There are no changes being recommended to the middle school feeder pattern.

In conformity with Exhibit A and Exhibit B, the District recommends the creation of attendance boundaries to assign K-8 grade students, living within the designated area, to the proposed 5th Ward School upon construction.

Intent to Finance and Construct a School in the Fifth Ward

As outlined in the D65 Student Assignment Planning memo, the District 65 Administration is seeking Board approval to pursue financing and construction of a new school building located in the 5th Ward that would serve students living in the designated attendance area.

In addition, the newly constructed facilities would be home to the Dr. Bessie Rhodes Magnet School community and programming (dual strands of the Two-Way Immersion Program). The magnet school would operate independently from the 5th Ward neighborhood school.

The proposed location of the 5th Ward Campus would be at the existing site of Foster Field (located at Simpson and Asbury Streets). District 65 already owns this land.

District 65 has been exploring various ways to fund the 5th Ward School for over a decade. The District 65 Administration is recommending that the Board approve a resolution to issue Lease Certificates to fund the new construction. The estimated cost of building a new school in the 5th Ward is \$40 million. The annual debt service payments on Lease Certificates are estimated to be \$3,200,000 per year for 18 years.

Transportation savings resulting from the recommended Student Assignment and School Plan, namely revisions to attendance-area boundaries, should provide the funds required for the yearly lease payment. In FY22, the District is projected to spend over \$6.2 million for transportation services. The proposed school in the 5th Ward will allow the District to save money by reducing the funding for transportation costs to only those for early childhood, hazardous routes, and students with Special Education needs (IEP). Overall, the District could save over \$3 million in FY25 and beyond. These funds would be transferred annually to the debt service fund to pay debt service on the \$40M lease certificates beginning in FY2025 through FY2042.

The issuance of lease certificates is a long term financial commitment by the District that requires financial discipline to assure that the dedicated operating funds from savings in the transportation fund are budgeted annually to pay the debt service. Because the debt service payments are from operating funds, there is no separate tax levy increase for debt service or corresponding increase in taxes to the community.

Physical Closure of Rhodes

The closure of Bessie Rhodes is contingent upon the construction of the 5th Ward School. The earliest that the school would close and students and staff would transfer to the new building is estimated to be at the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

Upon its eventual closure, the District 65 administration recommends that the Board make the determination of how best to utilize or sell the building and land that currently houses Bessie Rhodes, in accordance with any necessary State of Illinois requirements and based on market conditions at that time. If the decision is made to sell, the Administration recommends that any proceeds be used for capital improvements and building repairs in schools across the District.

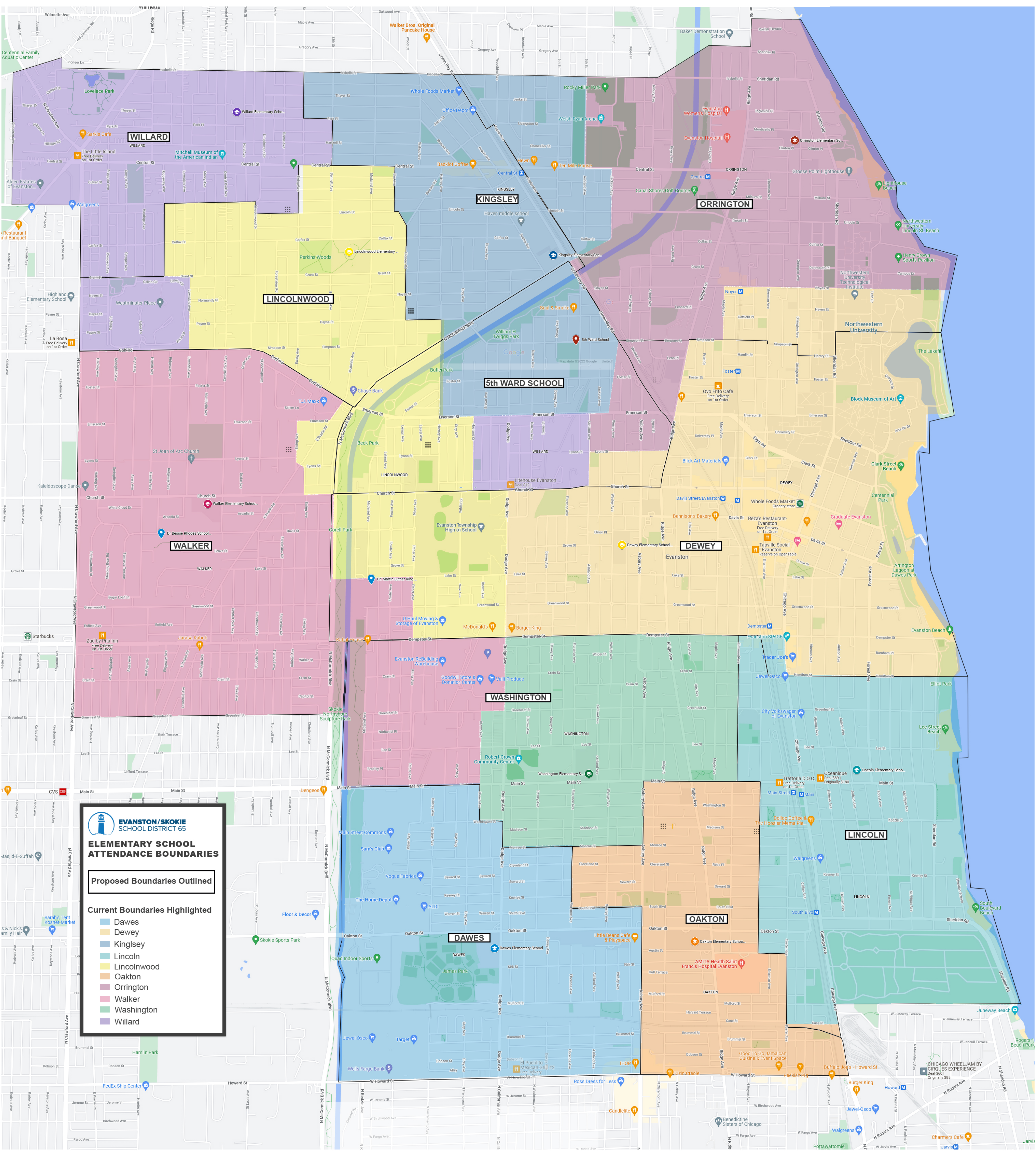
Implementation Phase


If the Board approves the Student Assignment and School Plan, the District will enter into the implementation phase which will occur over the next one and half years. During this phase, the Student Assignment and School Plan would be further **reviewed** to address staffing needs, student programming, building usage, transition support, and possible further revisions to boundary lines. This phase will continue to offer robust opportunities for stakeholder engagement.

As unforeseen circumstances arise, the District and Board may take steps to revise and amend this Student Assignment and School Plan that are in the best interests of the School District, its residents, and students.

Action

The District Administration recommends the School Board to take action to approve the accompanying resolution **approving this Student Assignment and School Plan**.



**EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES**

Proposed Boundaries Outlined

Current Boundaries Highlighted

Dawes

Dewey

Kingsley

Lincoln

Lincolnwood


Oakton

Orrington

Walker

Washington

Willard



**EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES**

Proposed Boundaries Outlined

Current Boundaries Highlighted

Chute

Nichols

Haven

