

# G-5: Administrative Procedures

## District Reconfigurations & Long-Term School Closures



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### REFERENCE

[Board Policy G-5: District Reconfigurations & Long-Term School Closures](#)

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### DEFINITIONS:

**Final Recommendation:** Adjustments to the configuration of district schools and/or long-term school closures that are being recommended to the board for adoption.

**Official Study List:** A list of schools that are being studied in a given year by the district. This list is culled from suggestions collected from patrons, employees, board members, and community sources throughout the year and approved by the board.

**Options Committee:** An ad hoc committee, convened by the superintendent, whose charge is to suggest viable options for the board and community to consider.

**Recommended Option(s):** Proposed options that have received preliminary approval from the board to move forward in the process, which requires the superintendent or superintendent's designee to give notice of the proposed options and receive community comment in accordance with state law.

**Viable Option(s):** The option(s) recommended to the board by the options committee, after receiving input from the local school community council.

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### PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

#### I. Procedures to be Followed During Each Year for Which an Official Boundary Study is Being Contemplated and/or Conducted

- A. Public input on school boundaries
  1. Concerns, suggestions, and questions may be raised by the public at any time during this process. See the steps below to determine to whom to direct such input, i.e., principal, school community council ("SCC"), and/or superintendent and/or the superintendent's designee (collectively "G-5 Administrator").
  2. Members of the public wishing to make a formal public comment to the board must sign up to speak during the public comment period of a scheduled board meeting. See, B-2: Administrative Procedures, School Board Meetings, Section II, Public Participation at Board Meetings.
- B. The official study list
  1. Prior to the end of February, the G-5 Administrator will gather information to present to the board regarding possible school boundary adjustments.
    - a. In presenting this information to the board, the G-5 Administrator will have considered:
      - i. School enrollment data, which may include, but is not limited to, declining or increasing enrollment data, future enrollment predictions, and the number of school choice applications.
      - ii. Facility capacity and design, which may include if applicable consideration of the physical condition of buildings, maintenance/repair needs, utility costs, school utilization (enrollment vs. school capacity), and location.
      - iii. School feeder patterns, which include studying the impacts on the network(s) rather than just a particular school site.
      - iv. Federal, state, or court mandates, which may dictate certain actions to be taken by the school board and provide a time frame for taking such action.
      - v. Demographics, which would include consideration of the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic status of the current school population. Consideration will be given as to whether an adjustment will increase, decrease, or maintain the demographic ratios at any affected school.
      - vi. Community input, which will include gathering, to the extent possible, stakeholder feedback from parents, students, teachers, staff, employee organizations, local business leaders, district partners, school community councils, parent/teacher/student organizations, and other community members.
      - vii. Student safety, including but not limited to the availability of safe walking/biking routes, crosswalks, pedestrian overpasses/underpasses, crossing guards, speed bumps, hawk lights, etc.

- viii. Transportation, which includes but is not limited to looking at the costs/savings related to transportation, and the capacity of the district to transport all affected students and arrive at school on time.
  - ix. Geographic features of the district, including consideration of whether there are any natural boundaries, or major thoroughfares which cannot be crossed safely by pedestrians, as well as consideration for contiguity of the school zone, and alignment of the feeder patterns.
  - x. Special programs, which may include, but are not limited to, consideration of the presence or absence of special education programs, English language learners, dual language immersion programs, and accelerated and gifted programs.
  - xi. Financial implications, which may include consideration of operational costs, staffing, utilities, freed-up subsidies, facility re-utilization, and central office reduction.
  - xii. Student educational opportunities and academic performance, which may include data related to student proficiency and student growth.
2. No later than the end of February, an official study list will be approved by the board containing the school boundaries to be studied.
  3. From March to May, assigned staff will meet with each principal and SCC chair that is directly affected by the official study list, to generate a core set of options to be considered by the options committee.
  4. From May to June, the options committee will study the viability of core options focusing on the "safe, reasonable, simple, and cost-effective" criteria in order to establish a list of viable options.
  5. Prior to presenting the list to the board in July, the options committee will report its recommendation of viable options to each affected principal and SCC chair for their comment.
- C. Establishing recommended option(s)
1. In July, information from the options committee and comment from each affected school is reported to the board.
  2. In August, the board must approve any recommended options for boundary changes for further study.
    - a. If the board approves recommended options for further study, the following actions must be taken:
      - i. at least 90 days before approving a school boundary change, the district will notify the following individuals that the board is considering a boundary change:
        - (a) parents of students enrolled in the schools directly affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
        - (b) parents of students enrolled in other schools within the district that may be affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
        - (c) Salt Lake City Council members; and
        - (d) Mayor of Salt Lake City.
      - ii. provide an opportunity for public comment on the proposed boundary change during at least two public board meetings; and
      - iii. hold a public hearing and provide public notice of the hearing in accordance with state law.
    - b. The notice of the public hearing shall indicate the school(s) which will be impacted by the proposed boundary change, and the date, time, and location of the public hearing.
      - i. At least 30 days before the public hearing, the district will provide notice of the public hearing to:
        - (a) parents of students enrolled in the schools directly affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
        - (b) parents of students enrolled in other schools within the district that may be affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
        - (c) Salt Lake City Council members; and
        - (d) Mayor of Salt Lake City.
      - ii. The notice listed immediately above in Section I.C.2.b.i., shall also be provided 10 days prior to the public hearing.
      - iii. The required notice must be:
        - (a) published:
          - (1) on the district's website;
          - (2) on the Utah Public Notice Website;
          - (3) at the district's community learning centers; and
          - (4) on the front entrances of any potentially affected schools.

- c. The board-recommended options may also be presented at information sessions scheduled throughout September and October.
  - i. The number and location of the information sessions will be determined by the board.
  - ii. Notice of any open information sessions will be provided to parents of students enrolled in the schools affected by the proposed boundary changes.
- D. Adopting boundary changes
  - 1. In November:
    - a. one of the required public comment opportunities will be placed on a board agenda, and the G-5 Administrator will provide feedback from any information sessions for the board's consideration.
    - b. the second required public comment opportunity will be placed on a board agenda, and the recommended options for boundary changes will be placed as a discussion item on the board agenda.
  - 2. In December, the required public hearing will be held as part of the board's agenda, and the recommended options for boundary changes will be placed as a discussion item on the board agenda.
  - 3. If after discussing the recommended options the board determines to take action on a proposed boundary change, the final recommended options for boundary changes will be placed on the action agenda for the next public board meeting.
  - 4. Except in emergency situations, the following school year is the earliest any approved boundary change will take effect.

## II. Procedures to be Followed During Each Year for Which an Official Long-Term School Closure Study is being Conducted

- A. The same process outlined in Section I shall be followed whenever a long-term school closure is being considered.
- B. In addition to the factors outlined in Section I.B.1., if a long-term school closure is being contemplated, the G-5 Administrator will also consider:
  - 1. Community and neighborhood identity, recognizing that having a neighborhood school can be an integral part of a neighborhood's identity and improve a family's sense of community. Consideration will be given to the availability of nearby schools to the ones being considered for closure, as having a nearby school can lessen the impact of displacement and increase the connection to a new school.
  - 2. Special program facilities, for example, special programs, such as providing services for special education students, may require special facilities. Consideration will be given regarding the extent to which a large capital investment has been made in creating such special facilities and the costs associated with rebuilding those facilities elsewhere.
  - 3. Environmental factors, for example, a school's surroundings may have changed since it was first opened. Zoning may have been relaxed to allow more businesses with increased traffic, or there might be new environmental hazards that now compromise the safety of the students at a school.
  - 4. School designations, including whether the school has been identified for "comprehensive support and improvement," "targeted support and improvement," or "turnaround."
- C. Because a long-term school closure will necessitate boundary adjustments, if a long-term school closure is being contemplated, one comprehensive process will be run to address the school closure and boundary adjustment proposals. The process will follow the timelines and procedures outlined in Section I.

## III. Timelines to be Followed in Special Circumstances

- A. In certain circumstances, including but not limited to when school buildings have been made unsafe or unsanitary due to a natural or man-made disaster, the board may vote to utilize an abbreviated process in order to change school boundaries or close a school.
  - 1. In the event that a shortened process is necessary, the minimum requirements provided for in state law will be followed.
    - a. The shortened process will include the 120-day notification process, the opportunity for public comment at two board meetings, and public hearing requirements.
- B. If circumstances require the extension of any timeframe listed in these administrative procedures, the G-5 Administrator will notify the board that a particular deadline has been extended due to extenuating circumstances.
- C. If the district determines that one of its virtual schools is no longer viable and contemplates its closure because no boundary changes are necessary, the following shortened closure process will be used:
  - 1. By April 15<sup>th</sup> of a given school year in which closure is contemplated for the upcoming school year:
    - a. the district will notify parents of enrolled students that the board is considering closing the virtual school.
      - i. Such notification will be made using email or the parent's preferred method of communication.

- b. The district will notify Salt Lake City Council members and the Mayor of Salt Lake City of the proposed closure.
2. The board will provide an opportunity for public comment on the proposed virtual school closure during at least two public board meetings; and
3. The board will hold a public hearing on the proposed closure and provide public notice of the hearing in accordance with state law.

#### **IV. Decisions Related to District Facilities no Longer in Use as School Buildings**

For any unused school building, the following procedures will be followed to determine its future use. Potential options for an unused school property include: using the site to address a different district need, declaring the site "surplus property" and thus available for sale, or repurposing the site to benefit the district and community while still retaining ownership of the site.

##### **A. Immediate District Need**

1. Once a decision has been made to permanently close a school building, the district will determine if there is an immediate district need for the building.
  - a. An immediate district need means the district has a foreseeable need for new or additional space to meet the needs of district students, including for operating a district or school program or a special school, or to address a district operational space need.
    - i. In an open public board meeting, the superintendent will recommend to the board that a building be used to address an identified district need.
    - ii. During a subsequent public meeting, the board will provide time for public comment on both the identified district need and the site chosen to address that need.
    - iii. After receiving public feedback, the board will place the recommendation on an upcoming board agenda for a vote by the board.

##### **B. Determining Site Eligibility for Repurposing or Surplus**

1. If the district determines it has no immediate district need for the building, the district will conduct a feasibility study to understand the best uses for each site. The study can include:
  - a. A real estate analysis ("REA"). A REA will assess the current conditions of each site, such as assessing the existing condition of buildings and development allowed under zoning and other regulations. This phase could include an assessment of the development potential of each site, should its zoning be adjusted. A real estate market analysis can inform land uses that are in demand near each site, such as housing, retail, and small scale or creative office. Based on the development that is legally allowed, physically possible, and market feasible, a baseline land value will be identified; and
  - b. A financial and economic analysis ("FEA"). Using the baseline development assumptions identified during the REA, the FEA will define a creative and organized land use plan for each school site that meets the district's goals, is market feasible and ready for implementation. This phase of the project will refine potential commercial and community-focused uses of the sites and consider their impacts on the surrounding community, with a goal of adding value for both the neighborhood and district. A detailed financial analysis and risk assessment for each proposed land use plan will validate that the plans are financially feasible.
2. When the feasibility study is complete, the district will present to the board the recommendation for each site to either repurpose the site or declare it surplus property.

##### **C. Surplus Property**

1. If the feasibility study suggests that it is in the best interest of the district to sell the property, the superintendent or designee will recommend to the board that the property be declared "surplus" in accordance with Utah Code §53G-4-901.
2. If the board declares a site to be surplus property, the district will give written notice to the appropriate eligible governmental entities that the property is available for purchase.
  - a. The notice shall comply with the requirements outlined in Utah Code §53G-4-902.
3. If the eligible governmental entities forfeit their right to purchase the surplus property, the board is no longer obligated to sell the surplus property to an eligible entity.
4. Any sale of surplus property to an eligible entity must comply with state law and only be used for one of the statutorily identified purposes.
5. If the board sells surplus property to an eligible entity, the sale proceeds may only be used for bond debt reduction or school district capital facilities.

6. School sites or buildings may only be conveyed or sold by a board resolution affirmed by at least two-thirds of the school board members.

D. Site Repurposing

1. A recommendation to repurpose the site will feature a land use plan for each site that is founded on the facility, regulatory, market, community need, financial, and risk assessments conducted. The land use plans are intended to ensure that each repurposed site continues to serve as a community asset while offering value and enabling the district to advance its academic, staff recruitment, and other objectives.
  - a. As the district identifies a development recommendation for each site, the district will offer informal community feedback opportunities, which may include hosting community meetings and smaller focus groups to hear from community members and stakeholders.
2. If the board supports the development recommendation, during at least one subsequent public meeting, the board will provide time for public comment on the development recommendation.
  - a. The district will use a variety of communication methods to ensure that the public is aware of the development recommendation and upcoming opportunity for public comment during a board meeting. The district will also provide frequent updates, details and timelines on a district's Site Repurposing webpage.
3. If the board determines to move forward with the development recommendation, the district will follow the correct procurement process ("PP") to receive proposal submissions for each site that align with the development recommendation.
  - a. The PP will outline the district's concept for the property and the criteria, including benefits to the community, that must be met by any proposals.
  - b. The PP serves as an invitation to potential partners to submit proposals on how they would like to fulfill the request outlined in the PP.
  - c. A review committee, comprised in accordance with state law, will evaluate all submissions based on how well they meet the criteria and priorities outlined in the PP.
  - d. Based on the outcome of the PP, the superintendent or designee will make a final recommendation to the board on which submission should be awarded a contract to repurpose a site.
    - i. All decisions related to repurposing a site, including options for long-term lease or partnership will be voted on by the board in an open and public meeting.

E. Timeline

The determination on whether to sell or repurpose a site may be a multi-year process; the district will provide frequent updates of where it is in the process for each site and projected timelines on a district Site Repurposing webpage.

F. Upkeep of Properties

Closed school properties will be maintained throughout the year (including building and grounds maintenance). Buildings will be regularly monitored by district personnel and local law enforcement.