



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Dr. Greg Baker, Superintendent

DATE: December 14, 2023

SUBJECT: **Monitoring Report for EL-9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal**

I certify that the following is accurate as of August 31, 2023. The reporting period is from September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023.

Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy: EL–9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal
(A copy of the Executive Limitation is attached)

Adopted: February 27, 2019

Interpretation of Items:

- Bond issues approved by voters in last 10 years:

February 18, 2022	\$122 million
February 13, 2018	\$155 million
November 5, 2013	\$160 million

Background Information: This report pertains to Executive Limitation 9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal. It was prepared in collaboration with staff from Capital Projects, Communications and Community Relations, Finance and our Grant Writer and Special Projects Manager. Information indicating compliance for each of the areas is presented below.

Description of Evidence of Compliance:

Recognizing the long-term community commitment when the district issues new bonds for property improvement, development or acquisition, the superintendent shall not fail to:

- 1. through the consent agenda, inform the board that the district is constituting a facilities and bond planning task force for the purpose of reviewing the adequacy of current facilities and the possibility of a future bond issuance.**

In compliance.

Executive Limitation (EL) 9.1 was adopted in 2019, in time to help guide the facilities and bond planning task force in preparation for the most recent Bellingham Public Schools bond in 2022.

A [Facilities Planning Task Force](#) was established in September 2021 with the following purposes/goals:

- Review long-term recommendations from the previous Facilities Planning Task Force, formed in 2017;
- Learn about schools and facilities related to current and future educational program needs; the physical condition of existing schools/facilities; the process associated with voter-approved bond ballot measures;
- Recommend updates to the long-range Facilities Master Plan to the superintendent.

The superintendent did keep the board fully informed of the process leading to the decision to create the facilities and bond planning task force. Actions included emailed updates, individual conversations and updates during the superintendent's report at school board meetings. While the consent agenda strategy specifically noted in the EL was not used, the intent of the EL was honored, and the board passed a legal resolution during a later consent agenda.

The superintendent would suggest to the board to consider revising the policy and give some discretion as to the means of informing the board. Suggested language for consideration:

Recognizing the long-term community commitment when the district issues new bonds for property improvement, development or acquisition, the superintendent shall not fail to:

1. ~~through the consent agenda~~, inform the board that the district is constituting a facilities and bond planning task force for the purposes of reviewing the adequacy of current facilities and the possibility of a future bond issuance."

- 2. seek balanced staff, parent and community stakeholder input in the planning process;**

In compliance.

The 2021 Facilities Planning Task Force issued a call for applications in September of 2021. Members of the task force included principals, deans, parents, teachers, counselors, Department of Teaching and Learning (DTL) directors, students, operations directors, community partners from the City of Bellingham, Western Washington University (WWU), Whatcom County Health Department, BPS executive directors, and consultants from OAC.

3. use best practices in evaluating the adequacy of existing facilities and in the design of new facilities;

In compliance.

Meetings were designed and led by consultants, in partnership with district staff. The OAC consultants are experienced in school facility assessment. They offered first-hand examples of other Washington State public school district facility assessment processes, helping to inform the Bellingham process for assessing the adequacy of our existing facilities.

Meetings were designed to elicit member participation, highlighting local knowledge and expertise and calibrating local needs with best practices in school facility design.

4. assure that final recommendations regarding facilities and bonds are aligned with district's strategic plan, The Bellingham Promise; and

In compliance.

A key basis for establishment of the 2021 Facilities Planning Task Force was the acknowledgment that Bellingham Public Schools has an equity gap between newer and older elementary schools, and the programs that our facilities can support. Recommendations to the superintendent address equity, a core value of [The Bellingham Promise](#), and are an effort to fulfill our “collective commitment to Bellingham’s children.”

5. provide ample opportunity for board and community discussion prior to final board action.

In compliance.

The Facilities Planning Task Force met five times from September to November 2021. Agendas and meeting summaries were posted to the BPS webpage after each meeting. The [recommendation to the superintendent](#) was submitted in December of 2021.

On December 8, 2021, the Bellingham School District’s Board of Directors approved a bond election resolution according to the recommendations developed by the task force.