

2012-2013 District Realignment (DR) Plan FAQ

November 22, 2011

District Budget

Q. How big is the budget problem, and how did we get here?

A. If we do not address our budget problem, our budget deficit could be as much as \$100M by 2015. This year, we've reduced expenses by \$23 million, but not enough to overcome years of lingering infrastructure costs. These historical costs have created a systemic financial issue in light of the decline in student enrollment. Our state government has provided a 'wake-up call' for public school systems to live within their means, and that also means less subsidy per student. Our facility infrastructure far exceeds what our current enrollment would justify. We have a serious budget crisis ahead of us.

Q. Are we the only District experiencing these financial challenges?

A. No. This condition is not unique to Pittsburgh. School systems throughout Pennsylvania and around the country are having similar budget challenges.

Q. What changes have already been made outside of school buildings?

A. Already the District has made some cuts totaling nearly \$15 million annually including:

- 75% reduction of the 2011 Capital Budget spending plan
- A few months ago in June 2011, the District made reductions to Central Office and Operational Support that eliminated 217 positions and reduced the budget shortfall by about \$11 million annually.

This was an important first move, but not enough to overcome legacy costs of years of salary and infrastructure costs in the face of the funding gap. In addition, declining student enrollment due to greater competition from Charter Schools is eroding our budget annually.

Q. Will the Board consider raising taxes?

A. No. Our challenges are fairly well-defined and we have no choice but to make these changes in order to avoid raising taxes.

District Realignment:

Q. What is the District Realignment Plan?

A. The District Realignment Plan, announced on August 4th, aims to address the District's under-enrolled classrooms that result in unnecessary costs to tax payers. As part of its work to build a sustainable public school system in the City of Pittsburgh, the District Realignment Plan includes the following three strategies for addressing under-enrolled classes:

- School Closings and reconfigurations,
- Feeder Pattern Changes, and
- Adjustments to the Educational Delivery Model.

On November 22, 2011 the Board took action on all three strategies: 1) school closures and reconfigurations 2) feeder pattern changes and 3) adjustments to the educational delivery model. Faced with a projected \$100 million deficit by 2015, the proposed 2012 budget relies on the implementation of all three strategies in order to decrease the District's funding gap. In developing the budget through the a multi-year plan, the District anticipates adjustments to the District's Educational Delivery Model that will result in the reduction of approximately 400 full time employees in 2012. The Board will vote on the 2012 Budget at its Special Legislative Meeting on December 7, 2011.

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District Realignment - Strategy 1: School Closings and Reconfiguration

Q. Can you provide more information on the approved school closings?

A. Yes. The District's Board of Directors approved on Tuesday, November 22, 2011 a District Realignment plan that would impact schools for the 2012-13 school year. The final plan includes:

- **Closing of 7 schools** - Pittsburgh Fort Pitt PreK-5, Pittsburgh Langley 9-12, Pittsburgh Murray K-8, Pittsburgh Northview PreK-8, Pittsburgh Oliver 9-12, Pittsburgh Schaeffer K-8, and Pittsburgh Stevens K-8.
- **Closing of 7 facilities (buildings)** - Fort Pitt, McNaugher, Murray, Northview, Schaeffer Primary, Schaeffer Intermediate (Sheraden building) and Stevens.
- **Creation of one new school** - a K-8 school in the Langley building.

The proposed plan also includes:

- **Expansion of Pittsburgh Morrow** from a PreK-5 school to a PreK-8 School, with grades PreK-4 in the Morrow building and grades 5-8 in the Rooney facility. (walking distance from one another)
- **Reconfiguration of Pittsburgh Westwood** from a K-8 to a K-5 school. Grade 6-8 students would go to South Hills 6-8.
- **Relocation of Pittsburgh McNaugher** into the Oliver building along with the special education offices currently in the Overbrook building.
- **Relocation of the Early Childhood classrooms at McCleary (up to 6)** into Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5

Q. Why it is necessary for the District to close more schools?

A. Given the state of declining funding for education in Pennsylvania and around the country, our school district is at an important crossroad. We have find a way to live within our means as the District's student enrollment continues to decline which means that we continue to have fewer students. Currently, in this 2011-2012 school year, the District has an estimated 11,165 seats of excess capacity with a total student enrollment of 25,046. We know that the District and taxpayers cannot afford to pay for empty seats. Closing and consolidating schools is another step on the path to building a Sustainable District. The first phase of reductions started as far away from the classroom as possible. But more is needed in order to reach financial sustainability.

Q. How were the recommendations for closures made?

A. In order to determine schools to be recommended for closure, the District began an internal process that reviewed all the District's current schools and school facilities based upon four equally weighted criteria measures:

- Student Achievement – Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP); Student Growth
- Student Enrollment – Enrollment vs. Capacity
- Facility Condition – DeJong study Rating (In November 2009, a nationally known independent consulting firm, provided the District long-term facilities report that envisioned a leaner Pittsburgh Public School District in 10 years.
- Operations Costs – Utilities, custodial, etc.

In addition, the District looked at the following factors: special programming (like special education, early childhood, English as a Second Language (ESL), impact of school size on educational programming (high schools), racial distribution, regions and equity.

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Q. My child's school is on the school closing list for 2012-13. Can you please tell me where my child will be attending?

A. We have preliminary student assignments from closing schools but can provide more specific information if you contact the Parent Hotline at 412-622-7920. Please provide the Parent Hotline Customer Service Representative with your child's name, current address and current school. With this information, we will be able to provide you with your child's school assignment for 2012-13 within 48 to 72 hours.

Student Assignments based on the approved District Realignment Plan for 2012-13 are detailed on the chart below.

Current Assignment	New Student Assignments
Pittsburgh Fort Pitt PreK-5	Arsenal PreK-5, Woolslair K-5, and Fulton PreK-5
Pittsburgh Langley High School	Pittsburgh Brashear High School
Pittsburgh McNaugher	Pittsburgh McNaugher at Oliver Building
Pittsburgh Murray K-8	Pittsburgh Arlington PreK-8
Pittsburgh Northview PreK-8	Pittsburgh King PreK-8, Pittsburgh Morrow PreK-8
Pittsburgh Oliver High School	Pittsburgh Perry High School
Pittsburgh Schaeffer K-8	New K-8 at Langley
Pittsburgh Stevens K-8	New K-8 at Langley, Pittsburgh Westwood K-5, Pittsburgh South Hills 6-8
Pittsburgh Morrow PreK-5	PreK-5 expands to a PreK-8, PreK-4 in Morrow 5-8 in Rooney
Pittsburgh Westwood K-8	Changes from a K-8 to K-5, 6-8 to South Hills Middle
McCleary Early Childhood	Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5

Q. My child's school is on the closing list – do I need to register my child at his/her new school?

A. No, parents will not need to register their child at their new school for the 2012-13 school year. This change will automatically occur in our student data information system.

Q. My child is on a PS-6 transfer and their current school is on the closing list. What does this mean for my child?

A. Students who are attending schools on a PS-6 or other transfer that are closing will be returned to their home school for the 2012-13 school year. The District will contact all students/families currently attending schools on a PS-6 that are on the closing list to inform them of their options and processes to make the best choice for their child's school.

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Q. How will my child get to the new school assignment if it is no longer in my neighborhood and walking distance?

A. The District will provide transportation to any children who meet the guidelines for transportation.

Distance Criteria

- Pupils in grades kindergarten through eight are eligible for free transportation if they live more than one and one-half (1.5) miles from school.
- Pupils in grades nine through twelve are eligible for free transportation if they live more than two (2) miles from school.
- Distances will be measured from the nearest point where a private way or private road connects the dwelling house of the pupil to the nearest point where a public road touches the school grounds.
- Students that fall within the distance guidelines qualify if 1) are in their feeder school 2) carry a magnet code 3) carry a code for homeless, medical, school choice, English as a second language or pupil service code (extenuating circumstances)

Q. What will happen to the Spanish Magnet Program that is currently in Pittsburgh Northview?

A. The Pittsburgh Northview Spanish program will be discontinued:

- Students currently enrolled in the Spanish magnet program will have the option to attend Pittsburgh Liberty or Phillips, as room allows. Please contact the Magnet Office at (412) 622-3991 to check on availability.
- A Summer Spanish immersion class will be added to the North Side Summer Dreamer's Site to support the readiness of any Northview grade 6-8 students who may choose to go to Pittsburgh Obama

Q. What will happen to the Magnet Program at Pittsburgh Perry?

A. Pittsburgh Perry will change from a full magnet program to a partial magnet program. Magnet students currently attending Perry will remain in the magnet program. District students, outside of the Northside feeder pattern, can continue to apply to enter Pittsburgh Perry through the magnet application process. All students enrolled in Pittsburgh Perry will be in the Traditional Academy Program. All students on the Northside who currently attend Oliver will be assigned to Pittsburgh Perry High School as their feeder school. Additional Perry Magnet Programs include Science and Math and the newly added JROTC Program (housed in the Oliver facility).

Q. What will happen to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs that are currently at Pittsburgh Oliver?

A. The CTE Programs will continue to be options for all students currently enrolled in these programs at Oliver. Some of the existing CTE programs will continue to be housed in the Oliver building and others will move to Pittsburgh Perry for the 2012-13 school year. Shuttle bus service will be provided to transport students to the programs from Pittsburgh Perry.

CTE Programs in the Oliver building for 2012-2013

- Cosmetology

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- Health Careers (new for 2012-2013, part of the original CTE plan)

CTE Programs moving to the Pittsburgh Perry for 2012-2013

- Culinary Arts
- Business, Finance and Technology (BFIT)

Q. What will happen to the JROTC Program that is currently in Oliver?

A. The JROTC Program will continue to be an option for all students currently enrolled in this program at Oliver and for other students who may choose to enroll at Pittsburgh Perry in the future. This program will continue to be housed in the Oliver building. Shuttle bus service will be provided to transport students to the program from Pittsburgh Perry.

Q. How will students from Pittsburgh Oliver be transported to Pittsburgh Perry from the Northside communities?

A. Students who meet the District guidelines for transportation will be transported by yellow bus from all parts of the Northside to Pittsburgh Perry. Students who continue or enroll in the Career and Technical Education programs or the JROTC programs located at the Oliver facility will be provided shuttle transportation from Pittsburgh Perry to the Oliver building.

Q. What will happen to the CTE Programs currently at Langley?

A. The CTE Programs currently at Langley will be relocated. The Machine Operations Program will move to Pittsburgh Brashear. The Health Careers Program will move into the Oliver building, which is per the original CTE Plan for 2012-2013.

Q. How will students get to Pittsburgh Brashear from the Langley neighborhood?

A. Students who meet the District's guidelines for transportation will be transported by yellow bus from the West End to Pittsburgh Brashear.

Q. What will become of the Teaching Academy currently located at Pittsburgh Langley?

A. The Teaching Academy at Pittsburgh Langley will move to Pittsburgh Brashear, one of the District's two Teaching Institutes sites.

Q. What will happen to the Early Head Start Program that is currently in the Oliver building?

A. The Early Head Start Program that is currently in the Oliver building will close. The students who are currently taking advantage of this program at Oliver will be supported and assisted in finding alternate child care.

Q. What will be the impact of the food service and meals that my child would receive in their new school assignment?

A. Any Changes to Food Service and Student Meals would be positive. Use of on-site prep kitchens at Pittsburgh Langley will provide more options for those students now attending:

- Pittsburgh Schaeffer,
- Pittsburgh Stevens.

Continued used of on-site prep kitchens at Pittsburgh Morrow PreK-8 (including Rooney building) will provide the same level/type of food service for students now attending:

- Pittsburgh Morrow PreK-8.

Q. How will the interscholastic athletic programs be impacted by school closings and reconfigurations?

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A. In the High Schools, students from Langley and Oliver will have the same or more opportunities to participate in interscholastic athletics at Brashear and Perry (this was a part of the Athletics Reform recommendations) In the Middle schools, students will have equal access and opportunity to participate in athletics. There may be some shift in the configurations of the leagues and potentially in practice and game playing sites.

Q. What impact will the school closings have on the teachers and staff?

A. The proposed school closings at the end of the 2011-2012 school year will have an impact on staffing and staff movement:

- We will work closely and collaboratively with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT) and other employee representatives, as we normally do, when we close schools.
- We will meet with affected staff regarding their rights and opportunities to apply for other positions

Q. How was the community given the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions on the proposed plan?

A. The District is committed to ensuring community involvement. All stakeholders were encouraged to participate in the difficult choices that the Board ultimately had to make in determining the most equitable and efficient way of using our financial, physical and human resources for the benefit of the entire District. There were several ways parents and the community members were encouraged to provide feedback.

- Attend regular monthly public hearings – September 19, October 24, November 21 in Conference Room A, Administration Building, Oakland;
- Provide input on solutions by completing a quick online form located on the City Schools Fiscal Challenges web page or via email at cityschoolsfinancialchallenges@pghboe.net.
- Comments were also encouraged to be submitted via fax to 412-622-3624; or by writing the Division of Communications, Pittsburgh Public Schools, 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.
- The Public could also contact the Parent Hotline at 412-622-7920 or at parenthotline@pghboe.net
- Attend one of three community forums hosted by Superintendent Linda Lane:
 - Tuesday, Sept 13 – Southwest (Greenway – conference center)
 - Thursday, Sept 15 – North (Pittsburgh King gymnasium)
 - Thursday, Sept 22 – East (Reizenstein cafetorium)

District Realignment: Strategy 2 - Feeder Patterns

Q. What is the goal of the feeder pattern realignment?

A. The goal of the feeder pattern alignment is twofold:

- To maintain school and class sizes that align to a Sustainable District
- To create a school system that is less confusing and easier for students and families to navigate

Q. How were feeder patterns reviewed?

A. Feeder patterns were reviewed using the following data:

- Total number of students in the feeder pattern
- Number of students in the feeder pattern who choose to attend:
 - The feeder pattern school

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- Another PPS school (magnet, transfer, open enrollment, school choice)
- A Charter school
- A private, independent or parochial school

Q. Were there other factors that were considered when looking at the feeder patterns?

A. We considered feeder pattern changes in three ways:

- Uninhabited spaces (i.e. parks) or spaces with no student population or impact (i.e. universities)
- Changes resulting directly from the proposed closing of the seven schools.
- Other feeder pattern adjustment recommendations based upon the following factors:
 - Student achievement in schools
 - School and classroom enrollment
 - Changes in Public Housing
 - Racial Diversity
 - Correcting past process limitations
 - Cleanup of existing anomalies and awkward boundaries
 - Neighborhood boundaries
 - Major street divides

Q. How can I learn what my child's new feeder pattern will be?

A. To ensure the District can provide the most accurate information, please contact the Parent Hotline at 412-622-7920. Please provide the Parent Hotline Customer Service Representative with your child's name, current address and current school. With this information, we will be able to provide you with your child's school assignment for 2012-13 within 48 to 72 hours.

District Realignment: Strategy 3- Educational Delivery Model

Q. What is the Educational Delivery Model?

A. One of the three strategies in the District's Realignment Plan is adjusting our Educational Delivery Model. This includes gaining efficiencies through course reductions, class size adjustments and staff reductions in a way that continues academic progress while addressing the District's fiscal challenges. The District is committed to providing every student rigorous academic classes, arts and music education, school library services, certified student services staff, and family and community engagement opportunities. The adjustments to the Educational Delivery Model will ensure that all students in these schools receive at least one day a week of Art, Music and Physical Education, in every grade K-8. Additionally to ensure equity across schools, all K-5, K-8 and 6-8 schools will have a librarian on site one full day a week.

Q. How is the new plan different from what the District's Educational Delivery Model is now?

A. Currently, not all students in the District's K-5, K-8 and 6-8 schools receive art and music weekly. Also, not all of the District's secondary schools (6-12 and high school) currently offer more than one world language, Advance Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes, and both music and art. In this plan, all secondary schools would have at least two world language offerings, advanced placement offerings, art and music. In addition, all students in every grade K-8 will receive at least one day a week of Art, Music and Physical Education and will have a librarian on site one full day a week. All secondary schools will be assigned one full time librarian.

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The District plan also sets standards for allocation of staff, discretionary dollars, and special programs to schools. Teacher positions for all necessary certifications (Core Content, Related Arts, and Special Education) will also be allocated to schools under the new plan.

Q. Would this plan result in teacher and staff reductions?

A. Salaries make up 80% of what we can control in terms of cost. This plan, if adopted will likely result in reductions for 398 full time employees in 2012.

Q. How would these changes affect class size?

A. The average class sizes in Pittsburgh are much lower than the national average because we have many under-enrolled classes. This is most pronounced at the high school level where there is ample opportunity to gain some efficiencies. We can anticipate class sizes to moderately increase, but our goal of delivering quality education to ALL students will not change. We are aiming to have the following average class sizes, all permissible within the Pittsburgh Federation of Teacher Collective Bargaining agreement (www.pft400.org/)

Grade	Current Avg.	Target Avg.
K-5	22	25
6-8	22	28
9-12	21	30

Q. Do you plan to continue the Empowering Effective Teachers (EET) work?

A. Absolutely. We believe that the EET work is critical for the continued academic achievement of our students. Ensuring we have effective teachers in the right places with the right supports is paramount to keeping students Promise-Ready and ensuring that we maintain our goal of 80% of students completing post-secondary or workforce certification.

Q. When would these proposed changes take effect?

A. Most of these changes would occur for the 2012-13 school year; although there would be immediate changes to discretionary spending at most schools effective immediately.

Q. Would there be changes to the Gifted and Talented Program?

A. The Center for Advanced Studies (CAS) provides classes that are rigorous and vital in preparing our most advanced students for college and post-secondary schooling. We are committed to maintaining the construct of the program. We are also committed to the implementing the expansion of the Talent Development Initiative during the next school year as scheduled which will provide academically talented students the opportunity to take CAS classes through an application process.