Point Proud Schools 2040 Task Force

Meeting #4: July 15, 2026

STEVENS POINT AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome back!

- This is the fourth of nine Task Force meetings, leading to a recommended long-range facilities plan
- As you make your way into the room…
  - Please sign in
  - Help yourself to a snacks and a drink
  - Introduce yourselves to your new table mates
- And as a note, the School Board Task Force members will step back from the table groups starting this meeting, as Task Force preliminary recommendations begin

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What is the Task Force's charge?

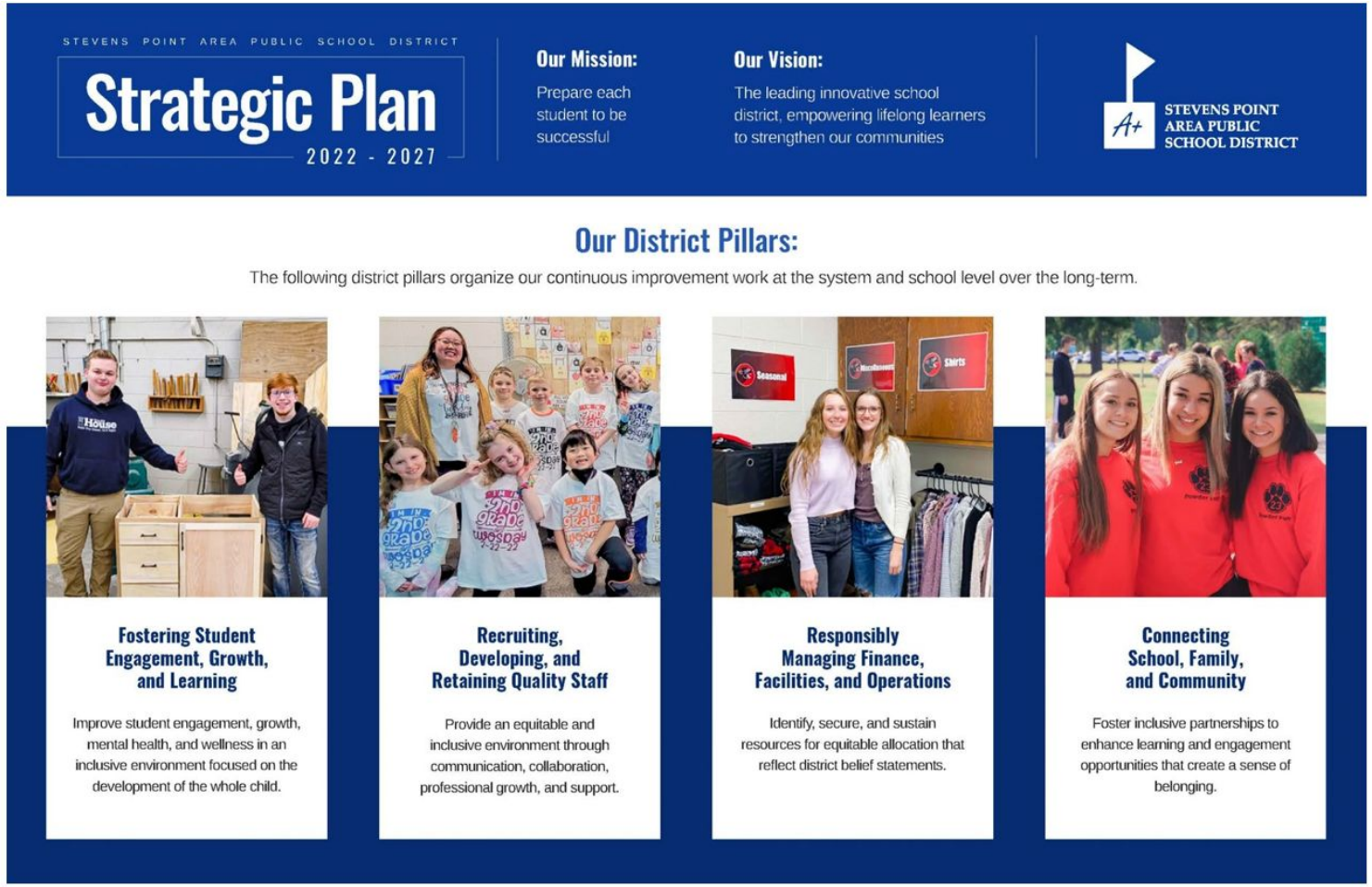
1. Recommend a long-range school facilities plan for the District, including phasing advice, to the School Board by winter 2026-27.
2. Learn applicable baseline conditions, including student enrollment projections and demographics; conditions, capacities, and locations of school buildings; financial conditions and projections; and educational policy, funding, and programming practices.



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What is the Task Force's charge?

3. Develop and evaluate a range of different long-range options with phasing **related to the utilization of the District's school buildings** with reference to:
   a) The District's mission, vision, and pillars in its *Strategic Plan 2022-2027* →
   b) Option evaluation criteria approved by the School Board (and detailed on handout)



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Facility Option Criterion 1 – Maintained or Enhanced Student Opportunities

- Provide a full and equal range of educational and co-curricular services and offerings at all schools serving similar grades
- Support full staffing, reasonable scheduling, and safe and modern learning environments
- Maintain or enhance athletic, educational, and co-curricular offerings
- Optimize grade groupings with educational programming, athletic, co-curricular opportunities, and social development

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Facility Option Criterion 2 – Manageable Student and Family Impacts

- Maintain or enhance student and family engagement, growth, learning, welfare, and sense of belonging
- Minimize number of students affected by changes to the degree possible
- If/where students change schools, consider factors like the number of students changing and neighborhoods where they reside
- Include logical transitions from elementary to junior high/middle school
- School buildings close or at least easily accessible to students and families

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Facility Option Criterion 3 – Fiscal Responsibility

- Consider building improvements, staffing requirements, and capital and operational costs relative to District financial constraints
- Minimize solutions that would result in major capital expenses and major transportation or other operational cost increases

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Facility Option Criterion 4 – Efficient Building Utilization

- Reasonably balance enrollment among schools serving similar grades
- Plan for enrollment to not be substantially below, and not above, working building capacities
- Do not assume changes in the District's current class size policy
- Consider projected enrollment, but not too far into the future

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Could the Task Force advise no changes?

Probably not. To do so would be dodging current and emerging challenges:

- Decreasing enrollment resulting in excess capacity at many schools
- Enrollment imbalances across schools, with some significantly below capacity while others approach capacity
- Atypical grade groups (K-6, 7-9, 10-12) compared to common educational curricula, student movement among classrooms, and social/emotional and co-curricula needs and interests
- Old school buildings with physical needs and challenging designs relative to modern learning expectations
- A challenging fiscal climate in which the District is seeking $1 million in operating cost reductions each year

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How will Task Force meetings progress?

Common Understanding (April-June)

- Enrollment projections
- Educational policy
- Financial conditions
- Building conditions
- Other information

General Directions (July-August)

- **Explore, rank, and narrow broad school facility-related options**
- **E.g., Should the District reconfigure its grade groupings? To what?**

Specific Advice (September-December)

- Present, evaluate, and rank detailed school facility options
- E.g., If reconfigured grade groups advised, should facility improvements should be planned? If so, generally what type?
- Recommend preferred option to school board

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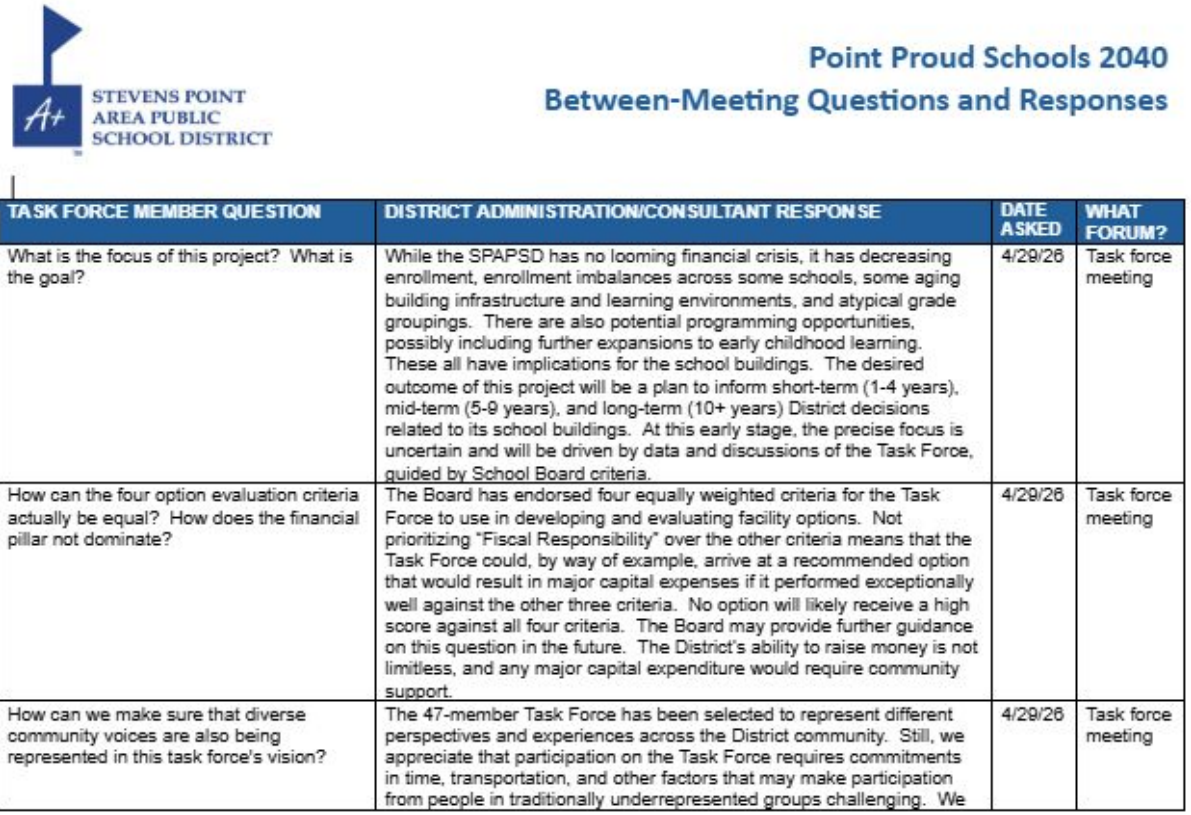
Main outcomes from last meeting

- Discussed District's existing school building and site conditions and transportation services
- Repeated comments:
  - Leave Team Trivia to the bars
  - School buildings are old. When do further major investments become unwise? Are all the District's buildings good investments going forward?
  - Desire for "apples to apples", complete, easy to understand, and ideally dynamic comparisons of elementary schools
  - Wondering about impacts of possibly changing grade groups (especially 9th to SPASH) and reducing number of school buildings (e.g., class sizes, bussing)
- See "Outcomes" document shared via email and on webpage

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Reminder of Questions & Responses document

- On 7/1, Nicole provided the updated "Questions & Responses" document (new questions 39-47)
- Provides responses to questions asked at each Task Force meeting or in-between meetings
- We generally do not go through these at the subsequent meeting



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Between-Meeting Questions and Responses

#	TASK FORCE MEMBER QUESTION	DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION/CONSULTANT RESPONSE	DATE ASKED	WHAT FORUM?
1.	What is the focus of this project? What is the goal?	While the SPAPSD has no looming financial crisis, it has decreasing enrollment, enrollment imbalances across some schools, some aging building infrastructure and learning environments, and atypical grade groupings. There are also potential programming opportunities, possibly including further expansions to early childhood learning. These all have implications for the school buildings. The desired outcome of this project will be a plan to inform short-term (1-4 years), mid-term (5-9 years), and long-term (10+ years) District decisions related to its school buildings. At this early stage, the precise focus is uncertain and will be driven by data and discussions of the Task Force, guided by School Board criteria.	4/29/26	Task force meeting
2.	How can the four option evaluation criteria actually be equal? How does the financial pillar not dominate?	The Board has endorsed four equally weighted criteria for the Task Force to use in developing and evaluating facility options. Not prioritizing "Fiscal Responsibility" over the other criteria means that the Task Force could, by way of example, arrive at a recommended option that would result in major capital expenses if it performed exceptionally well against the other three criteria. No option will likely receive a high score against all four criteria. The Board may provide further guidance on this question in the future. The District's ability to raise money is not limitless, and any major capital expenditure would require community support.	4/29/26	Task force meeting
3.	How can we make sure that diverse community voices are also being represented in this task force's vision?	The 47-member Task Force has been selected to represent different perspectives and experiences across the District community. Still, we appreciate that participation on the Task Force requires commitments in time, transportation, and other factors that may make participation from people in traditionally underrepresented groups challenging. We	4/29/26	Task force meeting

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The rest of this meeting

- Background information overview
- Major choices and preliminary decision-making proposal
- Presentation and discussion of potential grade group realignment options
- Presentation and discussion of potential school consolidation options (as far as we can get)
- Deep breathing (on own)



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Background Information Overview

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What did we learn about enrollment projections-to-building capacity?

- Births down + housing construction up = projected enrollment decreases, but more modest than over past 10+ years
- Projected decrease of ~400 4K-12 students by 2035; continued decreases after
- Projected 2035 grade 4K-6 enrollment ~800 students fewer than combined working capacity of all nine elementary schools (average building capacity = 440 students)
- Jefferson, Kennedy, Madison, and McKinley projected to operate at less than 70% of their capacity in 2035, with Plover-Whiting at 110% of capacity
- Projected 2035 grade 10-12 enrollment ~400 students fewer than SPASH capacity, with projected 2035 9th grade enrollment totaling ~475 students

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What did we learn about educational programming, policy, and trends?

- District's targeted class size ranges from 22 students for kindergarten, to 30 for 5th and 6th grades, to 20-32 for secondary school grades
- Actual average class sizes are 21 students at elementary schools, 23 students at junior highs, and 24 students at SPASH—though sizes can be larger at some schools and for secondary core classes
- Student needs seem to be increasing, especially related to special education, which can result increased demands especially in larger classes
- Student test results and District DPI ratings have increased since 2021-2022
- Starting in September, District will offer full-day 4K at five elementary schools and half-day 4K at one other (Jefferson)

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What did we learn about the District's financial conditions and forecast?

- State policy limits, on a per-student basis, how much money school districts can get from general state aid and property taxes combined
- This limit has lagged behind inflation, specially since late 2000s, and declining enrollment has also led to less revenue overall
- Has led to cycle of operating referenda in SPAPSD and elsewhere
- To stretch this cycle, the District has sought to decrease $1 million in operating expenses each year, and to maximize grants and other aid not tied to revenue limit

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What did we learn about the District's school buildings and sites?

- The 2018 capital referendum resulted in safety, deferred maintenance, learning environment, and specialized space improvements
- The average age of the District's school buildings is 59 years (54 for elementary), and the newest (Bannach) is 34 years old (U.S. average = 49 years)
- Rapid deterioration typically begins after ~40 years of service
- The District's 10-year capital needs plan totals ~$2.5 million/year (not including administrative buildings), but the District presently can spend ~$700,000 on major projects each year

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What did we learn about the District's school buildings and sites?

- On average, a SPAPSD elementary school building has ~$1.16 million in 10-year capital needs and costs nearly $1,000 per student to run each year (not including salaries)

- All SPAPSD elementary buildings have:
  - Separate cafeteria and gym spaces
  - Received remodeling or other capital upgrades since 2018

- Many spaces in many elementary buildings do not have the most suitable characteristics for modern learning, such as:
  - Flexible/adaptive spaces, including break-out and common learning spaces
  - Seamless technology integration, including interactive displays
  - Well-being components, including air conditioning throughout building, sufficient natural light, ample connection to outdoors, advanced air filtration, and modern acoustic control

What did we learn about District transportation services?

- District provides in-house bussing service, which appears cost efficient versus the alternative of private service
- In-house bussing provided to all 4K students, to all kindergarteners 1+ mile from school, and to all others 2+ miles from school—with closer distances where unusually hazardous transportation conditions present
- If schools consolidated, then bussing needs may increase (but grade group shifts might result in less co-curricular/athletic bussing)

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Other Task Force resources

- Each April-June informational presentation and Q&R on website
- Task Force Purpose and Charge and Facility Option Criteria and Metrics
- Schools, attendance areas, and neighborhood map (District-wide and urban zoom)
- Student Enrollment Projections table, and full projections report
- School and Building Site Overviews (i.e., matrices) for all elementary buildings and secondary buildings

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Major Choices and Preliminary Decision-Making Proposal

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A reminder of what the Task Force might consider…

- Attendance area changes to rebalance enrollment among schools
- Grade group shifts, potentially to a more traditional model
- Expanded or contracted educational and co-curricular programming that are related to building usage
- School building or site upgrades
- School building or site repurposing and/or consolidation
- Phasing alternatives

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But direction on some of these depends on others…

- For example, attendance area changes to rebalance enrollment among schools would differ if the Task Force supported:
  - A grade group shift, such as to move 6th graders from elementary schools (Plover-Whiting enrollment would then be *under* building capacity by 2035, as one implication)
  - Consolidation of elementary schools, which would require attendance area changes
- Also, if the Task Force supported a shift to a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 model, then:
  - Greater excess capacity at the elementary school buildings would result, potentially affecting discussion on consolidation and/or adding full-day 4K to all elementary schools
  - Need for programming changes and/or improvements at SPASH emerges to accommodate 9th graders

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Our proposal

We should first understand whether there is sufficient understanding and interest in either or both:

- Reconfiguring to a different grade group model, and/or
- Consolidating/reducing the number of school buildings



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We should acknowledge different decision-making styles

- **Directive**—use quick, decisive thinking to come to solution; focused on a task and using own judgement and experience to decide
- **Analytical**—carefully analyze data to come up with a solution; want to look at all details/angles before deciding
- **Conceptual**—willing to consider big ideas and take risks in decisions to capture big potential opportunities
- **Behavioral**—focuses more on relationships than on the particular decision, often preferring consensus over any particular direction

Source: www.indeed.com

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Potential Grade Group Realignment Options

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Possible grade group realignment models

- **K-5, 6-9,** 10-12 (junior highs at 900+ students each; elementary excess capacity increases because one less grade; 6th with 9th graders?)
- **K-5, 6-7, 8-9,** 10-12 (one current junior high becomes "intermediate school"; additional transition; elementary excess capacity increases)
- **K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12** (additional transition at younger age; more bussing; uneven school capacities present K-2/3-5 pairing challenge)
- **K-4, 5-8, 9-12** ("middle schools" at 900+ students each; major elementary excess capacity; 5th with 8th graders?)
- K-6, **7-8, 9-12** (each "middle school" has significant excess capacity at 450+ students, or one 900+ student middle school)
- **K-5, 6-8, 9-12** (common configuration; educational, co-curricular, social/emotional alignment?; elementaries more under capacity)

Bold = different grade grouping than today

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K-5 Elementary Reconfiguration Enrollment Projections

Elementary School (UNDER K-5 MODEL)	Students and Building Capacity				
	Working Building Capacity*	Projected 2027 Enrollment	Projected 2035 Enroll & 2035+ Trend	% of Building Capacity Used in 2035	EC-5 Students within 1 Mile
Bannach (4K-5)	464	332	335 →	72%	169
Jefferson (4K-5)	373	242	221 ↘	**59%**	438
Kennedy (4K-5)	293	168	161 →	**55%**	34
Madison (5K-5)	463	276	226 ↘	**49%**	232
McDill (4K-5)	419	341	322 ↘	77%	293
McKinley (4K-5)	470	262	235 ↘	**50%**	409
Plover-Whiting (4K-5)	502	403	473 ↗	94%	368
Roosevelt (5K-5)	524	415	388 ↘	74%	352
Washington (5K-5)	455	373	361 ↘	79%	323

BOLDBLUE% = projected enrollment <70% of building capacity

* = Working Building Capacity is 90% of maximum capacity assuming no change in class size guidelines

Projected combined 4K-5 enrollment in SPAPSD buildings ranges from 2,722 to 2,812 students, compared to combined working building capacity of 3,963 seats in these nine elementary buildings

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6-8, 9-12 Secondary Reconfiguration Enrollment Projections

Secondary School/ Building (UNDER 6-8, 9-12 MODEL)	Students and Building Capacity				
	Working Building Capacity*	Projected 2027 Enrollment	Projected 2035 Enrollment & 2035+ Trend	% of Working Building Capacity Used in 2035	Current Feeder Elementary Schools
Ben Franklin Junior High School (6-8)	985	742	717 →	73%	McDill, McKinley, Plover-Whiting, Roosevelt
P.J. Jacobs Junior High School (6-8)	985	657	630 ↘	**64%**	Bannach, Jefferson, Kennedy, Madison, Washington
Stevens Point Area Senior High School (9-12)	1,628	1,782	1,681 ↘	**103%**	
Point of Discovery (7-12) & Charles F. Fernandez (9-12)	317	228	228 →	72%	

* = Working Building Capacity is 75% of maximum capacity assuming no change in class size guidelines

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Secondary building suitability for grade group reconfiguration

- Most districts moved to grade 6-8 middle schools decades ago; a minority have 5-8 middle schools or 5-6 intermediate and 7-8 middle
- SPAPSD and D.C. Everest may be the last WI districts with a junior high model (DCE may be moving away from K-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-12)
- P.J. Jacobs and Ben Franklin are generally as suited for 6th graders as they are for 7th through 9th graders, but less suited for 5th graders
- Typical 6th grade instruction generally involves more switching of classes than does K-5 instruction—more like 7-12 grade instruction
- SPASH is generally suited for 9th graders, but either capital improvements or programming changes would be necessary before introducing 9th grade

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A look back at 2013/2014 studies regarding 9th grade at SPASH

- 2013 Grade Level Reconfiguration Study and 2014 Consolidated Task Force Final Report advised a shift to grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 groups
- Recommendations were informed by elementary school crowding (especially on District's south side) and expectation of enrollment growth (reverse actually happened)
- Main upper-grade benefits cited were programming related, including academic and co-curricular opportunities and all students earning credit in the same building
- Groups advised more adding to SPASH classrooms, resource areas, conference rooms, offices, storage spaces, lockers, new production kitchen, additional gymnasium, more sports fields, and parking and circulation enhancements
- 2013 study group also suggested that ideally SPASH would be configured with separate learning spaces for both the 9-10 and 11-12 grade grouping (i.e., "building wings").

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Updated SPASH assessment with 9th graders

- Around the year 2000, SPASH had approximately 2,100 10th through 12th graders, which was above the building's 1,628-student working capacity, approached its 2,170-student maximum capacity, and required compromises like a zero hour, open campus, larger core classes, and shared teacher classrooms with separate office spaces
- Last year, SPASH had 1,363 students—or 265 below full working capacity
- This has supported more flexible classroom and space usage and programming enhancements, especially in tech education (e.g., wood shop)
- If 9th graders were brought to SPASH without building expansion and improvements, programming and procedural changes (i.e., some reductions, more compromises) would be necessary

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Updated SPASH assessment with 9th graders

- If such programming and procedural changes proved unacceptable:
  - More classrooms would be advisable, for both core and particular encore classes (e.g., tech ed)
  - An auxiliary gymnasium and locker room space would be advisable to support additional PE classes, address winter/early spring sport demand, and provide more flexible scheduling
  - Common space size and configuration should be revisited
- Bringing 9th graders to SPASH carries other considerations such traffic flow and density, student health plan management, & staffing
- Building and site may not be suitable for a broader SPASH space re-configuration (e.g., 9-10 closed/11-12 open or 9th grade wing)

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How does this affect the Task Force work?

- At this point in our process, it is important to acknowledge that moving 9th graders to SPASH will require programming/procedural compromises, building expansion/improvement, or some combination
- If, tonight, there is support for reconfiguration including a grade 9-12 SPASH, the Task Force can, in the fall, delve into more details, including general improvement scope and phasing
- Task Force will need to provide such recommendations this fall, at whatever detail is practical, before any architectural plans, specific cost estimates, etc. would be available

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Questions? Show of hands…which to discuss further today?

- **K-5, 6-9,** 10-12 (junior highs at 900+ students each; elementary excess capacity increases because one less grade; 6th with 9th graders?)
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Bold = different grade grouping than today

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Small Group Discussion on Grade Reconfiguration

- Each member completes worksheet (will be handed in)
  - In columns on top, fill in options large group voted for further discussion
  - Refer to Facility Option Criteria and Metrics handout for more detail
- Select facilitator, recorder, and reporter
- For current grade grouping and each reconfiguration option, shared on flip charts and lettered accordingly:
  1. How well does the grade group option perform against the criteria?
  2. What are its other pros, cons, and considerations?
- Each small group discusses outcomes and attempts to achieve preliminary advice on grade group reconfiguration (if any)
- Each reporter reports their small group's advice and rationale

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Potential School Consolidation Options

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