

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMO #115  
Jamestown School District #1  
2024/2025 School Year  
March 3, 2025

RE: Recommendation of Facilities Committee on Elementary Boundary Option

FROM: Superintendent Robert Lech

BOARD FOCUS: Action

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The purpose of Board Memo #115 is to highlight the discussions, recommendations and rationale from the Facilities Committee meeting on Monday, February 24 as it relates to the boundary options provided by RSP & Associates in the [Enrollment and Boundary Analysis Report](#).

#### Overview

The boundary analysis considers potential changes in the short-term and over a longer time horizon. Options 1a and 1b consider the immediate changes resulting from the retirement of Washington Elementary and reduction from 8 Kindergarten through Grade 5 sections to 7. Options 2a and 2b consider future boundaries if the district pursues and is successful with a referendum. Option 2a represents boundaries if a new 2-section elementary school is built on the current Washington campus and 2b represents if a new 3-section elementary school is built on the Washington campus.

The Facilities Committee's focus is on a recommendation only between Options 1a and 1b as future decisions by the board and community will be required for Options 2a and 2b. These currently exist as planning options.

#### Overview and Benefit of Option 1a

Option 1a represents the boundary change with the most limited initial impact for families, but holds the potential for greater impact if Options 2a or 2b are adopted. All four elementary buildings would be between 75%-90% utilization.

The Lincoln boundary expands to the west into the current Washington boundary, Louis L'Amour expands to the north into the current Lincoln boundary south of the railroad, and Roosevelt Elementary expands to the west into the Lincoln boundary south of the railroad to the James River. In Option 1a, 151 (Current K-4) are impacted by movements if the boundary study is enacted by residence for all K-4 students.

The primary benefit identified by the Facilities Committee is that the short-term impact is smaller than Option 1b.

#### Overview and Benefits of Option 1b

Option 1b represents the boundary change with a slightly higher initial impact for families, but would be a smoother and less impactful impact if Options 2a or 2b are adopted. Better balance

in operations are also much more likely if adopting Option 1b. Similarly to Option 1a, all four elementary buildings would be between 75%-90% utilization.

Similarly to Option 1a, the Lincoln boundary expands to the west into the current Washington boundary, Louis L'Amour expands to the north into the current Lincoln boundary south of the railroad, and Roosevelt Elementary expands to the west into the Lincoln boundary south of the railroad to the James River. The difference in Option 1b is that Lincoln and Gussner boundaries are adjusted to match Options 2a/2 around the University of Jamestown and the northwest corner of the current Lincoln boundary. In Option 1b, 223 (Current K-4) are impacted by movements if the boundary study is enacted by residence for all K-4 students.

The primary benefits identified by the Facilities Committee include: 1) While more impact is created in the short term than Option 1a, fewer would be impacted if either 2a or 2b are enacted, 2) poverty factors (i.e. Free and Reduced %) are much more equalized with projections between 39% - 49% as compared to 26% - 52%.

As outlined below, resource allocation and program implementation are key areas for consideration for Option 1b.

**Resource Allocation:** The balance of at-risk factors, such as poverty, operationally results in more consistent and direct balancing of funding and resource allocation. This provides a more consistent approach to staffing, curricular and intervention resources, and opportunities for all students. This includes an improved ability through consistent Title I programming at all elementary buildings. It is important to recognize that grant funding, specifically the after school program, requires a minimum free and reduced percentage. The shifts in 1b would make it feasible that all elementary buildings would be Title I eligible, meaning that after school programming, and potentially other poverty-based programming, would be equitably available in all four remaining elementary schools.

**Enhanced Academic Achievement:** Research supports that a diverse economic demographic has a demonstrable increase effect on student achievement through improved teacher and student efficacy.

**Improved Teacher Quality and Support:** Schools with balanced demographic often see improved retention, which provides a more structured, consistent, and effective learning environment.

Lastly, while 1a would create greater short-term comfort, it would not position the district well for long-term needs. It does not align as well with facility needs, doesn't improve demographic distribution and equity in access to importance programming like the after school program.

#### Facilities Committee Considerations to Smooth Transition

To address the transition to new boundaries and concerns over impacts to current families, the district administration discussed some key concepts that could smooth the process and limit the impact on families. This includes the following:

- 1) Beginning with the Kindergarten class of 2025/2026 SY, eliminate general waivers but leave existing K-4 waivers in place.
  - a. Rationale/Impact: If waivers for 2025/2026 SY Grade 1 – Grade 4 students are honored, the impact on these families will lessen significantly. The listed impacts of 151 (Option 1a) and 223 (Option 1b) assume all students are placed based on residential boundaries. If waivers are honored, the impact diminishes significantly.
    - i. It is important to note that the current K-4 enrollment at Washington Elementary (68) is included in the student movement numbers in both Option 1a and Option 1b.
  - b. Rationale/Impact: It is important to note that legacy waivers for incoming Kindergarten students beginning in the 2025/2026 SY would have the option to either move all children to the boundary school or split students within the family based on waivers (current Grade 1—Grade 4) and boundary-assigned schools (students registered for/after 2025/2026 SY).
- 2) Establish conditional waivers only when class enrollment reaches 22 for K-2 and 24 for Grades 3-5.
  - a. Rationale/Impact: If existing waivers are going to be honored for 2025/2026 SY Grade 1-Grade 4 students, a mechanism needs to exist to ensure class sizes do not get above reasonable levels.
- 3) Beginning with the Kindergarten class of 2025/2026 SY, eliminate rural areas from elementary boundaries and place rural students based on location, travel, and balance class sizes.
  - a. Rationale/Impact: Currently, all rural areas have established boundaries for elementary school placement while open-enrolled students are administratively placed. If rural students who register for 2025/2026 SY and beyond, are placed, this will allow central office to be more flexible with registration and better balance class sizes and building needs.

### Recommendation

The Facilities Committee reviewed Options 1a and 1b, their impact to families in both the short-term and long-term. This committee highlighted the importance and long-term operational value of equitable resource allocation, enhance operational efficiencies, demographic balance and long-term preparedness. The committee also believes that other considerations could be enacted to smooth the transition. As such, the Facility Committee will advance Option 1b as the recommendation for board approval.

### Recommended Action:

Based on the Facilities Committee Recommendation, Approval of Boundary Option 1b