BRIC ARCHITECTURE

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Meeting Notes

PROJECT: Salem-Keizer Public Schools – Bond Planning
DATE: November 18, 2026
SUBJECT: Superintendent's Bond Development Committee
ATTENDEES: Committee Chair: Mark Shipman
School Board Liaisons: Lisa Harnisch, Satya Chandragiri
Committee Members: Valerie Alban, Koko Cotter-Lord, Amanda Davis, Ely Flores, Mark Freed, Mandi Hansen, Stephanie Haycock, Justin Hopkins, Aaron Howard, Cassie Huntley, Kiersten Ravenwood, Pedro Reyes, Ron Speck, Tanya Stagray, Zach Wilson
District Administrators and Staff: Andrea Castañeda (Superintendent), Kyle Beatty, David Hughes, Paul Odenthal, Joel Smallwood, Stefanie Stonebrink
Consultants: Elisa Warner (BRIC Architecture), Jeremy Wright (Wright Public Affairs)

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Group Agreements

- Members were welcomed to the first SBDC meeting, introduced themselves, and reviewed the Group Agreements.
- Superintendent Andrea Castañeda welcomed members and thanked them for serving on the Committee. She spoke positively about this opportunity to provide purpose-built facilities for SKPS students, describing it as one of a few big steps toward charting a future for the District, along with updating the Strategic Plan next year.

2. Role and Purpose of the Committee, Consensus Model, and Timeline

- The SBDC will advise SKPS in developing a bond package for the November 2027 election. It is an advisory committee, not a decision-making body, and will operate using a consensus model.
- The Committee will meet seven times, November 2026 through March 2027. The Committee's scope and key milestones were reviewed.
- Paul Odenthal described the challenge of needs outweighing available funds, with $1.5 to $2 billion worth of identified work. The work will need to be narrowed and prioritized into a bond package the community will support, at a price within voters' tolerance. The District has a surplus of space, but a deficit of quality learning environments.
- Committee comments or questions:
    - Q: Will meeting materials be printed?
        - A: Yes, certain materials such as the agenda and minutes will be printed. Other materials, such as the LRFP report, will be posted on the SBDC website, which is expected to go live very soon. A printout of the flyer summarizing work completed under the 2018 bond will be brought to the next meeting.

3. District Overview and Strategic Plan

- An overview of the District, its feeder patterns, and the 2025-27 Strategic Plan (Climbing Together) was presented, including connections to facilities planning.

4. Bond Planning History (2018 Bond)

- The 2018 bond ($619.7 million, approved by voters in May 2018) and its outcomes were reviewed.
- Committee comments or questions:
    - Q: Did the 2018 Bond projects address some ADA deficiencies?
        - A: Yes, some ADA deficiencies were addressed as part of the last bond, but a lot of work still remains. ADA compliance is required for all new construction and significant renovations.

5. 2026 Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP)

- The LRFP guiding principles, Task Force recommendations, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and Long-Term Site Viability Framework were reviewed. The LRFP and CIP are the starting point for bond planning.
- Committee comments or questions:
    - Q: Do the costs shown in the CIP include work at schools that may close?
        - A: Yes. The CIP costs were developed during the LRFP process, before the recent proposed school closures were announced. As for any potential future closures (beyond the initial 6), the District does not know which schools those would be, but it does know which buildings are least efficient to operate and present the greatest educational adequacy challenges. Even if a school is likely to close, the District would still invest some funds, because it is serving students in the meantime and the building must be maintained as long as it is a District asset.
    - Q: Are soft costs included in the project totals shown in the Capital Improvement Plan?
        - A: Soft costs of 40% are included, and costs are shown in 2026 dollars. The projects are not all-inclusive of the work required. They reflect like-for-like replacement of existing aging systems, not upgrades, and do not include any estimates for new construction.
    - Q: What about potential grants for building improvements?
        - A: The District has pursued OSCIM and Seismic Rehabilitation Grants in the past, and will again.
    - Q: Are security entry vestibules on the CIP list?
        - A: Yes. Some schools still lack them. The CIP included money for improvements to main entries at these schools to improve access control and security.
    - Q: Could the District be subject to fines if certain capital improvements are not made?

        - A: Not necessarily, though a compliance issue may create an impetus to find a way to fund certain improvements. A recent situation at South Salem High School was referenced, in which the District made an agreement with the Office for Civil Rights to address certain improvements. No fines were issued.
    - Clarity was sought on the definition of Educational Specifications and how they differ from building codes and standards that may be enforceable at the state or federal level. Ed Specs are a District-published document, which the District applies to new construction and renovation projects. Compliance is not required by any external entity. However, the District provides the Ed Specs to every design team working on new construction or renovation projects and ensures that the guidelines are applied to projects to the greatest extent possible.

6. Turn and Talk: Initial Reactions and Takeaways

- Members took part in a brief turn and talk to give everyone a chance to process what they had heard so far.

7. Bonds 101

- An overview of how school bonds work in Oregon, how a bond gets on the ballot, and the Committee's role in finding the "sweet spot" between District needs, community priorities, and what voters are willing to pay.
- Committee comments or questions:
    - Q: Does the District have a sense of the likliehood of passing a bond next November? Are there concerns about current public sentiment around the closures, and that the November 2027 bond election will coincide with implementation of the closures?
        - A: No sense of the chances at this time, but outreach and polling will help the District to determine this. The District will not place a bond on the ballot that it does not think can win. Polling at various intervals leading up to the election helps the District gauge its chances.
    - Q: What is the plan if the bond does not pass?
        - A: A plan would be developed to move forward. It is important to clarify that a bond funds capital needs only, not operations. The District may have to put more funds into emergency repairs and would look at another election cycle.

8. Draft Bond Project Categories ("Buckets") / Why a Bond Even as We Close Schools

- Five draft bond project categories (Buckets A through E) were presented as a starting point that the SBDC may shape or expand. See attached slide deck for additional information.
- The challenges of under-enrolled schools were discussed.

- The District plans to organize tours of select sites in the near future, allowing Committee members to view conditions firsthand.
- Committee comments or questions:
    - Q: Why don't districts create K-12 campuses rather than separate elementary, middle, and high school campuses?
        - A: There are various historical and practical reasons. The size of site required can be a limiting factor, and safety and security challenges could apply. The District does have some elementary and middle schools on shared, adjacent sites.
    - Q: Will the Committee tour the newest schools, or the older ones facing the most challenges?
        - A: Both. The intent is for the Committee to see firsthand the spectrum of conditions across the District and how learning environments can differ between schools.
    - Q: Will the tour include the Hawthorne Building?
        - A: Yes, this building will be part of the tour.
    - Q: Is there potential for revenue generation associated with the school sites subject to possible closure?
        - A: Potential uses are still to be determined. The District will look carefully at each property to determine how it can provide the greatest value.

9. Small Group Discussion: Questions and Information Requests

- The Committee divided into four small groups and discussed the following questions: After hearing tonight's presentation, what questions or uncertainties do you still have about the bond planning process? What information would help you feel ready for the next meeting? Responses from each group are listed below.

    - Group 1
        - What is my role on this committee? For example, as a high school teacher, am I a representative of all high schools?
        - How will individual members be able to contribute to recommendations around ADA, Title IX, safety, and similar areas?
        - Will there be questions directed to each representative (for example, high school, Alt Ed)?
        - Can we invite a SPED Instructional Assistant (IA) to be part of the SBDC? This perspective is important to include.

    - Group 2
        - What is the time commitment outside of meetings (for example, readings)?
        - What is the tax implication? Is it still $1.24 per $1,000? Is a range already known?

- Are we only considering the 0-5 year horizon, or 5 and 10 years (referencing the CIP)? Are the CIP 0-5 year items and Buckets A through E set in stone? (Joel Smallwood responded that neither the buckets nor the CIP projects are set in stone. The work of the SBDC may result in modifications to or expansion of the buckets.)
- Community financial support: are there companies that would do pro bono work?
- How will the District repair community relations regarding the closures?
- What is District policy regarding Minority, Women-Owned, and Emerging Small Businesses (MWESB) for contract work?
- Please define "greatest impact" vs. "greatest need."

- Group 3
  - Interest in improved budget and cost predictions that account for closure decisions, potential grants and rebates, and redundant expenses.
  - How can the District overcome the timing of the closures with a bond vote?
  - Interest in how Special Education support will be addressed.
  - New facility costs that may arise from combining schools.

- Group 4
  - The group included mostly members who had previously served on the LRFP Task Force and were largely familiar with what was presented.
  - There was discussion about SBDC members serving as "ambassadors," with the chance to share information about the bond with families. Members noted it would be helpful if the District or Committee could develop a few talking points to support these conversations.

10. Report Back, Wrap Up, and Next Steps

- Next meeting: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Anticipated topics include bond financing scenarios (Piper Sandler); enrollment, capacity, and utilization; discussion of Buckets A and B; and bond visioning.

Submitted by: Elisa Warner, BRIC Architecture, Inc.