Superintendent's Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2025

AGENDA

1. **Superintendent's Recommendation**

- Superintendent Tavitian reviewed the Board Goals, along with the District's vision and mission statements, highlighting how they align with the work and decisions that will guide this process moving forward.
- She presented a timeline outlining the history of this process, beginning January 21, 2025, and shared district enrollment data showing Buford and Felton as the schools with the lowest enrollment.
- Superintendent Tavitian then presented an operational cost analysis comparing revenues and expenditures between Buford and Felton, followed by a Facilities Needs Assessment. She noted that while Felton has larger square footage, it requires more repairs and has limited parking capacity. Buford, though smaller, has lower repair costs, adequate parking for additional staff, and a larger parent pick-up and drop-off area.

- She emphasized that communication regarding this process has been regularly shared with the community through the District's website.
- Superintendent Tavitian also presented the SAC ballot results, with members selecting Recommendation #2 (unifying Buford and Felton, with Special Education distributed districtwide). She announced her recommendation to close Felton Elementary School at the end of the 2025-26 school year, which she will formally present to the Board on December 16, 2025. She underscored that this recommendation is made with a deep commitment to supporting students, families, and staff through a thoughtful and inclusive transition.
- She further emphasized the importance of adopting an inclusive model for Special Education, ensuring students are served across all schools districtwide, rather than centralized at a single school site. Families will also have the opportunity to apply for placement at other district elementary schools as space allows.
- Finally, Superintendent Tavitian announced two upcoming Town Hall meetings to gather additional feedback from families and community members, scheduled for October 22 and October 23, 2025.

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2. SAC Input on Town Hall Meetings

- Superintendent Tavitian presented a draft working agenda for the Town Hall meetings and invited input from SAC members. Feedback included:

- A suggestion to address campus safety and communicate how the Felton site might be repurposed.

- Concerns from a member who felt the process appeared predetermined, noting community rumors about Felton's closure, and raising issues related to bathrooms and playground facilities for Special Education students.

- Recognition from a member that, while no option is ideal, closing Felton may be the most appropriate decision.

- A call to slow the process to allow more preparation time for students, especially those in Special Education, to transition.

- An affirmation of unity, with a member stating that Felton educators and leaders will rise to the occasion and that the district must remain one community, communicating a consistent message to families.

- A reminder that this is not the first time the District has closed a school, and lessons should be learned from past closures by ensuring staff are supported, brought together as one culture, and given time for closure.

- A perspective that unity should remain the focus, and that committee members must own the decision while prioritizing students and families above personal

concerns.

    - Several members emphasized the importance of providing staff sufficient time to process this transition so they can better support families.

    - Concerns regarding potential job losses, with recommendations to notify impacted staff as early as possible and to treat them with dignity and respect.

    - A recommendation to provide counseling support for both staff and students.

    - A suggestion to communicate the future role of the Felton administrative team.

- Superintendent Tavitian reviewed the communication plan for keeping both the committee and the community informed, including timelines related to personnel, facilities, Special Education programs, instructional materials, and nutrition services.
- Mr. Taylor provided an update on the three-phase plan, noting that the process has reached Phase III. He explained that if the Board determines there is no educational purpose for the vacant Felton facility, a state-mandated 7-11 Committee must be convened to determine future use.
- Several SAC members recommended that the District share general information with the community about potential options for the Felton site and solicit community input.

- Superintendent Tavitian concluded by reviewing the to-do list for completing Phase II of the process.
- **Next meeting October 14, 2025**