

EVERY STUDENT FUTURE READY

**WPS FY25 Budget Update
Phase 2 - School Closing Recommendation
Board of Education ~ February 12, 2024**

DISTRICT SNAPSHOT

- 47,174 students (official headcount)
- Largest district in Kansas
- 3rd largest employer in southcentral Kansas
- Richly diverse:
 - 97 countries of birth
- 95 total buildings
 - 54 Elementary
 - 15 Middle
 - 3 K-8
 - 9 High
 - 9 Special
 - 5 Support
- Average age of building: 60+ years



POINTS OF PRIDE

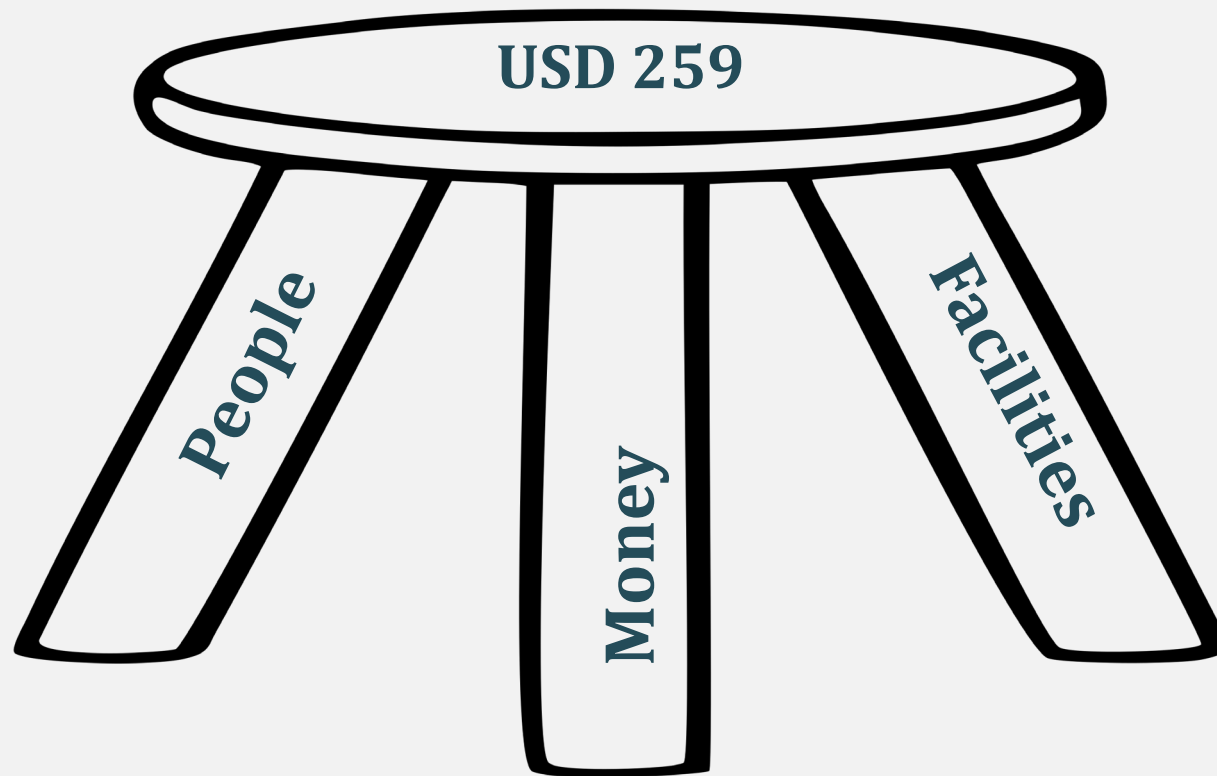


We are a WPSproud family. A family by choice and often a family by blood.



- 30,000+ students are involved in WPS music programs
- 5,200 students in athletic programs
- 2,000 in JROTC programs
- Growing eSports opportunities
- 865 students enrolled in college courses
- WPS graduates received more than \$55.6 million in scholarship offers in 2023
- Choices and opportunities for families:
 - Magnet schools
 - IB and Early College Academy
 - Future Ready Centers
 - CTE programs
- AND MORE!!!

CRITICAL RESOURCES

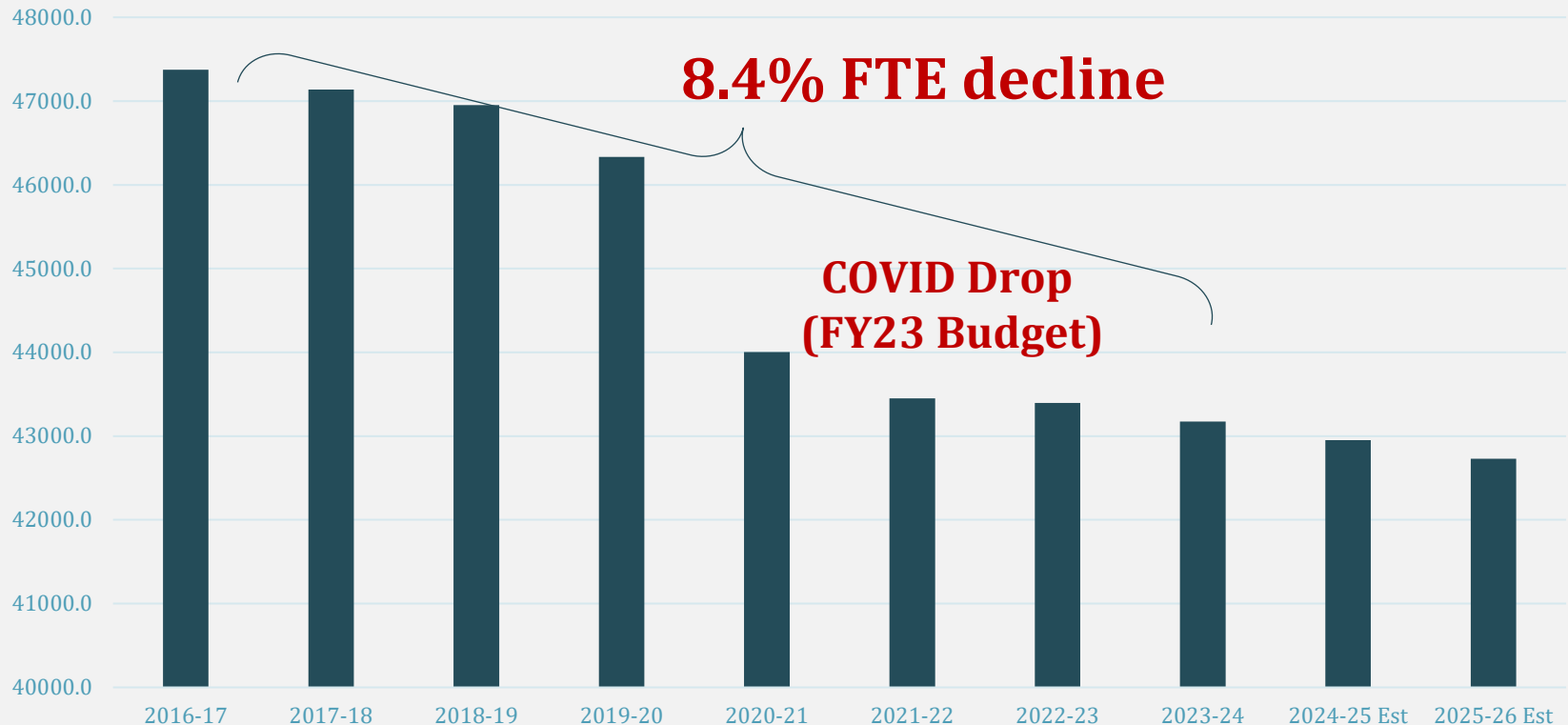


ENROLLMENT DECLINE

Impacting District Revenues

FTE Enrollment History: 2016-2023

Estimates 2024-26



STAFFING CHALLENGES

- 270+ individual position vacancies
- 51 positions on hold
- 400 teaching positions normally turnover at the end of each at the end of each school year
- 191 subs are filling vacancies – had those subs been available to cover absences, fill rate on 1/19/24 would have been 89%



Weekly Absence/Vacancy Chart

Date	# Absences/Vacancies	# Need Fulfillment	# Fulfilled	Fill Rate
01/19/2024	850	<u>703</u>	<u>457</u>	65%

FACILITY CHALLENGES

- Capacity for 63,000 students
- Underutilizing square footage, especially in elementary/middle
- Scope of physical age, system replacement needs of buildings
- Unable to keep up with system replacement, major repair needs



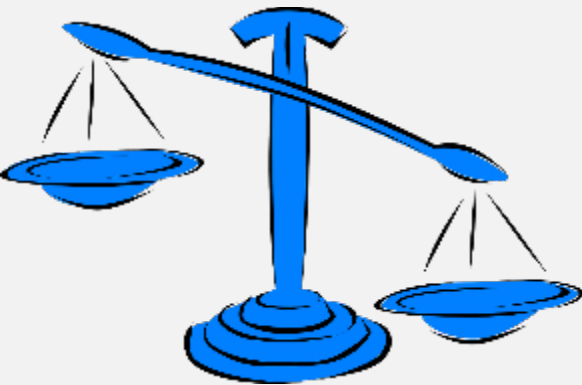
Spreading resources too thin

Losing impact

Unable to innovate

Can't staff buildings

\$20 million of
ESSER used to
balance the
budget



BIG ONE-TIME MONEY ENDING

- BOE-approved raises in 2022-23 (2,600 student reduction)
- Support positions added (paras, counselors, security, social workers, other supports, etc.) to deal with student behavior and academic deficits – we've not yet fully recovered.

\$20 million
of ESSER
used for
staff
support



THE BUDGET SHORTFALL



\$42,000,000 *for 2024-25*

MISINFORMATION

1. The District has never had 63,000 students.

Yes, it has. In 1971, the district headcount was 63,811.

2. The District must have misused funds.

No. Choices were made.

- Use federal pandemic relief funds rather than make significant cuts
- Didn't close schools when 2600 students didn't return

3. The District hasn't taken care of its buildings.

Patently false

- All school districts struggle with deferred
- Age of buildings, number of buildings, inflation, and expenditures moved into Cap Outlay in 2014-15 have added to the challenge

MISINFORMATION

4. The District has plenty of money.

- Some cash will be used
- Use of any one-time funding solution only works for a year
- NOT ALLOWED to use restricted funds for non-restricted purposes

5. Why is this happening so fast?

- \$42 million budget deficit is driving the timeline
- A balanced budget is required by state law
- BOE has received regular updates on deferred maintenance and Capital Outlay since 2018
- BOE has received regular updates on use of pandemic relief funds and staffing challenges since 2021

LOOKED TO FEEDBACK FIRST



- Multiple ESSER Surveys
- Safe and Civil Schools Surveys
- Employee Engagement Surveys
- Superintendent Search input opportunities
- Strategic Plan input opportunities
- Facilities Planning Survey
- Employee Budget Listening Circles

FEEDBACK DRIVES PRIORITIES

- Keep **mental health/child study team supports**
- Maintain a level of additional **para support**
- Maintain jobs/reasonable class sizes & caseloads
- Protect **wages**
- Classroom vacancies filled with **certified teachers**
- Student and family **engagement**



BUDGET CHANGES

Phase 1 – Administrative Reductions



5% minimum cut to non-school program budgets



Recapture/ eliminate non-school positions through attrition (9 to date – more to come)



Reassign 12 ESSER supported non-school positions to other budgeted positions



ESSER-supported initiatives (non-FTE) will end or absorbed into existing program budgets

BUDGET CHANGES

Phase 1 – School Reductions

- Cut fully-ESSER funded vacancies
- Analyze and implement Para FTE for changes as attrition occurs
- AVID changes
- Reassign any remaining non-Child Study Team and non-Behavior ESSER positions to other budgeted positions
- Pause Administrative Intern Program in FY25

AFTER PHASE 1 REDUCTIONS



\$42.0 MILLION
- 9.0 MILLION
\$33.0 MILLION

SUGGESTED PHASE 2 - MINIMUM OF \$16 MILLION

BUILDING CLOSURES

Pros

- Reduces deferred maintenance
- People can be moved to vacancies
- Focuses resources for remaining buildings
- Efficiency
- Prioritizes people – per feedback

Cons

- Impact on students, parents and staff at closed buildings
- Quick implementation
- Timing - no master plan yet
- Targeted boundary changes

OR

STAFF CUTS (EQUIVALENT OF 230 TEACHERS)

Pros

- Defers closing buildings

Cons

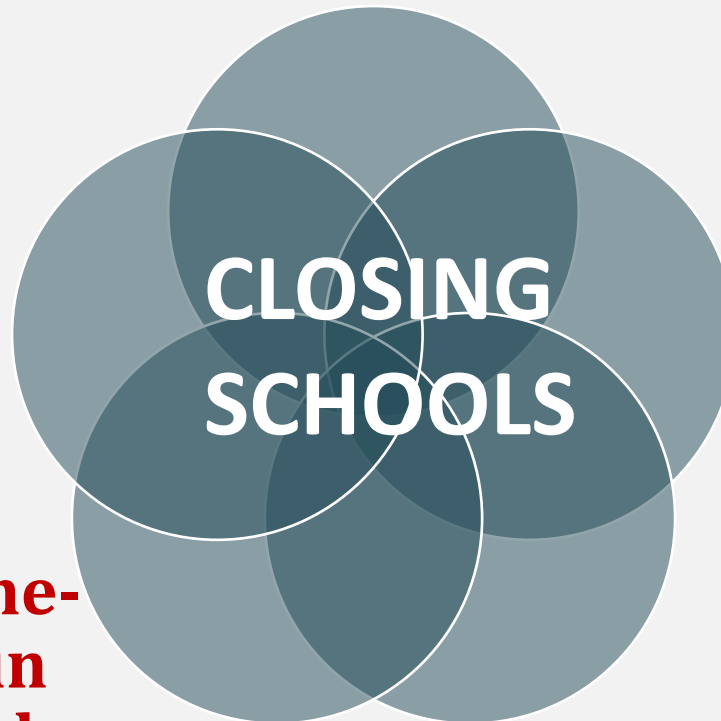
- Look at feedback – people are critical!
- Worsens staffing challenges
- Impacts every building/every student/every department - some more than others

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL PHASE 2 SOLUTION

Enrollment loss

**Under-
utilization of
buildings**

**Staffing
challenges**



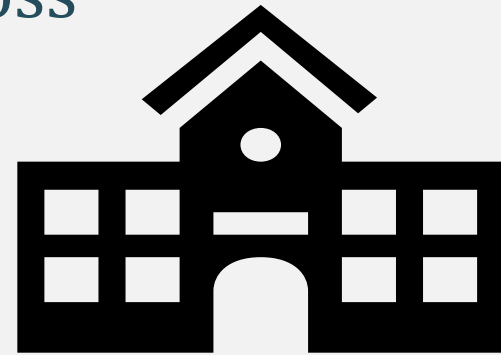
**\$40 million one-
time money in
positions and
overall budget**

**\$1.2 billion
deferred
maintenance**

WHY RECOMMEND CLOSING SCHOOLS?

IT SOLVES IMMEDIATE NEEDS

- Fill vacancies
- Prioritize people needs
- Start reducing the repairs/maint. backlog
- Focus resources in fewer buildings (not spreading so thin)
- Reduce expenditures to balance the budget
- Better utilizes remaining buildings
- Right sizes for some enrollment loss



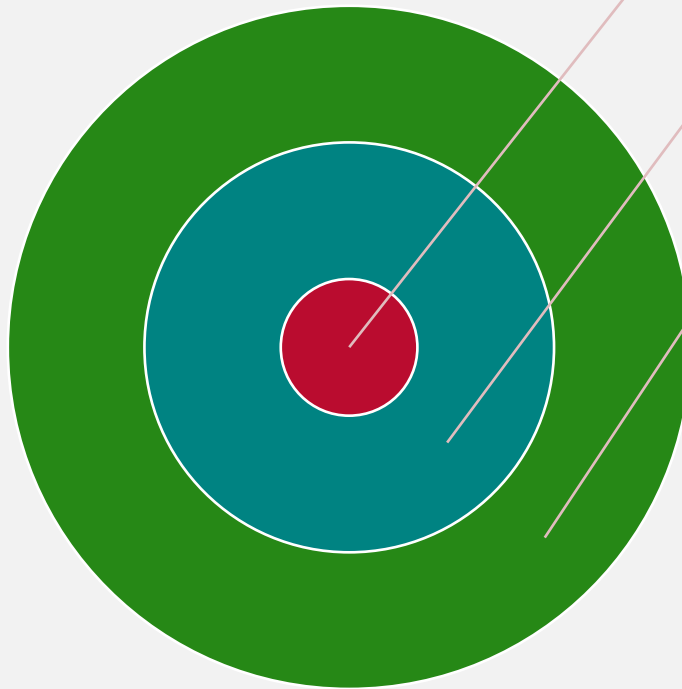
WORK ALIGNS, BUT THIS IS NOT LONG-TERM FACILITIES PLANNING

Long-Term Planning

- Envisions what district facilities could/should be
- Engages stakeholders fully in various ways
- Right-sizes for long-term facility and financial health based on enrollment forecasts
- Responds to community needs, changing demographics
- Develops a financial plan to meet long-term facility needs

FRAMEWORK for PHASE 2 - Closing Schools Recommendation

Consider each school's data
in context

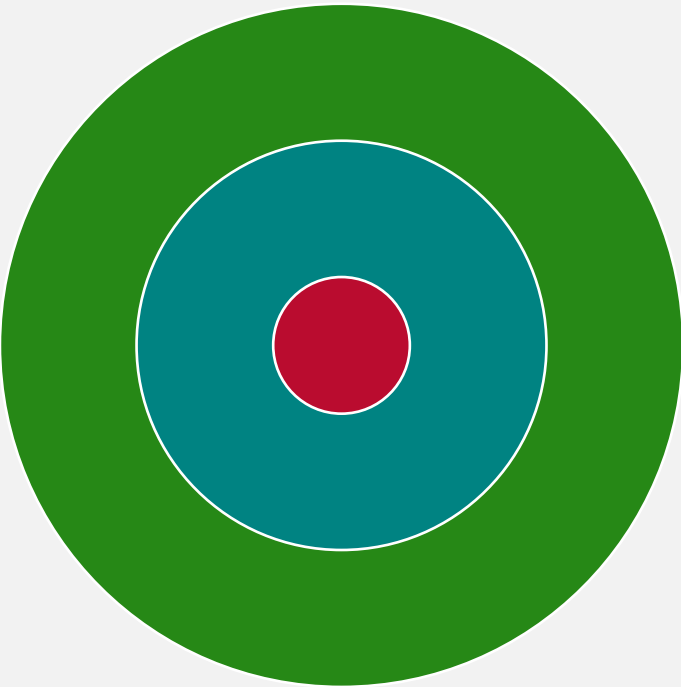


**Individual school
conditions & utilization**

**Surrounding area school
conditions & utilization (HS
network)**

**Districtwide school
conditions & utilization**

Guidance for PHASE 2 - Closing Schools Recommendation



1. No layoffs from closing schools
2. Fill vacancies
3. Choices that are least disruptive to the system (minimize boundary and feeder changes)
4. Move students where there is capacity nearby without adding significant numbers of new staff
5. Savings goal of \$16 million

ITEMS LEFT FOR LONG-TERM FACILITIES PLANNING

NOT IN PHASE 2 – Closing Schools Recommendation

1. Any disposition of vacated buildings
2. Any district-wide boundary/feeder pattern changes
3. Any facility improvement plans for schools

BUILDINGS NOT REVIEWED FOR PHASE 2

- No High Schools – too big/many disruptions
- No Special Schools – students are placed/too many facility modifications would be needed
- No K-8s – newer buildings; higher utilization as a group
- No Admin Centers – costs to adapt receiving buildings; no significant personnel savings/can be made anytime

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE FACTS

Elementary

- 24 of 54 sites under 350
 - 12 are under 300
 - 6 under 300 are less than 60% utilized
- 14 of 54 sites over .7 FCI

Middle

- 11 of 15 sites under 650
 - 8 sites under 575
 - Only 1 exceeds 80% utilization (average 62%)
- 7 of 15 sites over .7 FCI

MIDDLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

Hard data

- $FCI \geq .50$
- $\geq 50\%$ of classrooms below 700 square feet
- <600 students
- Magnet options where similar magnet theme schools have capacity

In addition

- Proximity to, capacity of nearby schools
- Receiving schools able to welcome students without major staff investment
- Minimize impact on system (boundaries)

PHASE 2

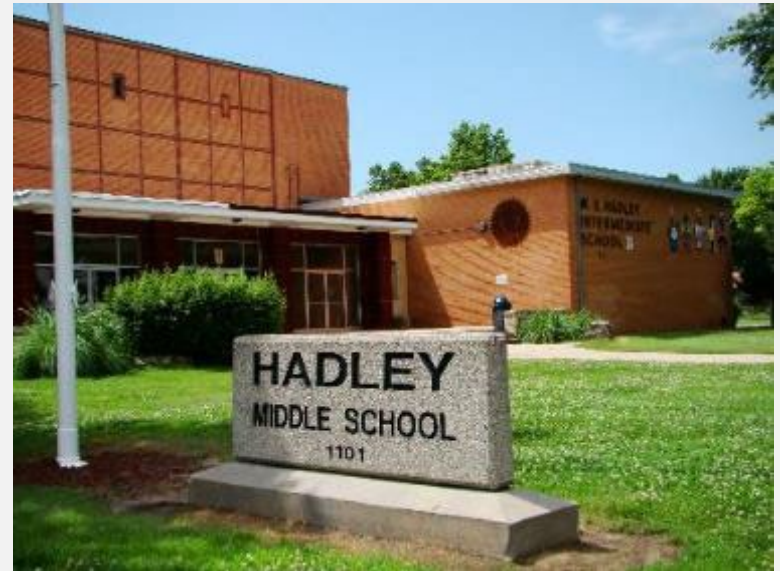
MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPOSAL

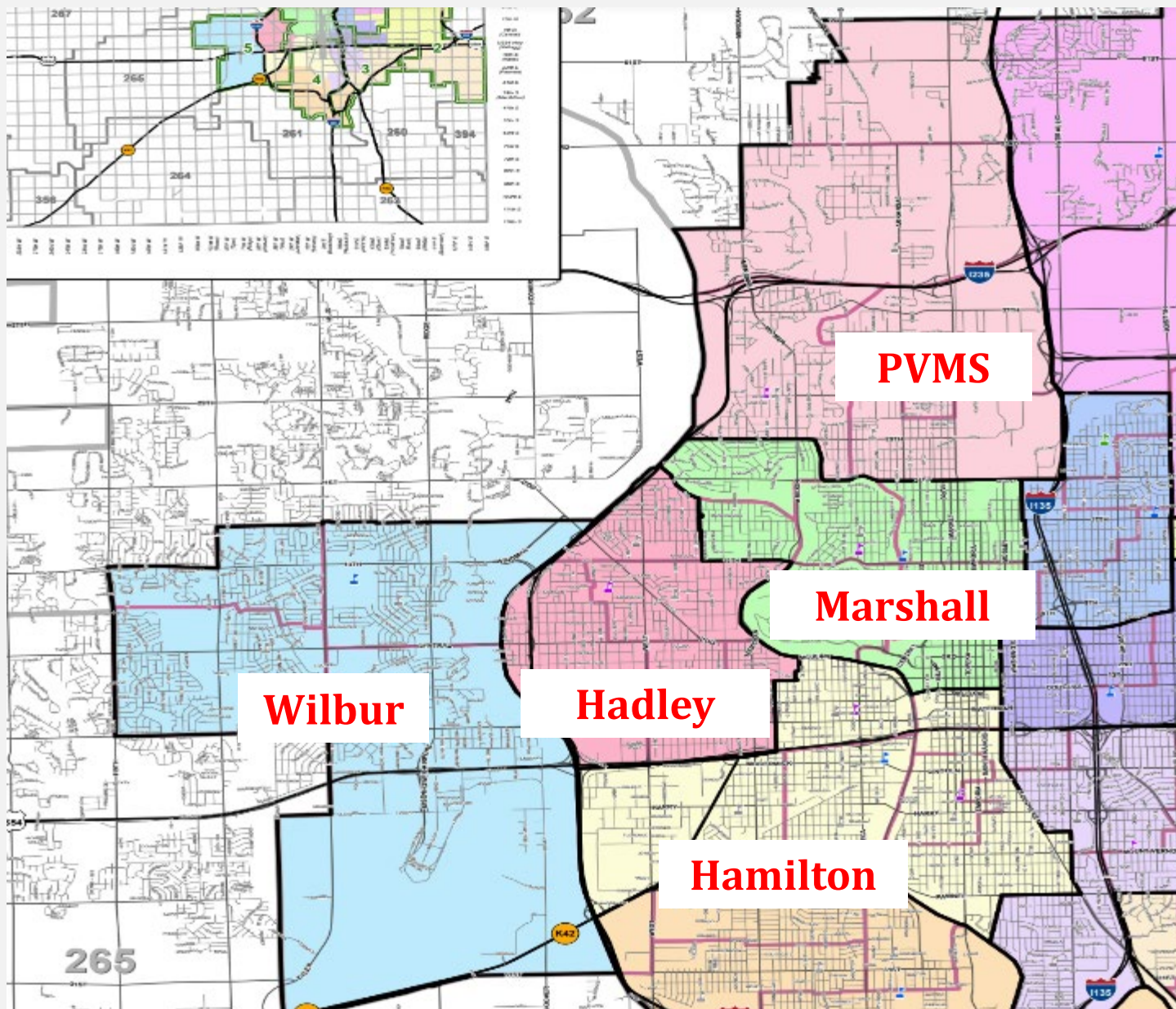
Close:

- Hadley Middle School
- Jardine STEM and Career Explorations Academy
Magnet Middle School

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPOSAL: HADLEY

- .62 FCI
- 51% utilization
- 57% of classrooms under 700 sq ft.
- 19 vacancies
- Enrollment dropped 18.6% in 4 years
- <500 students impacted
- Welcoming schools:
Hamilton, Marshall, PV Middle and Wilbur

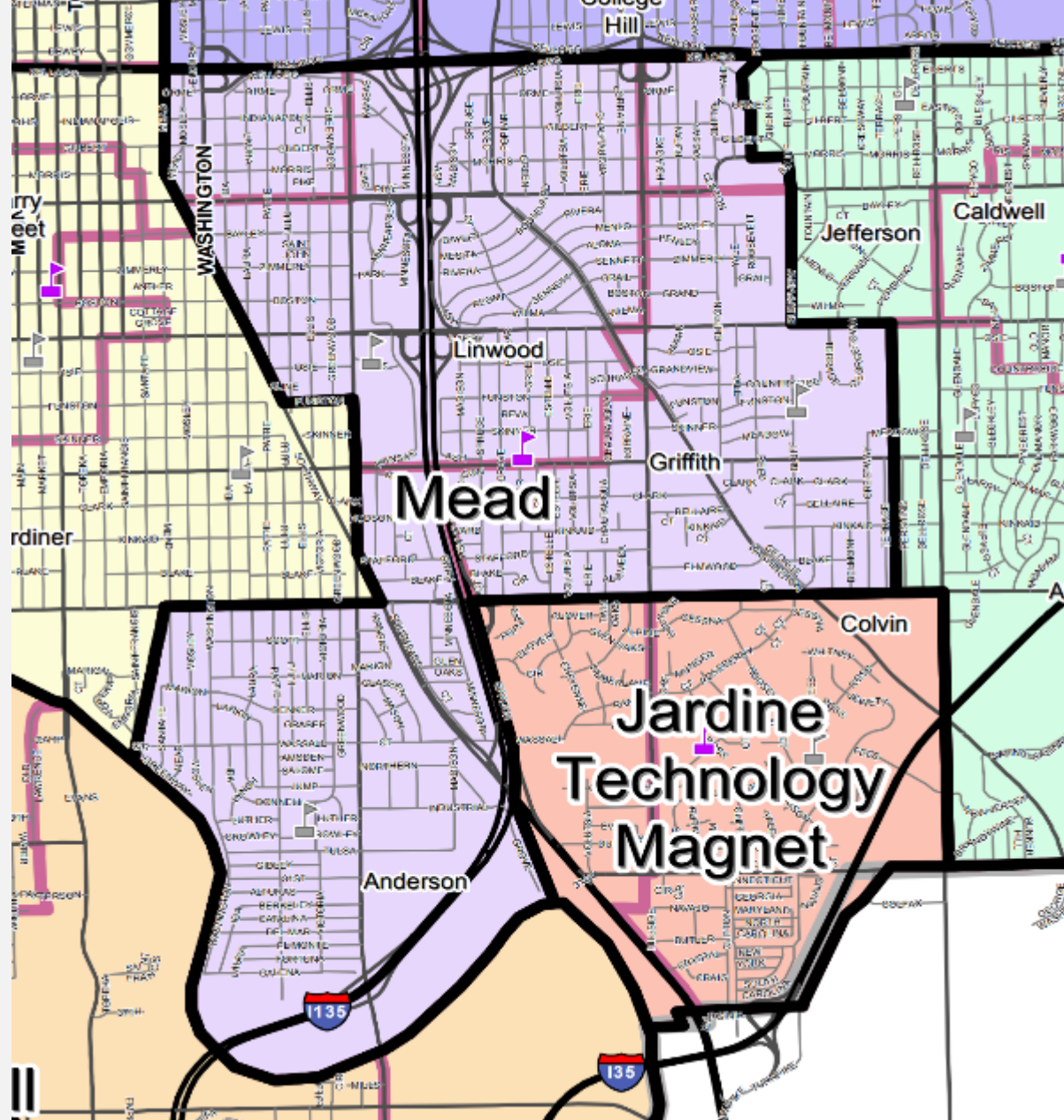




MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPOSAL: JARDINE

- .55 FCI
- No secured entry-costly to add
- 71% utilization
- 70% of classrooms under 700 sq ft.
- <575 students impacted (*190 from neighborhood*)
- Welcoming schools: *Mead*
- Brooks STEM Magnet has capacity





ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EVALUATION

Hard data

- Over .7 FCI
- Low utilization rate (<65%)
- Enrollment declines (>20%)
- Under 350 students
- Pure magnet where similar themed schools have capacity

Other Considerations

- Proximity to, capacity of nearby schools
- Receiving schools able to welcome students without major staff investment
- Minimize impact on system

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSAL

Close:

- Clark Elementary School
- Cleaveland Traditional College and Career Readiness Magnet Elementary
- Park Elementary School
- Payne Elementary School

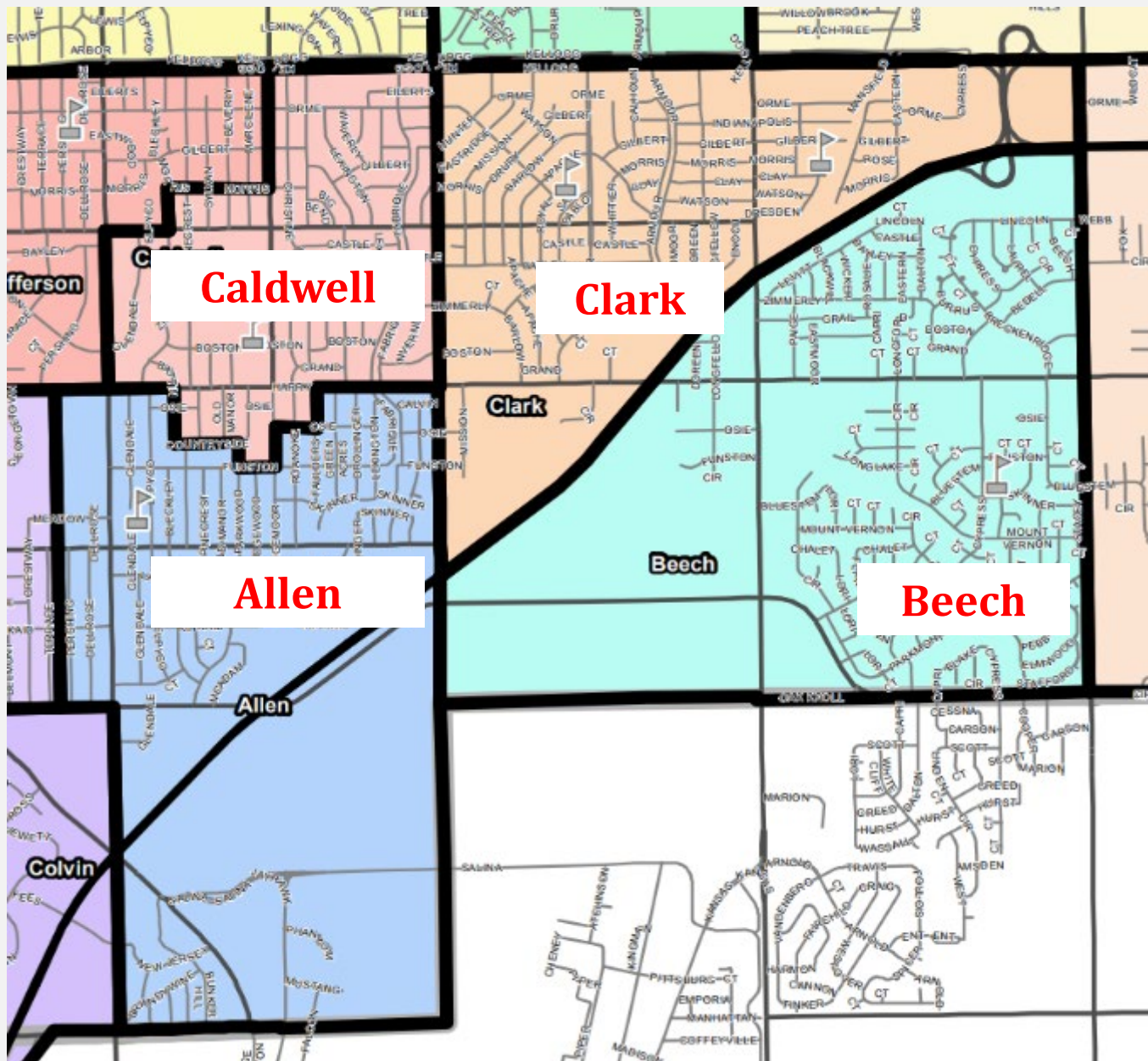
ELEM. SCHOOL PROPOSAL: CLARK

- .76 FCI
- 51% utilization
- <300 students
- 36% enrollment drop since 2016
- No dedicated cafeteria
- Available capacity at nearby schools

- No secured entry



- Welcoming schools:
Caldwell, Beech, Allen



ELEM. SCHOOL PROPOSAL: CLEAVELAND

- .43 FCI
- <350 students
- No dedicated cafeteria
- Pure magnet: capacity in two other traditional magnets and other neighborhood schools

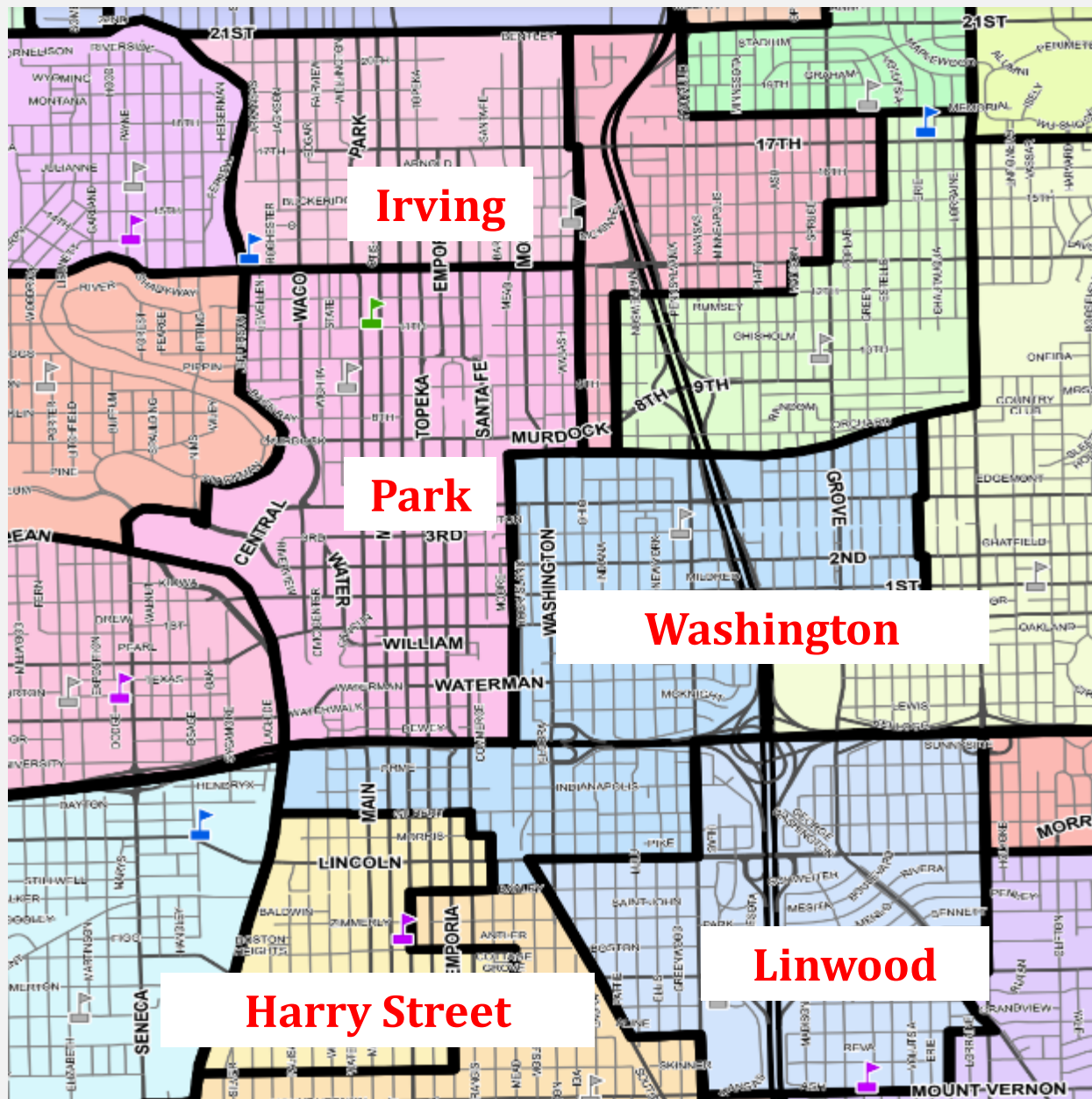


- Welcoming: magnet lottery or alternate parent choice school

ELEM. SCHOOL PROPOSAL: PARK

- .95 FCI
- <350 students impacted
- No secure entry (costly to add)
- \$11 million in deferred maintenance needs
- No dedicated cafeteria
- Welcoming schools:
*Irving, Washington,
Harry St., Linwood*

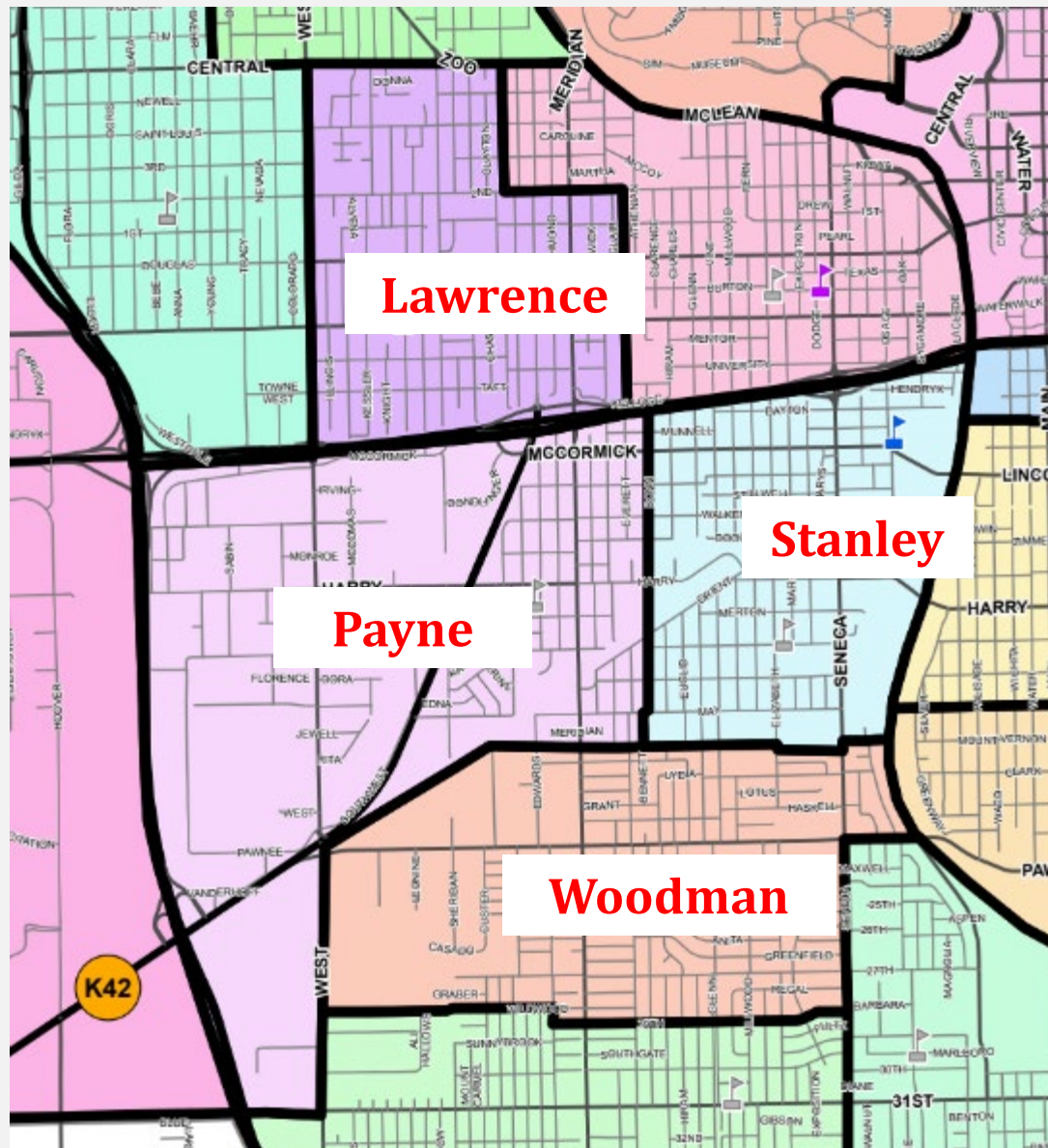




ELEM. SCHOOL PROPOSAL: PAYNE

- .70 FCI
- 59% utilization
- <300 students impacted
- 21% enrollment drop since 2016
- No dedicated cafeteria
- Receiving schools:
Lawrence, Stanley, Woodman





Lawrence

Stanley

Payne

Woodman

BOUNDARY CONSIDERATIONS

Least disruption to
system

Minimize feeder
pattern changes

Proximity to schools

Capacity

Enrollment
projections

Minimize students
crossing major
highways/roadways

PARENTS HAVE CHOICES!

Currently in a **Magnet** recommended to close:

1. Apply to another Magnet
Priority placement in the Magnet lottery, which increases odds but does not guarantee enrollment
2. Attend new assigned neighborhood school
3. Transportation provided based on distance (2.5 miles) for options 1 and 2
4. Request a special transfer to another neighborhood school – no transportation

PARENTS HAVE CHOICES!

Currently in a **neighborhood school** recommended to close:

1. Attend new assigned neighborhood school
2. Apply for a magnet school – acceptance through regular lottery process
3. Transportation based on distance for 1 and 2
4. Request a special transfer to another neighborhood school – no transportation

PARENTS HAVE CHOICES!

If impacted by a **boundary change**:

1. Attend new assigned neighborhood school
2. Apply for magnet school – through Magnet lottery process
3. Transportation based on distance (2.5 miles) for options 1 & 2
4. Grandfather at current school – no transportation
5. Request a special transfer – no transportation

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL IMPACT – PHASE 2

Data Point	Data
Impacted Students	2213
Average class size – welcoming elementaries (after estimated student moves)	21.14
Average class size – welcoming middle schools (after estimated student moves)	23.89
Elementary Teachers impacted	69
Middle School Teachers impacted	63
Other Staff impacted	190
Estimated savings	\$16.2 million

AFTER PHASE 1 AND 2 REDUCTIONS



\$42.0 MILLION Budget Deficit

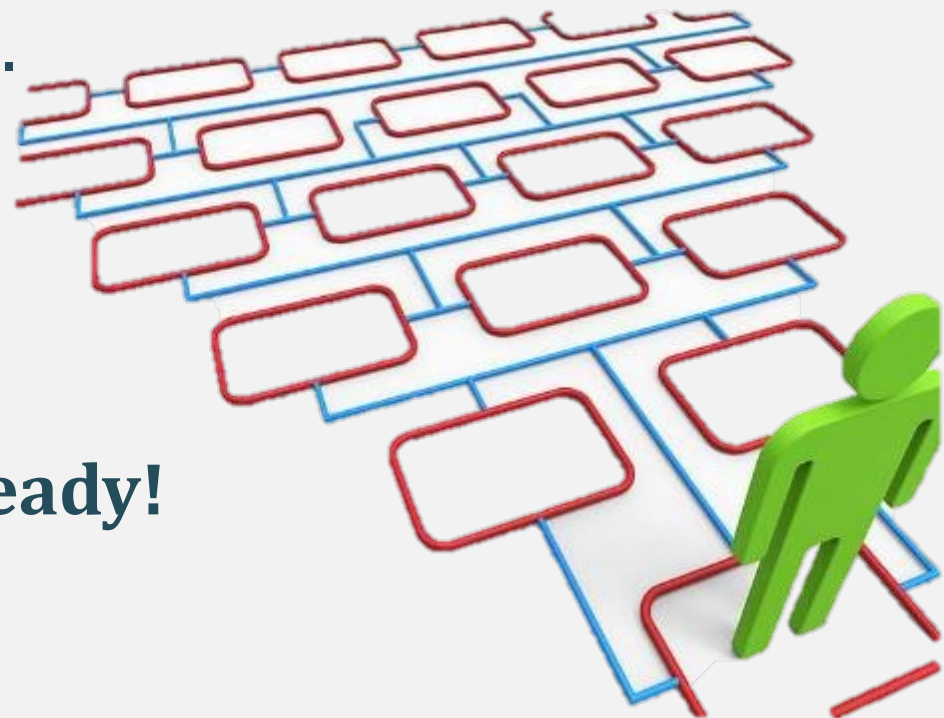
- 9.0 MILLION Phase 1 Savings

-16.2 MILLION Phase 2 Savings

***\$16.8 MILLION Remaining for
Phase 3***

AREN'T THERE OTHER OPTIONS?

- **There are no easy options.**
- Doing *nothing* only delays a decision and doesn't solve the staffing problem.
- Reviewed the data.
- Listened to feedback.
- Looked ahead.
- **Every Student, Future Ready!**



PROPOSED TIMELINE

2/12	School closure proposal to BOE
2/13	HR and support staff to proposed closing buildings
2/13	Magnet deadlines extended through March 22
2/16	Parent letters mailed, including school assignment options
2/21-26	Parent meetings
2/21	Application workshop for impacted staff
2/29	Public hearing
3/4	Vote on school closure

TIMELINE IMPLICATIONS

Must decide before spring break to allow adequate time for implementation.

This is a package proposal.

There is no pulling one school and substituting another.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Support for impacted staff

- Dedicated HR specialists per location to support staff placement needs
- Extra paid time for packing and setting up classrooms
- HR staff will deploy to locations in person on 2/13

More at www.usd259.org/transform24

IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Support for families

- Support available for students at closing schools
- Listening sessions for families
- Dedicated customer services support team to answer questions – (316) 368-8008
- As much choice as possible for impacted students and families

More at www.usd259.org/transform24

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Transform24 Parent Support Center

Hours of operation: 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Phone: 316-368-8008

Email: transform24@usd259.net

Web Site: www.usd259.org/transform24

RECOMMENDATION

*Administration recommends the Board establish 6 p.m., February 29, 2024 as the **Public Hearing**, at the Alvin Morris Administrative Center, Room 813, and approve the proposed Notice of Public Hearing for publication in the Wichita Eagle on February 14 and 19.*