

Middle School Consolidation Planning Committee 2026–2028

Purpose:

The Pennridge School District is examining the potential transition from three middle schools to a two-middle-school model beginning with the 2028–29 school year. The Middle School Consolidation Planning Committee will provide a structured and representative process for examining the educational, operational, financial, facilities, staffing, transportation, and student transition considerations associated with a potential consolidation.

The committee will bring together administrators, Board members, teachers, support staff, parents, students, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to review relevant information, identify opportunities and challenges, and inform recommendations regarding the feasibility and implementation of a two-middle-school model.

During the 2026–27 school year, the committee will focus on analysis, planning, and the development of recommendations for consideration by the Board of School Directors. The District will provide opportunities for formal public input prior to Board action. If consolidation is approved, the committee's working groups will continue during the 2027–28 school year to complete the detailed implementation and transition planning necessary for the new middle school configuration to begin with the 2028–29 school year.

Committee Charge:

The Middle School Consolidation Planning Committee is charged with:

- **Reviewing relevant enrollment projections, building capacity information, financial data, academic programming, staffing, transportation, facilities, and other information related to a potential middle school consolidation.**
- **Examining the educational and operational implications of transitioning from three middle schools to two.**
- **Identifying opportunities, challenges, costs, and implementation considerations associated with consolidation.**
- **Evaluating how a two-middle-school model could support consistent academic programming, student services, extracurricular opportunities, and student supports.**
- **Identifying the facilities, staffing, transportation, attendance boundary, and operational changes necessary to support a two-middle-school model.**
- **Considering the impact of consolidation on students, staff, families, and school communities and identifying strategies to support a successful transition.**
- **Providing opportunities for representative stakeholder participation throughout the planning process.**

- **Developing findings and recommendations for presentation to the Board of School Directors and the broader community.**
- **Providing the foundation for detailed implementation planning during the 2027–28 school year if consolidation is approved.**

The committee's work is intended to provide the Board and community with a comprehensive analysis of the proposed consolidation and the conditions necessary for successful implementation. Final authority regarding consolidation rests with the Board of School Directors.

Committee Structure:

The committee will operate through a combination of full committee meetings and focused working groups. The full committee will meet at key points in the process to review information, consider the work of the individual groups, identify areas requiring additional analysis, and develop recommendations.

Working groups will conduct detailed analysis and planning associated with specific aspects of consolidation and will report their findings to the full committee.

Committee Leadership

District administrative leadership will coordinate the overall committee process, facilitate communication among the working groups, maintain the project timeline, and coordinate presentations and recommendations to the Board of School Directors.

Committee Leadership:

- Dr. Bradley Palmer, Assistant Superintendent
- Mr. Duane Renner, Principal of Strategic Initiatives

Potential Committee Membership:

Membership should provide broad representation while allowing individual members to contribute most directly to areas related to their experience and perspective.

- Members of the Board of School Directors
- District administration
- Middle school principals and administrators
- District curriculum and instructional leadership
- Student Services and Special Education administration
- Human Resources administration

- Facilities and Operations administration
- Transportation administration
- Technology staff
- Teachers representing each middle school
- Counselors and other student support professionals
- Support staff
- Representatives of PEA and PESPA, as appropriate
- Parents representing the middle school communities
- Middle school students
- Other staff or community representatives whose expertise is relevant to specific areas of study

Not every committee member will participate in every working group. Working-group membership will be based upon the expertise, responsibilities, and perspectives needed to complete each group's assigned work.

Working Groups:

1. Academic Programs and Schedules

Leadership

- Dr. Bloom
- Dr. Collice

Initial/Potential Members

- C. Baker
- M. Burke
- J. Vitale
- D. Renner
- C. Tamburino
- S. Ware
- K. Alexander
- Middle school teachers representing multiple content areas and schools
- Special Education representative
- Student Services representative
- Additional instructional staff, as appropriate
- Middle School Parents

Tasks

- Develop a middle school bell schedule that incorporates MTSS and other programmatic and instructional needs.

- Review current academic programming across the three middle schools and identify opportunities to provide consistent programming within a two-middle-school model.
- Identify required instructional, curricular, or programmatic changes associated with consolidation.
- Evaluate special education programming and determine potential program and location needs.
- Consider the impact of consolidation on intervention, enrichment, electives, student supports, and other academic opportunities.
- Identify scheduling or programmatic issues that may affect staffing, facilities, or student transition planning.
- Coordinate with the Staffing and Human Resources and Facilities, Operations, and Logistics working groups regarding programmatic needs that affect staffing or space.

Deliverables

- Recommended middle school bell schedule.
- Recommendations for a unified middle school academic program.
- Unified middle school program guide.
- Special education program and location recommendations.
- Identification of academic and programmatic changes necessary for implementation.

2. Communication and Community Engagement

Leadership

- Mr. Thomas
- Dr. Palmer

Potential Members

- District communications staff
- Building administrators
- Other staff or community representatives, as appropriate
- Carly Baker

Tasks

- Develop a coherent communication strategy to provide timely and accurate information to the Board, families, staff, students, and community.
- Organize opportunities for community engagement and public feedback, both in person and virtually, as appropriate.
- Develop key messages, frequently asked questions, presentations, and other informational materials.
- Maintain clear communication regarding what decisions have and have not been made throughout the process.

- Monitor community questions, concerns, and misinformation and identify areas requiring additional communication or clarification.
- Coordinate communication associated with formal public hearings and Board consideration.
- If consolidation is approved, develop a communication framework for the 2027–28 implementation and transition year.

Deliverables

- Comprehensive communication and community engagement plan.
- Community FAQ document.
- Public presentation materials.
- Middle school consolidation webpage and related online resources.
- Communication materials associated with major project milestones.
- Implementation-year communication framework.

3. School Culture and Student Transition Planning

Leadership

- Mr. Renner
- Mr. Johnson

Initial/Potential Members

- Ms. Marchese
- Middle school administrators
- Teacher representatives from each middle school
- Student Services representatives
- Support staff
- Parent representatives
- Student representatives from each middle school
- Additional staff involved in student activities, athletics, or student supports, as appropriate

Tasks

- Examine the cultural and student-experience implications of integrating middle school student populations.
- Develop strategies for establishing positive school identity and culture within the new configuration.
- Recommend PBIS and behavioral support structures.
- Develop plans to support students impacted by a school closure and attendance boundary changes.
- Identify student orientation and transition activities.

- Consider opportunities for students from different schools to interact prior to implementation.
- Examine implications for student activities, athletics, clubs, traditions, and other aspects of the middle school experience.
- Identify supports for students who may experience difficulty with the transition.
- Gather student, staff, and parent perspectives regarding transition needs.

Deliverables

- Student and staff transition framework.
- Parent transition guide.
- PBIS and behavioral support recommendations.
- Student orientation program.
- Recommendations for developing school identity and culture.
- Transition activities and supports to be implemented during the 2027–28 school year.

4. Staffing and Human Resources

Leadership

- Dr. Doster
- Mr. Keddie

Potential Members

- Human Resources staff
- Middle school administrators
- District administrators
- PEA representatives, as appropriate
- PESPA representatives, as appropriate
- Other staff with responsibility for certification, staffing, or collective bargaining matters

Tasks

- Develop a projected staffing model for a two-middle-school configuration.
- Review existing middle school staffing, certifications, assignments, and seniority.
- Identify potential staffing efficiencies, additional staffing needs, and areas requiring reassignment.
- Develop procedures and timelines for necessary staff transfers.
- Review applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions.
- Work with PEA and PESPA to identify any agreements or modifications that may be necessary to accomplish the transfer and transition plan.
- Coordinate with the Academic Programs and Schedules working group to ensure that staffing recommendations support the proposed academic program and schedule.

- Identify staffing decisions that must occur during 2026–27 and those that can be completed during the 2027–28 implementation year.

Deliverables

- Preliminary staffing model for the proposed two-middle-school configuration.
- Comprehensive review of existing certifications and seniority.
- Staff transfer procedures and implementation plan.
- Timeline for transfer requests, assignments, and staff notification.
- Identification of any collective bargaining issues requiring resolution.
- Related transfer and staffing documents.

5. Transportation and Boundary Planning

Leadership

- Dr. Palmer
- Ms. Krause

Initial/Potential Members

- Mr. Alexander
- Transportation staff
- Middle school administrators
- District administration
- Board representative(s)
- Parent representatives
- Additional staff with expertise in enrollment, mapping, demographics, or transportation, as appropriate

Tasks

- Develop potential middle school attendance boundary scenarios for North Middle School and Central Middle School that appropriately distribute enrollment.
- Analyze projected enrollment and building capacity under potential boundary scenarios.
- Consider geographic, demographic, transportation, and community factors associated with potential attendance boundaries.
- Evaluate the transportation implications of potential boundary scenarios, including routes, travel times, staffing, vehicles, and costs.
- Develop a strategy for obtaining public feedback regarding proposed attendance boundaries.
- Coordinate with the Communication and Community Engagement working group regarding communication with affected families.
- Develop a final attendance boundary recommendation if consolidation is approved.
- Establish an implementation timeline for new attendance zones and transportation routes.

Deliverables

During the 2026–27 Study and Decision Phase:

- Viable attendance boundary scenarios.
- Enrollment and capacity analysis for each scenario.
- Preliminary transportation impact analysis.
- Identification of major boundary and transportation considerations for Board and community review.

During the 2027–28 Implementation Phase, if approved:

- Final recommendation for new middle school attendance zones.
- Communication plan for affected families.
- Timeline for boundary implementation.
- Final transportation routing recommendations, including anticipated impacts on routes, staffing, vehicles, travel times, and costs.

6. Facilities, Operations, and Logistics

Leadership

- Mr. Daubert
- Mr. Bramble

Initial/Potential Members

- Mr. Lezoche
- Mr. Taylor
- Mr. Brown
- J. Gallo
- Technology representatives
- Middle school administrators
- Facilities and maintenance staff
- District administration
- Other technical or professional consultants, as appropriate

Tasks

- Complete an analysis of Central Middle School and North Middle School to identify renovations, modifications, and improvements that may be necessary to accommodate increased enrollment.
- Evaluate classroom, instructional, special education, cafeteria, athletic, office, storage, and other operational space needs.
- Develop recommendations and preliminary cost estimates for potential facilities projects.

- Identify facilities work that would need to be completed prior to the beginning of the 2028–29 school year.
- Evaluate technology infrastructure and equipment needs.
- Develop a plan for relocating materials, furniture, technology, and equipment from South Middle School.
- Coordinate with the Academic Programs and Schedules working group regarding instructional and programmatic space requirements.
- Develop an implementation schedule for necessary facilities and logistical work.

Deliverables

- Facilities needs assessment.
- Renovation and modification recommendations.
- Preliminary and updated cost estimates.
- Facilities project timeline.
- Technology readiness plan.
- Furniture, materials, and equipment relocation plan.
- Operational readiness plan for the beginning of the 2028–29 school year.

Committee Process:

The Middle School Consolidation Planning Committee will meet as a full group at three key points during the 2026–27 school year. Working groups will meet between full committee meetings to conduct detailed research, analysis, and planning.

Full Committee Meeting #1 – Committee Kickoff September 30, 2026

The initial meeting will:

- Review the purpose and charge of the committee.
- Review the history and context of the consolidation proposal.
- Review relevant enrollment, capacity, financial, academic, and operational information.
- Introduce the working-group structure and leadership.
- Review the overall planning and decision timeline.
- Identify initial questions and areas requiring additional analysis.
- Establish expectations for working-group participation and reporting.

Full Committee Meeting #2 – Data and Status Review November 16, 2026

The committee will reconvene to:

- Receive progress updates from each working group.
- Review relevant data and preliminary findings.
- Review initial scenarios and alternatives developed by the working groups.
- Identify areas of agreement and outstanding questions.
- Request additional information or analysis where needed.
- Identify issues requiring resolution before the committee develops its recommendations.

Working groups will continue their work following this meeting and address additional questions identified by the full committee.

Full Committee Meeting #3 – Findings and Recommendation January 7, 2026

The committee will reconvene to:

- Review the completed analysis and findings of the working groups.
- Consider the educational, operational, financial, facilities, staffing, transportation, and transition implications of consolidation.
- Identify conditions or considerations necessary for successful implementation.
- Develop findings and recommendations for presentation to the Board of School Directors and community. Presentation will be during the facilities committee January 11, 2026

Following the committee's recommendation, the District will provide opportunities for formal public input and community feedback before the Board considers final action.

Community Engagement and Board Consideration

Following the committee's development of recommendations, the District will provide information to the broader community and conduct the formal public engagement required as part of the consolidation process.

The community engagement process will provide stakeholders with an opportunity to review the committee's findings, understand the educational, operational, financial, and transition implications of the proposal, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Feedback received through public hearings and other community engagement opportunities will be provided to the Board of School Directors prior to Board consideration of consolidation. Final authority regarding whether to proceed with middle school consolidation rests with the Board of School Directors. Public Hearing to be held week of January 18, 2026

Planning Timeline

Timeframe	Major Activities
September 30, 2026 4:30 pm DAO	Full Committee Meeting #1 – Committee Kickoff. Review purpose, charge, background information, relevant data, timeline, working-group structure, and key questions.
October- November 2026	Working groups conduct initial research and analysis, gather data, develop scenarios, identify opportunities and challenges, and begin developing recommendations. Communication and community information efforts continue throughout the process.
November 16, 2026 4:30 pm DAO	Full Committee Meeting #2 – Data and Status Review. Review working-group progress, preliminary findings, data, scenarios, and outstanding questions. Identify additional analysis needed before recommendations are developed.
November- December 2026	Working groups complete additional analysis and refine findings and recommendations based upon the full committee's review.
January 7, 2027 4:30 pm DAO	Full Committee Meeting #3 – Findings and Recommendation. Review working-group findings and develop recommendations regarding potential middle school consolidation.
January 11, 2027	Present committee findings and recommendations to the Board and community. Conduct formal public hearing(s) and provide additional opportunities for community review and feedback.
January 19-24, 2027	Public hearing is held on closure.
April 26, 2027	Board votes on consolidation if appropriate.
2027–28 School Year	Implementation and Transition Planning, if approved. Working groups continue detailed planning and implementation work, including attendance boundaries, transportation, staffing and transfers, academic programs and schedules, facilities modifications, communication, and student/staff transition activities.
Summer 2028	Complete facilities work, moves, technology preparation, staffing, transportation routing, student assignments, communications, and final operational readiness activities.
2028–29 School Year	New middle school configuration begins.