

April 18, 2023

Dear Pomona Articulation Area Families and Staff,

As your Pomona area principals, we recently invited you to join us in exploring our vision for delivering a thriving 6-12 secondary experience at Pomona High School starting in the 2024-25 school year. **This vision is to provide extraordinary experiences for our students—building academic and workforce readiness skills as early as 6th grade to best prepare students for rigorous college and career pathways through 12th grade.**

Community Conversations & Engagement Opportunities

We have had two community conversations about this so far. We are excited to continue this exploration with you at our **next meeting on Thursday, April 27 from 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Pomona High School.** Your engagement is helping us understand what is most important to you and your family, and is informing how we design safe, welcoming and thriving experiences for our students, especially our younger learners. If you are interested in participating in our ongoing community conversations, please fill out [this Google Form](#). If you can't make the meeting but are interested in touring Pomona High School to understand how different age groups would be served within the building, you can [sign up here](#). We will also be hosting lunch-and-learn sessions with more than 200 students and staff at Moore and Pomona to continue to listen to our community.

Timeline

The Jeffco Board of Education would have to approve a plan to create a 6-12 at Pomona, and if Board approval is given, we will work with our school communities to continue to develop and refine the 6-12 design and programming through the 2023-24 school year. The earliest that grades 6-8 would be offered at Pomona would be for the 2024-25 school year. Please visit this [new webpage](#) where you can find detailed responses to questions, information on upcoming events, and more resources.

Our Reality

Our articulation area is facing significant challenges. Moore Middle School is Pomona's only middle school and will be Jeffco's lowest enrolled middle school next year, with 298 projected students, but capacity to serve nearly 800. Since 2018 Moore's enrollment has declined by 50%, making it difficult to provide students with the quality experiences we believe they need in order to thrive. If Moore were to close and consolidate with another middle school, it would be a school outside of the Pomona articulation area, meaning Pomona High School risks losing its only feeder school. Long term, we believe this would jeopardize the sustainability of the entire articulation area, Pomona High School in particular.

Currently, only about half of the students who live in our articulation area choose to attend our schools. In a choice environment, shifting boundaries will not solve our problem; we need a solution that will create stronger programming by maximizing our resources. We want to take

our destiny into our own hands and propose a solution that will provide extraordinary experiences for our students and strengthen our Pomona articulation area pipeline.

This is why we have asked the district for their support to explore, together with our community, the opportunity to create a thriving 6-12 secondary experience at Pomona High School starting in the 2024-25 school year. This is a very common model—many schools in Colorado and across the country successfully operate 6-12 schools. We are bringing this idea forward so that we can sustain our community and provide more opportunities for our students to have an extraordinary secondary experience while preparing for their lives after graduation

Ensuring safety and security for students and preserving authentic high school experiences

We are grateful for the engagement of our parents, staff members, and students as we explore our 6-12 vision. There are two questions we have heard consistently so far:

- How will we ensure that our youngest students—6th and 7th graders—will be kept safe while we build a strong whole-school culture?
- How will we preserve an authentic high school experience for students in grades 9-12 with younger students in the same building?

Creating a safe culture of belonging is a top priority for our leadership team. Sixth and 7th grade students will have their own wing which is separate from the rest of the building. This means that they will have their own bathroom and pod of classrooms to ensure they are not sharing spaces with older students. During classes, each hallway is monitored by teachers to ensure student safety and to provide a consistent, supportive adult figure for students in their classroom areas.

Eighth and 9th graders will also have their own space for homerooms. We will also explore bell schedules that allow for staggered passing periods so that students of widely different ages are not in the hallways at the same time.

Finally, we will lean into some of the positive opportunities in this model by creating structured mentoring relationships between 6th and 7th graders and older students. This will help to ensure that our younger students are seen and valued by older students and that older students have the opportunity to act as positive role models for their younger peers.

In the spirit of recognizing different emotional and developmental needs, we will preserve traditional high school activities for students in grades 9-12 (Homecoming, prom, high school sports, etc.). Similarly, we will create new middle school activities for students in grades 6-8 (age-appropriate social activities, potential for middle school sports, music/arts programming, after-school clubs, etc.). We will also create appropriate, whole-school activities and events to create a strong sense of community across all grades and among our families.

What is next?

We anticipate presenting our plan to the Board Education at their May 3, 2023 study session. Our hope is that the Board will give approval this summer in order to best position our articulation area for the 2024 Enrollment process.

We are proud of the school communities within this articulation area and excited to join as one community to create a vision for new opportunities for our students – the POWER OF POMONA.

In Partnership,
Pomona Area School Leadership

Wendy Doran, Community Superintendent
Patrick Rock, Principal, Pomona High School
Brenda Fletcher, Principal, Moore Middle School
Julie Waage, Principal, Little Elementary School
Kristin Enney, Principal, Parr Elementary School
Matt Hilbert, Principal, Warder Elementary School
Jen Carlson, Principal, Weber Elementary School