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For Immediate Release

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Pittsburgh Public Schools Unveils Comprehensive Feasibility Report for District Transformation

Pittsburgh, PA – February 25, 2025 – This evening, Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) Superintendent Dr. Wayne N. Walters and District leadership presented a comprehensive feasibility report outlining a transformative vision for the future of PPS. Developed at the Board’s request in response to recommendations from Education Resource Strategies (ERS) last October, the report proposes a strategic restructuring plan to optimize school configurations, improve resource allocation, and enhance educational opportunities for all students.

Superintendent Walters emphasized the District’s commitment to “transforming the landscape of education” across PPS. “Tonight’s report is not merely an evaluation of physical spaces or enrollment numbers,” he stated. “It is a call to reimagine our educational practices to ensure that every student, regardless of background or neighborhood, benefits from expanded opportunities and experiences.”

The Feasibility Report was developed following an extensive, data-driven analysis of key challenges, including declining enrollment, aging facilities, and underutilized spaces. It highlights the importance of restructuring the District’s school system, as outlined in the Draft Facilities Utilization Plan presented last April, to create a clear and scalable pathway for student success—establishing K-5 foundational elementary schools, developmentally supportive 6-8 middle schools, and traditional 9-12 high schools.

Key Findings and Strategic Recommendations

The evening’s presentation reviewed the feasibility of ERS’s recommendations and provided the Leadership Team’s position on each recommendation, emphasizing **Support**, **Partial Support** or **Do Not Support**.

Restructuring School Configurations

The Leadership Team supports transitioning six K-8 schools (Brookline, Greenfield, Langley, Mifflin, Morrow, and Sunnyside) to K-5 models, converting three PreK-8 schools (Arlington, Carmalt, and Colfax) into dedicated 6-8 middle schools, and shifting three 6-12 schools (Westinghouse, Obama, and SciTech) to 9-12 high schools. These changes will enhance building utilization, standardize academic pathways, and improve student programming.



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Expansion of Obama 6-8 IB Program at Arsenal 6-8

The team further supports expanding the Obama International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program at Arsenal 6-8. While underutilization remains an issue, additional space can be used for tutoring, mental health services, after-school programs, and community partnerships. The team will work closely with the legal department to assess the best approach to ensure program continuity.

Transition of PreK-5 Magnets to Neighborhood Schools

The report recommends transitioning Allegheny PreK-5, Dilworth PreK-5, and Liberty PreK-5 from full magnet programs to neighborhood schools to strengthen local school models while aligning with community feedback.

Full Magnet Schools

- **CAPA:** The District recommends maintaining CAPA at its current downtown location due to significant facility investments. However, further exploration is needed to assess the feasibility of operating CAPA as two separate schools within the same facility while preserving program continuity. Additionally, magnet enrollment procedures will be reviewed to ensure equitable access, particularly for middle school students.
- **Montessori:** The report supports maintaining Montessori PreK-5 as a full magnet program and relocating it from the Friendship facility to Linden due to the \$20 million in renovations needed at Friendship. The move will support the Montessori model's unique instructional approach, which includes multi-age classrooms, self-directed learning, and Montessori-certified educators.

Special Schools and Center Programs

The report evaluates proposed changes to special education schools, online learning, and center programs:

- **Conroy and Online Academy:** The team supports relocating both programs.
- **Student Achievement Center:** Leadership does not support relocation, as services can be effectively delivered in students' feeder schools.
- **Gifted Center:** Leadership does support transitioning Gifted Center services to students' home schools, as 66% of gifted students are concentrated in just five schools.
- **Oliver Citywide Academy:** ERS provided no recommendations, so future programming and satellite locations remain under District review.

Opening of Three New Schools

The Leadership Team supports the creation of three new schools:

- A new neighborhood middle school STEM pathway at the Manchester facility for North Side families.



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- A new SciTech middle school at the Milliones facility, pending legal review to ensure program continuity.
- A new PreK-5 school at the Northview facility, with partial support due to cost concerns related to new construction. Alternative facility options will be explored.

Closure of 14 Schools and 10 Facilities

Due to declining enrollment, underutilization, and aging infrastructure, the report recommends closing 14 schools:

- Allegheny 6-8, Arsenal PreK-5, Fulton PreK-5, King PreK-8, Linden PreK-5, Manchester PreK-8, Miller PreK-5, Milliones 6-12, Schiller 6-8, Spring Hill K-5, Woolslair PreK-5, Roosevelt K-5, South Brook 6-8, and South Hills 6-8.

Additionally, the closure of **10 facilities** is recommended, making them available for alternative purposes:

- Baxter (Student Achievement Center), Conroy, Friendship (Montessori), Fulton, King, McKelvy (Miller), Morrow (Primary), Schiller, Spring Hill, and Woolslair.

Some facilities, such as South Brook, South Hills, and Roosevelt, may be repurposed for other District programs, while others, such as Fulton and King, face significant challenges making closure the most viable option.

Next Steps and Community Involvement

The feasibility report sets the stage for a structured decision-making process:

- **Board Action:** The Board of School Directors will be asked to vote to initiate a state-required public commentary period and schedule a mandatory public hearing on proposed building closures.
- **Public Engagement:** Community members will have the opportunity to provide feedback during the public commentary period, ensuring final decisions reflect stakeholder needs.
- **Phased Implementation:** Pending Board approval, changes will be implemented in phases to minimize disruption and allow for detailed planning.

“As we move forward, our focus remains on thoughtful execution, transparent engagement, and a steadfast commitment to our students’ success,” Superintendent Walters emphasized. “The decisions made in the coming months will shape the future of Pittsburgh Public Schools, making us stronger and more equitable as a community.”

To view the full report and tonight’s presentation, visit www.pghschools.org/facilitiesuplan

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