

School Closure Guide

Closing Schools as a Means for Addressing Budgetary Challenges

developed by district operators
with support from



Table of Contents

I. What is this guide and who is it for?	2
II. What resources are needed to decide upon and conduct school closures?.....	3
A. Time	3
B. Leadership and Staff.....	5
C. Money.....	6
III. What major challenges have other districts faced and how have they overcome them? 7	7
IV. What steps must be taken to decide upon and conduct school closures?.....	10
A. The Decision Process	10
B. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications.....	22
Keys to Success for Stakeholder Engagement.....	22
Execution of Stakeholder Engagement.....	26
C. Implementation.....	29
1. Student Re-assignment.....	29
2. Revised Enrollment Projections and School Budgets.....	33
3. Re-assignment of Teachers and School Staff	34
4. Use of Facilities from Closed Schools.....	36
5. Miscellaneous School Operations.....	37
V. Conclusion.....	40
VI. Appendices	41
Appendix A: Accelerated School Closure Timeline.....	43
Appendix B: Functional Capacity Approach (Seattle)	44
Appendix C: Functional Capacity Analysis (Seattle)	45
Appendix D: Analysis of Number of Schools to be Closed (Pittsburgh)	48
Appendix E: Examples of Criteria Used for Recent School Closures.....	49
Appendix F: Facilities Planning School Board Policy (Dallas).....	51
Appendix G: SPI Academic Criteria for Selecting Closing Schools (Pittsburgh).....	56
Appendix H: Budget Impact of School Closures (Seattle)	58
Appendix I: Sample Community Engagement Materials (<i>Washington, D.C.</i>).....	60
Appendix J: Student Re-assignment Criteria (Seattle)	66
Appendix K: Letter to Families Regarding Student Assignment (Oakland)	71
Appendix L: Boundary Adjustment Memo (Oakland)	72
Appendix M: Staffing FAQ (Boston)	75
Appendix N: Communication to teachers (Washington, D.C.)	77
Appendix O: MOA with teachers union (Washington, D.C.).....	78
Appendix P: Memo to Closing Schools Regarding Packing and Move Procedures (Oakland)80	80

I. What is this guide and who is it for?

This is a guide for school district operators considering school closures to address significant budgetary challenges. Note that this tool was *not* designed to assist with school closures as part of a periodical closing and opening of schools for academic performance, though a subset of the strategies may still be applicable.

Drawing on effective practices and lessons learned from 10 large urban school districts¹ that have recently closed schools, this guide provides frameworks, timelines and recommended practices for:

- Deciding whether to close schools and which schools to close
- Engaging and communicating with stakeholders
- Effectively executing school closures

This guide describes first what it takes to go through the school closure process; second, the do's and don'ts of school closures—some major risks and mitigation strategies other districts have identified; and finally, the detailed steps a district must take to decide upon and conduct school closures.

Last edit date 5/20/09

For further information or referrals to personnel in districts contributing to this guide, please e-mail: tools@broadfoundation.org.

¹ Districts contributing to this tool: Boston Public Schools, Charleston County School District, Chicago Public Schools, Dallas Independent School District, District of Columbia Public Schools, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Oakland Unified School District, Pittsburgh Public Schools, St. Louis Public Schools, and Seattle Public Schools.

II. What resources are needed to decide upon and conduct school closures?

While school closures can be an important component of any right-sizing plan to address a budget shortfall, properly executed closures require **time, leadership attention, and money**.

A. Time

When considering school closures, districts should allot between 12 and 18 months from the time of the first board meeting during which school closures are discussed to the actual relocation of students, materials and equipment. In districts where the process has taken longer than 18 months, there was a significant amount of time in which affected parties were in “limbo,” resulting in lost productivity. Conversely, in districts where the process has been rushed to completion in less than 12 months, many districts observed more confusion, community discord, and otherwise avoidable mistakes made because of the faster timeline.

The school closure process consists of a **decision-making phase** (determining whether to close schools, and, if so, which ones) and an **implementation phase** (closing the schools). Below is a sample 18-month timeline for school closures. The timeline allocates an additional five months for preparation and planning during the decision-making phase and one month for follow-up work after the schools are closed.

For a timeline that describes how the overall process might be accomplished in 12 months, please see [Appendix A](#). Note that this alternative timeline will carry a greater risk of stakeholder dissatisfaction.

School Closure Timeline

— = duration of workstream

Activity	Year 1												Year 2									Year 3		
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
	Prep and planning			Post-board decision-making									Implementation											
Decision Process - do we close schools and, if so, which ones?																								
Balancing the budget: the role of school closures																								
Identification of maximum number of seats that could be eliminated																								
Identification of initial criteria to select schools for closing																								
Revision of criteria based on community feedback																								
Evaluation of all schools against criteria: select initial list																								
Revision of school closing list based on community feedback																								
Community engagement and communications																								
Engagement: Phase I: The need for school closures																								
Engagement: Phase II: Initial list of schools for closure																								
Engagement: Phase III: Finalized list of schools for closure																								
Implementation - execution of school closures																								
1. Student Assignment																								
Policy decision: how students will be re-assigned																								
Facilities capacity analysis																								
Re-draw attendance boundaries																								
Application of re-assignment policy and informing of families																								
Integrating students from closing schools into new schools																								
2. Revised Enrollment Projections & School Budgets																								
Create multiple enrollment scenarios																								
Finalize enrollment projections																								
Generate school budgets (using district timeline)																								
3. Staff Reassignment																								
Decide upon approach to staff reassignment																								
Staff meetings with all impacted staff																								
Staff re-assignment (using district timeline)																								
4. Use of Facilities																								
Determine new use for closing schools' facilities																								
5. Miscellaneous School Operations																								
School Moves																								
Develop comprehensive move plan for closing schools																								
Inventory all closing buildings																								
Implement move																								
State, Federal & Private Grants																								
Identify discretionary funding and seek transfer options																								
Student Cumulative Records																								
Develop a plan to transfer and/or store records																								
Implement transfer of records																								
Notifications of School Closure																								
Notify all district entities (food services, after school, etc)																								
Notify state and county departments of education																								

B. Leadership and Staff

Any successful school closure process requires dedicated and engaged leadership—from the superintendent to principals of the schools being closed. In addition, there should be a team of district staff members who focus exclusively on school closures for the duration of the project. The chart below describes both ideal and minimum staffing configurations for a school closure process.

	Effort required	Ideally....	At a minimum...
School Board	3-4 lengthy public board meeting discussions over the course of 1-2 years; series of one-on-one meetings with staff; ongoing engagement with district staff; participation in community engagement process	Aligned, fully supportive board that makes strategic decisions that are in the best long-term interest of students, rather than for short-term political purpose	A majority of board members who are able to make strategic decisions that are in the best long-term interest of students rather than for short-term political purpose
Superintendent	6 or more hours in a given week over the course of closures	Visionary leader of the work	A strong supporter of senior champion and his/her leadership of the work
Senior Champion	Approximately 30% of time for decision-making phase, 15% of time for implementation phase	Cabinet member who considers this his/her top priority for the entire process	Cabinet member who considers this one of his/her top 3 priorities for the entire process
Overall Project Manager / staff lead	50 - 100% of time for 24 months (closer to 100% in the middle and 50% during preparation and follow-up)	Internal staff member respected by school board, senior staff and community leaders. Must have easy access to the superintendent. Consistent project manager for both the decision-making and implementation phases.	Internal staff member with strong project management and analytical skills, as well as a capacity for community engagement. Easy access to the superintendent.
Head of stakeholder relations	Average 20% of time over 18 month period but unevenly distributed (100% some weeks, 0% others)	Respected leader of a pre-existing community engagement function within the district with established ties to parents, union, business leaders and other key constituents	Senior district representative with community relations experience and proven rapport with key stakeholders
Cross-Functional Implementation Team	Approximately 2-3 hours per week during decision-making phase. 10-50% of time during implementation phase. Will vary by department and number of schools closing.	Department heads (e.g., human resources, assessment / accountability) that proactively participate in planning sessions and take ownership of their functional responsibility throughout the implementation process.	Deputy department heads who are willing to participate in planning sessions and execute on their functional responsibility throughout the implementation process.

C. Money

Budgets for a school closure process will vary greatly across districts depending on the scope of the work and number of schools under consideration. The following information can be used as a benchmark for understanding approximate resources necessary to execute school closures. Note that the following schedule assumes a fiscal year ending in July.

	Project Management	Community Engagement	Facilities (per school closed)
Year 1 (Oct. – July)	0.5 FTE (\$20,000 - \$50,000) for <i>project manager</i> to coordinate decision-making analysis	\$5,000 for labor, materials, pamphlets, photocopies, etc.	
Year 2 (Aug. – July)	1 FTE (\$40,000 - \$100,000) for <i>project manager</i> to coordinate decision-making and implementation	\$10,000 for materials, pamphlets, photocopies, etc.	\$10,000 - \$50,000 per school for inventory, packing, cleaning and transport of goods
Year 3 (Aug. – Oct.)	0.5 FTE (\$20,000 - \$50,000) for <i>project manager</i> to complete process management		\$100,000 per school requiring work for inventory, packing, cleaning, goods transport and preparation of both closing and receiving facilities for use
Total	\$80,000 - \$200,000	~\$15,000	\$110,000 - \$150,000 per school

III. What major challenges have other districts faced and how have they overcome them?

Districts encounter several common challenges when closing schools. Distilled below are the largest among these challenges, along with some strategies used to overcome them. Anticipating and prioritizing these challenges will greatly increase the likelihood of a smoothly executed school closure process.

The five most common and significant challenges are:

1. Insufficient stakeholder engagement
2. Lack of a true project leader and champion
3. Lack of focus on implementation
4. Closing schools on too rapid a timeline
5. Failure to ground the process in the improvement of educational opportunities for families

Challenge	Description	Mitigation Strategies
<p>1. Insufficient stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Community engagement becomes an afterthought. Meetings are held in the spirit of compliance rather than true collaboration. District officials do not engage with local community leaders and organizations.</p> <p>Political realities are underestimated. Not enough time is spent with school board members to ensure that they understand why recommendations are being made and the trade-offs at stake. As a result, the board vote can be unduly influenced by adult rather than student interests.</p> <p>Internal stakeholders such as principals, teachers and district staff are not engaged in the decision-making process. Rather than providing valuable input and support, they become alienated and directly oppose all aspects of the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize community engagement. Families are the most important stakeholders of the district and they need to be included in the dialogue. Moreover, they will often provide a valuable new perspective on the closure recommendations. • Carefully consider the realities of the district’s political landscape before engaging in this work. Be realistic about whether the governing body will approve these decisions. • Engage internal stakeholders early and often. Incorporating their feedback into early recommendations will help design a more robust overall approach and improve alignment by increasing their level of ownership in the process.

Challenge	Description	Mitigation Strategies
<p>2. No internal project leader or senior champion driving the work every day</p>	<p>By spreading the responsibility for school closures to too many people or “outsourcing” too heavily to consultants, some districts lack a single point of accountability to drive this difficult and important process. The lack of a single leader creates gaps in accountability that leave important tasks undone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a single project lead from within the district. • Ensure that the project lead has ample authority and support from the superintendent for any actions they must take.
<p>3. Lack of focus on implementation: the work that needs to happen after school closure decisions are made</p>	<p>Most districts focus all of their energy on the decision-making component of school closures. As a result, there is insufficient planning for everything that needs to happen once the decisions are made. The repercussions for this lack of resourcing can be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families aren’t given support during their transition to a new school. • Union relations can be extremely strained through staff placement processes that are disorganized and/or poorly communicated. • Student records can be permanently lost. • Millions of dollars of grant funds can be lost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a detailed implementation work plan is created prior to or soon after closure decisions are made. • Continue to resource the work appropriately (i.e., budget leadership time and money) and prioritize the implementation phase across all departments.
<p>4. Closing schools on too rapid a timeline</p>	<p>Districts generally begin their budgeting timeline for the next school year in December or January. This timeline often leads to the discovery of budget shortages and therefore a swift recommendation that schools be closed. Some districts feel the responsibility to make “tough decisions” and end up insisting that school closures need to happen in time for the next school year (i.e., on a six-month timeline).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not try to close schools on a six-month timeline. Successful implementation of school closures requires a minimum of one year, and ideally 18 months. • Use the urgency generated by the discovery of a budget shortfall to begin a planning process for a comprehensive right-sizing plan to be implemented in the following school year.

Challenge	Description	Mitigation Strategies
<p>5. Failure to ground the process in the improvement of educational options for families</p>	<p>Because the impetus for school closures stemmed from a budgetary crisis, districts often engage in a dialogue about these closures that only focus on finances. In doing so, they lose sight of another critical reason for school closures—the improvement of educational options for families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that schools are being closed only if it is the best way to improve resource allocation in the district. • Include academic factors in the criteria by which schools will be selected for closure. • Frame the dialogue with the community around how these difficult decisions are being made, with the long-term goal of creating the best possible educational options for families, given the limited resources available.

IV. What steps must be taken to decide upon and conduct school closures?

In order to close schools, districts will go through two phases, the *decision process* in which the number and identity of schools to be closed is determined, and *implementation*, where the closings are executed. In parallel with each of these two phases, the district should be in a constant state of *stakeholder engagement*; ensuring that the voices of all constituents are heard and incorporated into the final outcome.

A. The Decision Process

Questions addressed in this section:

- Will school closures help the district’s financial situation?
- How many seats can the district safely eliminate?
- Approximately how many schools can the district close?
- How should the district decide which schools to close?
- Which schools will be closed?
- How much money will be saved as a result of school closures?

How much will school closures help the district’s financial situation?

Closure Timeline

Year 1												Year 2												Year 3		
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

There are several basic considerations that should be included in the analysis of how much money the district will save annually from each school closure—namely, staffing, utilities, freed up subsidies, and facility re-utilization. By calculating an approximate average savings for a “generic” school, the district will then be able to estimate a total savings once the number of schools closures is known.

Staffing: Staffing positions that are allocated “per school” can be eliminated (e.g., principal, assistance principal, custodian and guidance counselor), whereas those allocated “per student” (e.g., teachers) can not because the former positions are no longer necessary if the school closes but the latter must follow the students.

ACME Example: Headcount (salary + benefits) savings at one school			
	FTE(s)	Fully-loaded cost per year	Yearly savings
Principal	1	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000
Assistant principal	1	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000
Custodians	2	\$ 45,000	\$ 90,000
Guidance counselor	0.5	\$ 60,000	\$ 30,000
Total			\$ 335,000

Utilities: Since these buildings will no longer be used for education purposes, utilities costs can largely be eliminated. Because utilities vary greatly from school to school, it's best to estimate savings based on square-foot usage across the district. Assuming that some of the buildings will be mothballed, unavoidable ongoing utilities costs (e.g., keeping the pipes warm to prevent freezing, security and maintenance costs to prevent and repair damages from vandalism, general upkeep, etc.) must be considered. One can then make an assumption about utilities costs based on the average square footage of the schools which may end up under consideration for closure.

ACME Example: Annual Utilities Savings	
District average cost per square foot for utilities	\$3
Average size of a school in the district (square feet)	50,000
	\$150,000
% of costs recaptured (not all costs eliminated)	85%
Total per school per year	\$ 127,500

Freed up subsidies: The district will sometimes provide subsidies to a school (e.g., small school subsidy, end of year bailout for budgets in the red, etc.) that will be recaptured when closing the school.

For example, imagine a district called ACME where many of the schools (~50%) are receiving a subsidy of around \$30,000 per year for upkeep on a tree-planting program initiated in the district last year. The average recapture for a given school in this district is about \$15,000.

Facility reutilization: Depending on how a district plans to reutilize the closed school facility, there may be some additional “savings” in the form of one-time revenue (i.e., building sale) or ongoing revenue (e.g., lease to a charter school). It is important to deduct any estimated cost associated with preparing the facility for this use.

ACME Example: Annual Facility Re-utilization "Savings"	
Average size of a school in the district (square feet)	50,000
% rented to charters and other community groups	50%
Square footage rented	25,000
Lease rate per square foot	\$1
Total per school per year	\$ 25,000

Central office reduction: In addition to the cost savings listed above, some districts have considered reducing central office operating budgets commensurate with the percentage of schools closing (i.e., if 5 percent of schools in the system are closed, then 5 percent of central office support is deducted from the overall district budget for all central office functions). While the central office workload *will* decrease as schools are closed, the decision-process around potential central office reductions should be made as part of the broader right-sizing effort and not only associated with school closures (i.e., central office reductions may be necessary even in the absence of school closures). As such, central office cost reductions are not discussed in detail in this guide and *are omitted from savings estimates* throughout this guide.

The savings summary of closing one school in our hypothetical “ACME” district is recorded below.

ACME Example: Summary of Savings	
Headcount savings	335,000
Utilities savings	127,500
Facilities re-utilization	25,000
Freed up subsidies	15,000
Total savings per school per year	\$ 502,500

The approximate annual savings per school closed for the districts contributing to this tool ranges from \$300,000 - \$1 million *without taking the costs of closure into consideration*. It is important to note, however, that it may take several years to realize savings from school closures because of the time lag in downsizing headcount costs and repurposing buildings (e.g., layoffs require severance packages, buildings cannot be immediately repurposed, etc.).

The Summary of Estimated Budget Impact for the ACME district (shown below) helps illustrate the fact that savings achieved as a result of school closings are captured over a period of years and are not immediate. The district will have spent \$168,000 over a three-year period to release \$1,147,500 from the budget over five years, for a net savings of nearly \$1 million over a five-year period. Note that the consultant/staff time and community engagement costs appropriated here are one-fifth of the total that would be incurred because the ACME district has made an assumption that around five schools will be closed and spread that cost across all five.

ACME Example: Summary estimated budget impact per school closure					
	School Year 1	School Year 2	School Year 3	School Year 4	Year 5 and beyond (end state)
Savings (Rev)	Preparation		Schools closed		
Headcount savings	-	-	-	335,000	335,000
Utilities savings	-	-	127,500	127,500	127,500
Facilities re-utilization	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
Freed up subsidies	-	-	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total	-	-	142,500	502,500	502,500
Costs					
Consultant/ staff time	10,000	20,000	10,000	-	-
Community engagement	1,000	2,000	-	-	-
Facilities/ Moving of equipment	-	25,000	100,000	-	-
Lost government funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total	11,000	47,000	110,000	-	-
Net					
Total amount released in the budget	(11,000)	(47,000)	32,500	502,500	502,500

5 yr savings	1,147,500
5 yr cost	168,000
5 yr net	979,500

What is the maximum number of seats that can be eliminated?

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Once you calculate the approximate annual savings from each school closure, the first step toward understanding how many schools can be closed (and thus how much money can be freed up in the budget) is to determine how many extra “seats” the district has. This analysis should be structured by a comparison of *supply* (the number of seats available for students) versus *demand* (the number of students).

Step One: Calculate Supply

Supply is calculated by reviewing the facilities capacity across the district. As part of your district’s facility and student assignment processes, a methodology for calculating facility capacity should be in place. The details of a facility capacity analysis are beyond the scope of this guide, but [Appendices B and C](#) provide a description of the capacity analysis and approach used in Seattle Public Schools.

The output of a hypothetical capacity analysis in the simplified ACME district example is included below. The conclusion of the analysis is that there are 40,000 total available seats in the district (highlighted in yellow).

ACME Example: Seat capacity in the district				
Grades	# Schools	Rooms	Total # of seats available	
K-3		41	500	12,308
4-6		24	400	9,231
7-9		21	350	9,231
10-12		19	330	9,231
Total capacity		105	1,580	40,000

Step Two: Calculate Demand

Districts often consider the number of *current* students to represent demand. For example, they will report, “We have space for 40,000 students but our enrollment is only at 30,000.” Although this may be an effective communication strategy for helping community members appreciate the gravity of the situation, it is critical that a district have a robust strategy for predicting and using *future* enrollment trends for this calculation. Again guidance on making these projections is beyond the scope of this tool, but it should be embedded in your district’s approach to a capacity analysis.

The following two examples help to illustrate this point: the enrollment level used to determine how many seats can be eliminated in each scenario is highlighted in yellow.

Example A: Declining enrollment					
Total capacity = 40,000 seats					
Enrollment projection	2009 (current)	2010	2011	2012	2013
K-3	11,077	10,954	10,831	10,615	10,462
4-6	8,308	8,215	8,123	7,962	7,846
7-9	8,308	8,215	8,123	7,962	7,846
10-12	8,308	8,215	8,123	7,962	7,846
Total students	36,000	35,600	35,200	34,500	34,000

ACME Example B: Increasing enrollment					
Total capacity = 40,000 seats					
Enrollment projection	2009 (current)	2010	2011	2012	2013
K-3	11,077	11,138	11,200	11,231	11,231
4-6	8308	8354	8,400	8,423	8,423
7-9	8308	8354	8,400	8,423	8,423
10-12	8308	8354	8,400	8,423	8,423
Total students	36,000	36,200	36,400	36,500	36,500

In *Example A: Declining enrollment*, a maximum of 4,400 seats (40,000-35,600) can be eliminated. The five-year projection (34,000 students) cannot be used for the calculation in this case because that would result in 1,600 students without seats for the next few years until enrollment drops to the projected number.

In *Example B: Increasing enrollment*, a maximum of 3,500 (40,000-36,500) seats can be eliminated. Although next year's enrollment projection suggests up to 3,800 seats could be eliminated in this scenario, the district would then need to re-open schools immediately in subsequent years as the student population expands.


When predicting future enrollment, it is important to look beyond recent historical trends. Many factors such as birth rates, new housing projects, and charter and private school growth need to be taken into account. In addition, the distribution of that population both across different grades and across regions of the district will need to be known in order to properly distribute the seats to be eliminated. See [Appendix D](#) for an example of how the supply and demand argument was framed to the Pittsburgh community in 2005.

What criteria should the district use to determine which schools to close?




Closure Timeline

Year 1												Year 2												Year 3		
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Once the district determines the maximum number of seats to be eliminated, it must then determine *which* schools will close. The first step is to decide upon the criteria that will be used for that selection. These criteria tend to fall into three categories: *academic*, *enrollment/facilities capacity* and *other*. Here is an example of the criteria that the Boston Public Schools used during their school closure process.



Phase II Facilities Reprogramming: High Level Data Areas

 <p>Academic Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Performance • Student Growth 	 <p>School Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization • School Demand/Choice • Operational costs 	 <p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical condition • Maintenance/repair needs • Utility costs • Locations
---	---	---

Additional examples of criteria used in recent school closure decision-making in Oakland and Charleston County can be found in [Appendix E](#).

When considering which criteria will be used in the school closure decision process, the district must also consider how much weight each will be given in the analysis. Effective practice is to engage the school board early in this process so that they can provide input on the criteria.

Ideally, the board will already have a planning document, such as the one on record at Dallas ISD (see [Appendix F](#)), that outlines the possible reasons for school closure. In order to expedite criteria selection, it is highly recommended that district staff present the board with a set of guidelines or recommended criteria to be used and ask for agreement. This should reduce the number of lengthy and difficult discussions experienced by a subset of the districts contributing to this guide. Below are more detailed explanations for some of the factors.

Academic Factors

Remembering that all district decisions should be made with the goal of maximizing educational options for families, academic performance should be the first criterion screened

when deciding which schools to close. Ideally, the academic criteria used should be aligned with the district's accountability metrics, assuming the district has them in place.

One of the key decisions regarding academic factors is how to weigh *absolute performance* (e.g., percent of students scoring proficient on state exams) versus *growth* (e.g., year over year gains made by students at a school). Many districts have prioritized the *growth* criterion because trend data is a closer proxy for the effect any given school is having on the achievement of its students. In one example, Pittsburgh Public Schools brought in RAND to help them evaluate their schools prior to closure because they wanted to build a more sophisticated method for evaluating which schools were best serving their students. RAND developed the School Performance Index (SPI), which estimated the added value that each school provided based on student-level growth. Pittsburgh used this metric to inform the closure selections, including the decision to close one school which had relatively high test scores but which was failing to accelerate student achievement. The index also highlighted the dramatic gains students were making in certain schools, despite low overall test scores. Although politically challenging, the SPI was mostly well-received across the city as an equitable way to make closure decisions.

Please see [Appendix G](#) for an op-ed published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on the topic of Pittsburgh Public Schools and the SPI.

Enrollment and Facilities Capacity

After evaluating potential closures from the perspective of academic performance, the second set of criteria to evaluate includes school utilization, facilities condition, and availability of reasonable alternatives for displaced students, especially at the elementary level and/or when the district does not provide transportation. In some cases, a school will be eliminated from consideration for closure because there are no alternatives for its students. This analysis should be conducted using the systems and structures associated with your district's enrollment projections and facility capacity procedures.

Other

Other criteria that may need to be considered include: opportunities to combine different grade level schools into a single, larger school; the fate of special programs (e.g., special education, English language learners, gifted programs), and strong community opinions. The challenge with many of these "other" criteria is that they are often subjective and more difficult to quantify, but their consideration is critical to the development of a strategic solution that is in the best interest of students. A suggested practice is to use the academic and enrollment/facilities criteria to create the initial list of schools. This list can then be evaluated against the other criteria and vetted with the community during Phase II engagement (see below) to arrive at the best possible plan.

In the ACME district, school closing criteria were prioritized as described below. Note that for “Difficulty reaching nearest alternative,” the superintendent’s office decided that any school receiving a rating of “most difficult” would be removed from the list of possible closures even though the criterion is ranked fourth on the list.

ACME Example: School closure priority list	
Criteria	Approx Rank
Academic performance (growth trend)	1
Academic performance (absolute)	2
Facility condition	3
Difficulty reaching nearest alternative	4
Utilization	5
Cost of operation	6

Which schools will the district recommend closing?

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Once the district has prioritized and refined the school closure selection criteria, it must then use these criteria to generate a preliminary list of schools for closure to be vetted with the board and the public.

Continuing with the simplified ACME example district with 40,000 total seats, the superintendent is deciding how many and which high schools to close in order to reduce the number of vacant seats (she will, of course, repeat the process for other grade levels).

ACME Example: Extra high school seats			
Source	Capacity	Projected enrollment in 2013	"Extra" seats
	Determined by capacity analysis	Determined by enrollment analysis	Difference between capacity and projected enrollment
Total high school seats	9,231	8,423	808

Having determined that there are 808 “extra” high school seats available, the project manager has listed all 19 high schools in the district to evaluate them for school closure (below).

ACME Example: Choice of high school closures (Step 1)											
808 seats can be eliminated at maximum at the high school level											
School	Type	Academic performance (growth trend)	Academic performance (absolute)	Condition of facility	Relative cost of operation	Difficulty reaching nearest alternative	Capacity	Current student population	Current Empty seats	Utilization rate	
1	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	High	Difficult	300	270	30	90%	
2	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	500	440	60	88%	
3	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	1 - Poor	Low	Difficult	700	650	50	93%	
4	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Easy	250	200	50	80%	
5	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	400	380	20	95%	
6	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Moderate	440	380	60	86%	
7	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	3 - Good	High	Difficult	550	480	70	87%	
8	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	Low	Easy	700	600	100	86%	
9	High school	2 - Average	3 - Good	3 - Good	Low	Easy	520	500	20	96%	
10	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	350	300	50	86%	
11	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	430	410	20	95%	
12	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Difficult	560	500	60	89%	
13	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Easy	400	300	100	75%	
14	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Moderate	Moderate	500	470	30	94%	
15	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	High	Easy	200	190	10	95%	
16	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Low	Difficult	1000	900	100	90%	
17	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Easy	600	550	50	92%	
18	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	High	Easy	465	432	33	93%	
19	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	Low	Moderate	366	356	10	97%	
Total							9231	8308	923	90%	

The project manager then sorts the 19 schools based on the criteria rankings (academic growth first, academic absolute performance second, facility condition third, etc.), with the following results.

ACME Example: Choice of high school closures (Step 2)											
808 seats can be eliminated at maximum at the high school level											
School	Type	Academic performance (growth trend)	Academic performance (absolute)	Condition of facility	Relative cost of operation	Difficulty reaching nearest alternative	Capacity	Current student population	Current Empty seats	Utilization rate	
7	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	High	Difficult	550	480	70	87%	
14	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Moderate	Moderate	500	470	30	94%	
16	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Low	Moderate	1000	900	100	90%	
4	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Easy	250	200	50	80%	
12	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Difficult	560	500	60	89%	
5	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	400	380	20	95%	
11	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	430	410	20	95%	
13	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	400	300	100	75%	
17	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Easy	600	550	50	92%	
8	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	1 - Poor	Low	Easy	700	600	100	86%	
10	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	350	300	50	86%	
18	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	High	Difficult	465	432	33	93%	
19	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	3 - Good	Low	Difficult	366	356	10	97%	
9	High school	2 - Average	3 - Good	3 - Good	Low	Easy	520	500	20	96%	
1	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	High	Difficult	300	270	30	90%	
2	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	500	440	60	88%	
15	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Easy	200	190	10	95%	
3	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	3 - Good	Low	Difficult	700	650	50	93%	
6	High school	3 - Good	3 - Good	1 - Poor	High	Moderate	440	380	60	86%	
Total							9231	8308	923	90%	

Of those schools displaying poor academic growth in recent years (7, 14, 16, 4, 12, 5 and 11), three also show poor absolute performance (7, 14 and 16). However, school #7 has a rating of “Difficult” with regards to nearby alternatives, so it was eliminated from consideration. In addition, school #16 has a capacity of 1,000 students, and a closure of that school would put the district at a shortage of seats (remember ACME district is only 808 seats below capacity at the high school level). Therefore, the superintendent passes over school #7 and school #16 and selects both school #14 and school #4 to recommend for closure, totaling 750 seats to be eliminated (see below: selections highlighted in yellow).

ACME Example: Choice of high school closures (Step 3)										
808 seats can be eliminated at maximum at the high school level										
School	Type	Academic performance (growth trend)	Academic performance (absolute)	Condition of facility	Relative cost of operation	Difficulty reaching nearest alternative	Capacity	Current student population	Current Empty seats	Utilization rate
7	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	High	Difficult	550	480	70	87%
14	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Moderate	Moderate	500	470	30	94%
16	High school	1 - Poor	1 - Poor	2 - Average	Low	Moderate	1000	900	100	90%
4	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Easy	250	200	50	80%
12	High school	1 - Poor	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Difficult	560	500	60	89%
5	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	400	380	20	95%
11	High school	1 - Poor	3 - Good	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	430	410	20	95%
13	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Easy	400	300	100	75%
17	High school	2 - Average	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Easy	600	550	50	92%
8	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	1 - Poor	Low	Easy	700	600	100	86%
10	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	Moderate	Easy	350	300	50	86%
18	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	2 - Average	High	Difficult	465	432	33	93%
19	High school	2 - Average	2 - Average	3 - Good	Low	Difficult	366	356	10	97%
9	High school	2 - Average	3 - Good	3 - Good	Low	Easy	520	500	20	96%
1	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	High	Difficult	300	270	30	90%
2	High school	3 - Good	1 - Poor	3 - Good	Moderate	Moderate	500	440	60	88%
15	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	1 - Poor	High	Easy	200	190	10	95%
3	High school	3 - Good	2 - Average	3 - Good	Low	Difficult	700	650	50	93%
6	High school	3 - Good	3 - Good	1 - Poor	High	Moderate	440	380	60	86%
Total							9231	8308	923	90%

Note that the team has made an overt choice to de-prioritize utilization (school #13 was not recommended for closure even though it ranked lowest with 300/400 or only 75 percent utilization) and has instead focused on academic criteria, facility condition, and available alternatives as the main inputs to their decision. The leadership’s thinking in the case of low utilization was that they should be able to move students to these schools to fill many of the empty seats if the school was rated as worth keeping.

While the focus in the ACME example above is on high schools, the same process must be undertaken for remaining school levels as well such that all areas of excess seats are addressed. Ultimately, the superintendent’s office will generate a list of elementary, middle and high schools to be reviewed by the public and the board before final decisions are made.

How much money will be saved as a result of all closures?

Once the initial list of school closures has been generated by the superintendent’s office, a more accurate estimate of savings over time can be generated based on specific information about those individual schools (e.g., principal salary, janitor salary, possible facility re-utilization, subsidy recapture, etc.). By summing these savings across all schools recommended for closure, districts can estimate the extent of the impact school closures will have on budget planning in coming years.

The ACME district started the process by looking at one of the high schools—school #14—in detail, with the following results. Note that the numbers here vary from those in the earlier example because, in this case, the details (e.g., principal and custodian compensation, freed up subsidies, etc.) have been filled in for the specific school in question (school #14). In addition, because the district will be closing 11 schools, the cost of consultant time and community engagement have been divided by 11.

ACME Example: estimated budget impact from closing school #14					
	School Year	School Year	School Year	School Year	Year 5 and beyond (end state)
	1	2	3	4	
Savings (Rev)	Preparation		Schools closed		
Headcount savings	-			310,000	310,000
Utilities savings			160,000	160,000	160,000
Facilities re-utilization	-			23,000	23,000
Freed up subsidies	-	-			
Total	-	-	160,000	493,000	493,000
5 yr savings					
1,146,000					
Costs					
Consultant/ staff time	4,545	9,091	4,545	-	-
Community engagement	455	909		-	-
Facilities/ Moving of equipment	-	25,000	100,000	-	-
Lost government funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5,000	35,000	104,545	-	-
5 yr cost					
144,545					
Net					
Total amount released in the budget	(5,000)	(35,000)	55,455	493,000	493,000
5 yr net					
1,001,455					

The school closing project manager then summed results like the one above across all 11 schools recommended for closure with the following output:

ACME Example: budget summary of closing 11 schools					
	School Year	School Year	School Year	School Year	Year 5 and beyond (end state)
	1	2	3	4	
Savings (Rev)	Preparation		Schools closed		
Headcount savings	-	-	-	3,685,000	3,685,000
Utilities savings	-	-	1,402,500	1,402,500	1,402,500
Facilities re-utilization	-	-	-	275,000	275,000
Freed up subsidies	-	-	165,000	165,000	165,000
total	-	-	1,567,500	5,527,500	5,527,500
5 yr savings					
12,622,500					
Costs					
Consultant/ staff time	50,000	100,000	50,000	-	-
Community engagement	5,000	10,000		-	-
Facilities/ Moving of equipment	-	275,000	1,100,000	-	-
Lost government funds	-		55,000	55,000	55,000
Total	55,000	385,000	1,205,000	55,000	55,000
5 yr cost					
1,755,000					
Net					
Total amount released in the budget	(55,000)	(385,000)	362,500	5,472,500	5,472,500
5 yr net					
10,867,500					

By closing these 11 schools, the ACME district will save roughly \$11 million over a five-year period, inclusive of the \$1.8 million required to execute the closures. Only \$0.6 million of this savings will be captured during year three (the year the schools actually close), because that is the year when the brunt of the moving costs are shouldered. No savings occur during years one and two of the timeline outlined in this tool because the actual student transition doesn't happen until the beginning of school year three.

When Seattle Public Schools made plans to close five of its schools in the 2009-10 school year, it estimated the plan would net a savings of \$16.2 million in general operating funds over five years, including implementation costs of \$1.9 million and savings of \$18.1 million. While the estimated savings in Seattle's example are greater than those estimated for the ACME district, this is an illustration of the variability in savings that may be captured in different districts.

For additional detail on the budget impact estimated for Seattle’s 2009-10 school closings, see [Appendix H](#).

B. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

Keys to Success for Stakeholder Engagement

In parallel with the decision process discussed above and extending into the implementation of school closures (to be discussed below), a the district should devise and execute a robust engagement strategy that encompasses communications with parents, students, teachers, staff, unions, the board, local business leaders and anyone else with an interest in local education. Districts tend to err on the side of too little engagement with too few stakeholders too late in the process, the results of which can range from school closure recommendations not being upheld, to angry and frustrated constituents, to students not reaching their proper facilities in the year after schools are closed. As much as possible, district leaders should work toward transparency to ensure that the public does not perceive school closure decisions as being made “behind closed doors.”

Questions addressed in this section:

- *Who should lead the community engagement process?*
- *How does the district establish allies?*
- *How should the message be crafted?*
- *How should concerns be addressed?*
- *How should community meetings be structured?*

The districts contributing to this work identified five key elements to success for stakeholder engagement:

1. appoint strong leadership
2. establish allies in the community
3. develop a clear and consistent message
4. respond promptly to questions and concerns
5. treat each meeting as a critical event

Each of these is discussed in greater detail below.

1. Appoint strong leadership for the community engagement process

Given the complexity and delicacy of stakeholder engagement, the superintendent must ultimately be accountable for its success. On a day-to-day basis, however, this portion of the school closure work is best managed either by a department head as part of their usual duties (i.e., community engagement) or, if that position does not exist in your district, another senior district officer with relevant experience. Either way, it is important that there is a single person responsible for all aspects of community engagement to help ensure that nothing “falls through the cracks.” The superintendent should appoint someone to this position for the duration of the school closure process and dedicate a significant portion of his/her own time to its oversight given its importance.

2. Establish allies and address opposition

During any school closing, certain stakeholders will naturally be aligned with the recommendations and others will be opposed to them. It is important to understand this context, identify key stakeholders quickly, and attempt to secure allies. Most noteworthy of this stakeholder group are the members of the school board, with whom one-on-one meetings

should be scheduled *after* the district has recognized the need for closures but *before* a preliminary list is presented to the board at an official board meeting.

By addressing individual board members’ concerns early and incorporating their thoughts into the criteria being used to select schools for closure, they will become more a part of the process and will be less apt to react negatively at subsequent meetings. This approach was used successfully by several of the districts contributing to this guide. It is important to note, however, that *some districts do not allow representatives of the district office to communicate with board members in private*, so be sure to check your district’s laws and regulations before proceeding. In addition, some districts have found it helpful to keep the mayor and the state board of education chair apprised of the situation as it develops.

Similarly, there will be other members of the community whose input should be sought on a regular basis. For example, once the preliminary list of closure recommendations is brought before the board and published, it is helpful to maintain dialogue with union representatives, address employee association concerns and incorporate teacher/union input into transition plans.

3. Develop the message

Although each district will require a slightly different message, there are some suggested overarching principles to keep in mind.

Focus on student achievement over the long term. Given that the singular goal of a school district is to provide the best possible educational options for families, district operators must be able to explain how school closures fit into the broader approach to meeting this goal. That is, how will the school closures free up funds (and where will these funds go), move students to better performing schools, ensure the long-term viability of important programs or some combination of these ideas? Below are a few examples that may help bring some of this to light.

Ineffective statements	Possible alternative
“The district is operating in the red and this cannot continue.”	“The fact that the district is operating in the red prevents us from providing the best possible educational opportunities to the children in this community in a sustained way.”
“On the list for closure are Schools A, B and C because they each are only 50 percent utilized.”	“On the list for closure are Schools A, B, and C. The students from these schools will be moving to nearby schools with equal or better academic performance.”
“We have determined that at least two schools will need to be closed to balance the budget for next year.”	“We recommend that two schools be closed in order that money currently spent on empty seats can be recaptured and applied in other ways to improve the education that our children receive.”

Keep it clear, concise and consistent. The rationale for school closures must be communicated in a way that is easily understood by all members of the community. In addition, the rationale that a teacher on the east side of town hears in September needs to be the same rationale that a parent on the west side of town hears in May. Inconsistency in messaging will lead to confusion and distrust.

Ineffective statements	Possible alternative
“Affected teachers will probably be moved to nearby schools.”	“Teachers affected by school closures have already been notified of their status.”
<p><i>Superintendent:</i> “All excessed teachers will be given preference for selecting new positions.”</p> <p><i>Deputy Superintendent:</i> “Principals will have the authority to select from the excessed teacher population.”</p>	<p><i>Superintendent:</i> “Excessed teachers will be given priority for new opportunities, but principals will have the final say when choosing between two excessed teachers for a position.”</p> <p><i>Deputy Superintendent:</i> “Excessed teachers will be given priority for new opportunities, but principals will have the final say when choosing between two excessed teachers for a position.”</p>
“Special Ed students will be taken care of.”	“All families of affected Special Ed students have been notified of their options. We have taken care to ensure that all programs and facilities available in previous schools will be provided in the new environment.”

4. Respond to questions and concerns in a timely fashion

Regardless of the quality of the communications, some level of confusion in the community is to be expected. For this reason, districts have utilized in-person meetings, websites, or even call centers to address community questions about school closures (among other things).

Washington D.C. Public Schools has been particularly successful in this realm during their recent school closures. The chancellor held individual meetings with each of the affected groups (e.g., teachers’ union, principals, parents’ associations) during the decision-making process. In addition, the district set up a comprehensive website to ensure that families, staff and community members had access to current information regarding the process. The website can be accessed at:

http://edreform.dc.gov/edreform/cwp/view,a,3,q,460386,edreformNav_GID,1452,.asp.

5. Treat every meeting during the school closure process as a critical event

Because of the delicate nature of this topic, the project manager for school closures should ensure that careful attention is paid to the planning and execution of each meeting during this

period. In particular, the district staff attendance, facilitator, meeting location, and community attendance must all be taken into careful consideration.

Meeting facilitator - While facilitation will vary depending on the format and structure of each meeting, the importance of this role cannot be overstated. For large regional meetings, it is a good idea to have a senior district staff member or vetted, experienced professional facilitate. For school-based meetings, having the principal facilitate can be effective, as long as a) that principal's continued employment is assured and b) the principal can be trusted to take a system-wide view of things as opposed to focusing on just their school. Where either of these is not the case, a vice-principal or district employee will serve.

Location: regional vs. school-based meetings - Regional meetings (for which the attendees and topics of discussion involve multiple schools) allow for a dialogue that focuses on the entire plan, rather than a deep dive into specific schools. This approach can be effective early in the process (see Phase I below) when discussing the fact that closures are needed and the criteria to be used for determining which schools to close. Moving later into the process (see Phase III below), school-based meetings become effective as they create a forum for individuals to voice their concerns about an individual school and ask specific questions about how the plan will impact their community.

Attendance by senior staff - Community members will pay close attention to which district staff members are attending each community meeting. Carefully consider who attends each meeting. If the superintendent attends one school-level meeting but not others, members of the other school communities may become upset. Conversely, if a junior member of the superintendent's staff is the only district staff representative at a large regional meeting, community members are going to feel that senior leadership doesn't believe their voices are an important part of the process.

What community organizations can support the engagement process? - Trusted community organizations can play a critical role in effective community engagement (e.g., PTA, influential parents and teachers, etc.). In addition to encouraging people to attend meetings, these groups can provide valuable feedback on the agenda and format of meetings.

See [Appendix I](#) for a PowerPoint presentation used by the DC Public Schools in their community engagement meetings.

WARNING: TRUE STORY PITFALL

The facilitator who was hired to mediate a regional community meeting fails to gain the respect of local community members and was sidelined within the first half hour of the meeting. A junior district office staff member ends up in the position of having to calm a room of 250 angry parents.

LESSON LEARNED: Ensure that facilitators of every meeting are both skilled and respected by the community. Some external facilitators have proven to be effective, but special care must be taken in vetting them.

Execution of Stakeholder Engagement

Although each district will sequence the community engagement process differently, an effective practice is to divide the engagement into three phases and to anchor them around three distinct board meetings.

Engagement Phase I: The need for closures

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

The public discussion of the need for closures is the first phase of community engagement (Phase I) and is structured around the initial board meeting that, as we describe it here, happens in March of year one. This board meeting will be the first time members of the community are made aware that school closures are being considered, even though some analysis will have been underway in the district office prior to this meeting (e.g., Oct – Jan: see section A. Decision Process above). Most districts find it best to keep that analysis confidential until a decision has been made to move forward so as not to alarm the community without cause.

The announcement that school closures are under consideration will inevitably lead to significant anxiety within the community. It is therefore critical that the board meeting, as well as any subsequent community meetings, also include the following:

- **Detailed timeline** - This timeline should explain when decisions will be made and at what points the community will have the opportunity to provide feedback as the plan evolves.
- **Preliminary school closing criteria** - District staff should present the draft criteria and engage in a dialogue with community members to gain their feedback. It is very important at this stage that no specific schools are discussed. Community members will be much more able to provide constructive feedback on the criteria if they are not focused on whether their particular school is on the list.

The initial announcement that school closures are on the district agenda should launch a series of community meetings to solicit feedback about the preliminary criteria identified for selecting which schools to close. These meetings are best arranged regionally rather than in a school-based way because at this stage the goal is to gather information about how to make the selection, not whether any individual school should be on the list. District staff must be very clear on the level of engagement being sought from the community. If the criteria are largely set and unlikely to change, the community needs to know that so that they do not become disillusioned with the process. If, on the other hand, some of the criteria are open for discussion, it is important that the discussion is as bounded as possible (e.g., “Here are four criteria under consideration by the district. How do you feel about these criteria and are there any others you’d like to see added?”)

Once the criteria that will be used are refined with community input, the preliminary list of schools slated for closure should be compiled. Some districts (Pittsburgh, in one example) engage independent third parties or appoint community commissions to make preliminary

school closure selections based on agreed-upon criteria so as to eliminate even the hint of bias in the process.

Engagement Phase II: Initial list of schools recommended for closure

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Phase II of community engagement is centered on the board meeting at which the initial list of schools recommended for closure will be announced. It is critical to manage this communication so that district leadership has the opportunity to communicate with the most impacted stakeholders before they hear from another source that their school is on the list.

Pittsburgh Public Schools implemented a highly effective communication strategy for rolling out the list of schools identified for possible closure—all communications happened in a single day in order to avoid slow leakage of information and the uncertainty that accompanies it. The district conducted one-on-one meetings with board members; trained customer service staff on how to discuss the issue with parents; informed principals of impacted schools; and finally, issued a press release and held staff meetings at each of the schools. The official board meeting was held a day later.

The release of this initial closure list will trigger a series of community meetings to solicit feedback on the plan. These gatherings should be a mix of regional (multi-school) and school-based (single-school) meetings to allow for school vs. school trade-off discussions and individual school questions/concerns, respectively. A key message during these meetings is to emphasize that *the decision to close schools is final, but no specific schools have yet been selected*. It is important for community members to realize that they have a voice in the decision-making process. In many districts, such as Oakland and Washington D.C., final closure recommendations have been adjusted based on input from the community.

WARNING: TRUE STORY PITFALL

The list of schools identified for closure in a certain district was leaked to the local newspaper before any school principals had been notified.

LESSON LEARNED: Ensure all participants in the analysis of possible school closures understand the importance of a methodical communication strategy. Collect all confidential documents at the end of meetings. Move as quickly as possible to notify principals.

As an example of a community meeting held during this Phase II period, the transcript of a legally-mandated public hearing held in Seattle to gather feedback on closure recommendations can be found at:

http://www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity/publichearing_jscee_012209.pdf

Engagement Phase III: Finalized list of schools recommended for closure

Closure Timeline

Year 1							Year 2							Year 3												
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Based on community input from Phase II of stakeholder engagement, staff (or an independent commission) should make any necessary revisions to determine the final list of schools recommended for closure. Once this list is complete and ready to be shared, a process similar to that used during Phase II should be enacted. That is, individual stakeholders should be notified in rapid succession so as to minimize information leakage and prevent people from hearing about their situation second-hand. For example, one-on-one meetings with board members, then principals of impacted schools and then a broader release.

Board members will vote on the list (ideally the same day or later that week) once all impacted stakeholders have been contacted. Because many boards are built such that individual members represent particular sub-regions and no one wants school closures to happen in their region, it is better to gather the full list to be voted upon in its entirety as an up or down “yes” or a “no” vote on the entire package rather than vote based on the merits of closing each individual school at this time. *Please note that local laws and board policy should be consulted to determine when the vote can occur. In many districts, policy recommendations require 7 to 14 days between the release of final recommendations and the vote.*

Assuming the board votes to move forward with school closures, the community engagement process does not stop there. From that point until students are seated in their new schools, it will be the responsibility of the engagement team to see to it that family, staff and other community concerns and questions are addressed in an effective and timely manner. The details of this are discussed in greater detail within corresponding pieces of the Implementation section below.

C. Implementation

Questions answered in this section:

- *How should decisions about student re-assignment be made?*
- *How do you develop revised enrollment and budget projections?*
- *How will you reassign teachers and school staff?*
- *What will be done with the closed facilities?*
- *How will the move plan be developed?*

1. Student Re-assignment

All decisions about school closures should be made before the annual student assignment process (it determines which matriculating and entering students will be going to which schools) in order that the students from closing schools can be added to this pool.

Step One: Decide on approach to re-assigning students

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

There are two major approaches districts take when re-assigning students: family choice or automatic re-assignment. Family choice involves selection of a new school by the parents, whereas automatic re-assignment involves moving students to new schools by a set algorithm. In the case of automatic re-assignment, the algorithm used should favor destination schools with higher academic performance, close proximity, and space available to accommodate a decent-sized cohort of children from a closing school. Districts opting for the family choice model tend to see better results in terms of community buy-in and general ease of transition; hence this is the approach most districts recommend where possible. (Note: This approach can be difficult to implement where a pre-existing, district-wide choice policy is not in place.)

The questions below are designed to help clarify some of the challenges that may surface as a result of selecting one approach or the other.

Reassignment Policy	Questions to consider
Family choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your district already have a choice policy? • If not, how are decisions going to be made for who gets priority (e.g., if 10 third-grade students from Closing School X want to attend Closing School Y but there are only five slots)? • Will re-assigned students receive priority over other transfer requests? • Will families be allowed to re-locate their student to a distant school? If so, what is the transportation policy (i.e., what portion of the transportation will be provided by the district)?
Automatic re-assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there sufficient space for all students at the nearest school? • What will the impact be on the receiving schools? (For example, a 400 student elementary school which has a small learning community approach may now grow to 600 students) • Will students be assigned to the school nearest the closing school or to the school nearest their home? • As a result of these re-assignments, will there be any new transportation needs?

Whichever model the superintendent’s office selects, it is important to understand how such a policy will be approved. Does it require school board approval? If so, engaging the board early in this process is critical to ensuring that the decision does not delay the overall school closure process and leave families unaware of where their child will be attending school in the meantime.

See [Appendix J](#) for an excerpt from a document describing Seattle’s approach to student re-assignment, including specifics on “riser” students, Accelerated Progress Programs (APP), and Special Ed students. For the full complement of materials, please visit the appropriate page on the Seattle Public Schools website at:

http://www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity/appendix_g.pdf

Step Two: Calculate capacity

Closure Timeline

Year 1							Year 2							Year 3												
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

As a component of the decision process discussed in the first part of this tool, the district will have determined that there is sufficient capacity across the district to absorb students from the closing schools (see [section IV-A](#), The Decision Process). However it is now necessary to identify available capacity at each school and each grade for re-assignment purposes. Refer to your district’s approach to capacity analysis within the *facility and student assignment process* for detailed information about how to do this calculation—the detailed steps required to perform a capacity analysis are beyond the scope of this tool. The basic principle behind this analysis goes something like this:

total 11 th grade seat capacity	-	<i>current</i> 10 th graders	*	modifier for student attrition and predicted incoming transfers	=	11 th grade spaces available at School X for <i>next year</i>
--	---	--	---	--	---	--

The example below describes the results of the ACME school capacity analysis for two schools in the vicinity of schools recommended for closure.

ACME Example: School 11			
Grade	Seat capacity	Seats	Seats
		next yr	accounted for available next yr
10	200	130	70
11	200	150	50
12	200	160	40
total	600	440	160

ACME Example: School 12			
Grade	Seat capacity	Seats	Seats
		next yr	accounted for available next yr
10	176	150	26
11	160	145	15
12	150	120	30
total	486	415	71

In seeking seats for 11th-graders, the deputy superintendent has found 50 available at School #11 and #15 available at School #12. Because ACME district has selected family choice as the method by which students will be re-assigned, the deputy superintendent will use these numbers to ensure that, for example, only the first 15 students that will be 11th-graders next year and wish to attend School #12 will be allowed to do so.

Step Three: Apply chosen re-assignment policy and inform families

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Immediate communication with families is critical. Ideally, all families should receive a letter with details regarding the re-assignment process within one to two weeks after the formal decision has been made to close the school (see [Appendix K](#) for a sample letter). Multiple meetings should be held to provide an opportunity for families to learn about the re-assignment process. Whenever possible, additional resources (e.g., student assignment office representatives, school staff) should be fully dedicated to helping families with the re-assignment process for one to two months following the school closure decisions.

Please note on the timelines that the student re-assignment process (choosing a re-assignment methodology, calculating free capacity in nearby schools) happens alongside the decision-making process regarding which schools will close (See overall timeline in [section III-A](#) of this document to compare timeframes). Although re-assignment cannot be completed until the final schools are selected for closure, it is important to do as much of the internal work as possible in anticipation of these decisions.

Communication with families should not end once students are assigned to their new schools. It is critical that the first day back in school be as smooth a transition as possible for these families. Some families will not be aware that their school has been closed no matter how many flyers are sent home or community meetings are held. District representatives should be present at each closing school on the first day of school to re-route any students who arrive unaware. Additional support should also be provided for the receiving schools on day one to ensure that enrollment of new students runs smoothly. Schools receiving a large number of students from the same school should hold integration and induction events in the spring or over the summer to ease the transition.

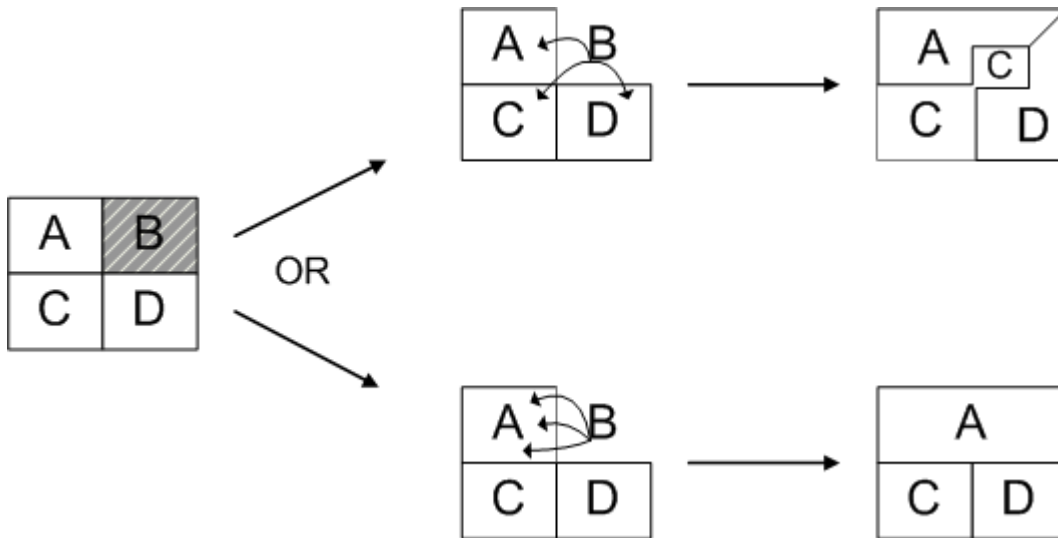
Step Four: Redraw attendance boundaries

Closure Timeline

Year 1										Year 2										Year 3						
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Regardless of which strategy is selected for student re-assignment, attendance boundaries will need to be redrawn to ensure that each area of town has one or more neighborhood schools. However, how attendance boundaries are re-drawn will be impacted by both the re-assignment policy (automatic vs. family choice) and capacity analysis. For example, if you decide that all students from closing School B should be assigned to School A, then School A’s attendance boundary will grow to fully absorb that of School B (see lower path in the illustration below). However, if students will be split up across the district or if parents will chose, then closing

School B's attendance boundary may be split between Schools A, C and D (see upper path below).



It is likely that your district has redrawn attendance boundaries at least once before, so the people involved in that previous effort will be valuable sources of advice and knowledge.

Some common issues to consider are:

- Will walking students now need to cross large freeways to get to their new neighborhood school?
- How will families' access to transportation (district buses and/or public transportation) be impacted by the new boundaries?
- How will new boundaries impact feeder patterns (e.g., all students from X elementary school attend Y middle school and Z high school) that communities members have become dependent on?

See [Appendix L](#) for a sample board memo regarding attendance boundary adjustments.

2. Revised Enrollment Projections and School Budgets

Closure Timeline

Year 1												Year 2												Year 3		
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

All decisions regarding school closures should be made before the annual budgeting process. Failure to adhere to this timeline will result in significant frustration, confusion and inefficient use of staff time, particularly if your district's budgeting process involves a level of principal autonomy over their schools' budgets. If decisions are made according to the appropriate timeline, the annual budgeting process can simply run as planned with the updated portfolio of schools which will be open in the following year.

School-level enrollment projections in most districts are generally created in late fall so that they can be ready in time for the budgeting cycle. As such, projections will most likely need to be revised as soon as school closure decisions are made to reflect the changes. However, this process can be much smoother if the demographer or individual responsible for enrollment projections is kept informed of the recommendations. Ideally, she should prepare projections under several scenarios so that the final figures can be quickly determined once decisions are made.

The ACME district High School #11, which was discussed earlier in this document, had 440 occupied seats originally accounted for in the budget for the following year, but because of a nearby school closure, there are now expected to be 525 students attending this high school next year (shown below). Therefore the budget must be adjusted upward accordingly.

ACME Example: School 11 before				
Grade	Seats		Seats	
	Seat capacity	accounted for	available next	
	next yr	yr	yr	
10	200	130	70	
11	200	150	50	
12	200	160	40	
total	600	440	160	

ACME Example: School 11 after				
Grade	Seats		Seats	
	Seat capacity	accounted for	available next	
	next yr	yr	yr	
10	200	160	40	
11	200	180	20	
12	200	185	15	
total	600	525	75	

The fact that 85 “extra” students will be attending High School #11 next year means around three additional teachers must be brought on and the total budget for the school year will be around \$500,000 higher than expected (assuming funding to be in the range of \$10,000 per student per year).

3. Re-assignment of Teachers and School Staff

Closure Timeline

Year 1												Year 2												Year 3		
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Once the district has a reasonable estimate as to where the students will be going, it can move forward with staff reassignment. Staff re-assignment processes and timelines will vary for each district, depending on local collective bargaining agreements. It is important to understand the timelines associated with your district’s annual assignment processes so as to ensure that closure decisions are made before the placement of classified and certificated staff. The district should also engage proactively with bargaining units. Union leadership needs to understand the rationale behind school closures and the reasons why certain schools have been selected. Failure to communicate with these units will place significant additional strain on what is already a challenging process politically.

Topics covered in this section:

- *How should decisions about teacher and staff re-assignment be made?*
- *What are some strategies for communicating with teachers and staff?*

Step One: Determine approach to staff re-assignment

Staff re-assignment policies will be dependent on your local contracts. The scenarios listed below suggest how these contracts might be interpreted.

Reassignment Policy	Issues for Consideration
<p><i>Strictest</i> Staff will simply be assigned based on collective bargaining agreements’ treatment of “involuntarily transferred” or “excessed” teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the unions file a complaint that some of their members are not being treated fairly? • How will the culture of certain schools be impacted by receiving a large number of teachers who don’t want to be there?
<p><i>Most Lenient</i> Staff from closing schools will receive special priority – either over all teachers (e.g., have “bumping rights”) or over other transfer requests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the unions file a complaint that some of their members are not being treated fairly? • What sort of precedent is set for future decisions if these teachers are given preferential rights? • How will the culture of schools be impacted when certain teachers are “bumped”?

Step Two: Hold staff meetings at all impacted schools

As soon as possible after closure decisions are made, staff meetings should be held at all closing schools. Each school will require separate meetings for all of the different bargaining units represented since each group will have different rights and timelines depending on their contracts. We recommend that these meetings be co-led by the area superintendent and a representative from human resources. Central office staff should prepare detailed hand-outs addressing all anticipated questions. Common question include:

- Am I guaranteed a job next year?
- If I lose my job, what happens with my retirement?
- Will “excessed” teachers be offered early retirement?
- How will I be assigned to a new school?
- When will I be assigned to a new school?
- Will I be guaranteed a position teaching the same subject and grade level?
- How are all of the things from my classroom going to be moved to the new school?

It is important that the central office staff facilitating these meetings have clear and consistent answers to these questions. Although many teachers may be upset that

WARNING: TRUE STORY PITFALL

In one school district, HR was scrambling at the last minute to make policy decisions about the timeline and process by which teachers from closed schools would be placed. As a result, an outdated timeline appeared at one staff meeting presentation. A representative of the union, who was collecting presentations from all these meetings, discovered the discrepancy and became very angry. Teachers were further confused and frustrated about how their placement was going to be determined.

LESSON LEARNED: Finalize decisions about how staff will be re-assigned prior to school closure announcements so as to avoid last minute chaos. Ensure that all materials shared with school staff are consistent across the district.

their school is closing, their frustration often stems from the fact that their future job placement is uncertain. It is critical that they receive a consistent and clear description of the process. [Appendices M, N, and O](#) provide examples of communications with teachers and bargaining units.

4. Use of Facilities from Closed Schools

Closure Timeline

Year 1							Year 2							Year 3												
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

There are several alternatives for how a closing school’s facility can be used. Although the specifics will vary depending on district-level circumstances, some issues for consideration are:

Possible Scenario	Issues for Consideration
Repurposing for another district use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the building be re-used for education purpose? • If not, consider the community response to moving students out and replacing with, for example, district office personnel.
Lease, sell or donate to a charter school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your state has laws regarding use of district facilities by charter schools, this may be the option that you are required to use. • Depending on state laws or district policy regarding rental rates, revenue from this alternative may not be allowed.
Sale or non-charter school lease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there state or city laws that prohibit use of this option? • If the building will be uninhabited for a period of time before a buyer or permanent tenant is identified, it is important to have a process in place for “mothballing” the building so as to avoid costly vandalism or other damage (refer to your district protocols for more information on selling or leasing a facility).

Depending on the number of school closures, it may be better to remove the district from making decisions about what to do with these “extra” facilities. For example, in 2008, the 23 school buildings closed by Washington, D.C. Public Schools were turned over to the city office of property management to identify property usage.

5. Miscellaneous School Operations

There are numerous operational details associated with school closures. It is important to create an implementation team and work plan as soon as the school closure list is final to ensure that all of these details run smoothly.

Topics covered in this section:

- *Move Plan*
- *State, Federal and Private Grants*
- *Necessary Notifications*
- *Student Cumulative Records*

Move Plan

Closure Timeline

Year 1						Year 2						Year 3														
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Once student re-assignment and facility use decisions have been made, it will be necessary to create a plan for how all the necessary furniture, textbooks, IT equipment and other assets will be moved.

Step One: Inventory

The project manager will determine what level of inventorying is necessary. Because it is common for valuable items to disappear during a transition related to school closure, we recommend an approach that is more rigorous than the usual year-end inventory process. Important items such as technology equipment should be recorded by the central IT department. Furniture and supplies can be recorded by representatives designated by the principal. All items should be accounted for upon delivery to the receiving school.

Step Two: Develop move plan and budget

This work is best coordinated by a representative from the facilities department. Move timelines should be very specific so as to ensure a) there is sufficient time to pack before movers arrive, and b) furniture/assets arrive at the new building with sufficient time to prepare for the next school year. Identifying a budget for the move may be challenging as the facilities department may not perceive that they “own” this process. Because of this common reluctance, it is important that the district make accountability for this process clear (and preferably lie with the facilities department) and allocate funds accordingly. As mentioned in a previous section, moves such as these tend to cost in the range of \$75,000 to \$150,000 per closing school for packing, cleaning, moving, etc.

Step Three: Packing

Teachers will often be expected to pack their own classrooms. Where resources are available, support should be provided to assist in this process, either through consultancy with the moving companies or with the facilities department.

Step Four: Move

Be sure that a representative from the receiving school will be available when furniture and equipment arrives so as to ensure that they have control over where the items are placed.

A sample memo to principals regarding packing and move procedures can be found in [Appendix P](#).

State, Federal or Private Grants

Closure Timeline

Year 1							Year 2							Year 3												
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

The closing school may be receiving school-specific grants as a result of their academic performance or for other reasons. The person in charge of this funding source should communicate with grant making organizations as soon as possible, as they may consider transferring the funds to the receiving school, particularly if the closing school is merging entirely into another school.

Student Cumulative Records

Closure Timeline

Year 1							Year 2							Year 3												
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

A plan should be put in place for moving all records to the receiving school. These records often get lost in the shuffle of school closure, a scenario which can create significant confusion for years. Ideally, these records should be moved prior to the move of assets and through a separate mechanism (records should not be moved with the furniture and general supplies sent to destination schools via movers). The attendance clerk or equivalent at the school can separate the files into groups based on destination school, then, though it is a rote task, either the project manager in charge of closures or a designated senior representative from the student assignment office should physically move these files to their destination schools. Extra care should be taken to ensure that all special education students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are transitioned appropriately.

WARNING: TRUE STORY PITFALL

A ninth-grader from a closing school was re-assigned to a nearby high school. There was no system to ensure that all student records from the closing school were accurately transferred to the receiving school. When the student applied for community college three years later, his new high school could not find the files. The community college would not accept the student without these records.

LESSON LEARNED: Implement a very careful process for ensuring that all cumulative student records are moved to the appropriate location

Notification of Closures

Closure Timeline

Year 1												Year 2												Year 3		
A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O

Any entity that interfaces with the closing school will need to be notified of the closure decision as soon as possible. Examples include:

- County and state education offices. Refer to county and state websites to learn what information is required to notify them of a school closure; a school board-approved resolution is generally necessary.
- Food services
- After-school programming
- All city agencies that provide services at the school (e.g., health protective services, department of mental health).
- PTA councils

V. Conclusion

A difficult and often divisive task, closing schools is something that every school district eventually faces. While some operators are accustomed to this challenge because of the frequency with which it happens in their district (in the best cases as a step in regularly trimming and improving upon a portfolio of schools), others face it so infrequently that there is no continuity between this time and the last. For those who may be less accustomed to closing schools, we hope to have provided you with a comprehensive framework and some of the tools necessary to make this task a manageable one. Equally important, we hope you will use this guide to identify challenges in the school closure process early on—and to mobilize resources to address them.

Only by facing school closures with an empowered leader, ongoing engagement with the community, perseverance through to implementation, a reasonable timeline, and a sharp, unwavering eye on better educational opportunities for students will districts achieve the most favorable results from school closures. By learning from the successes and failures of efforts highlighted in this guide, district operators will be better positioned to run smoother, less rancorous, and ultimately more successful closure efforts. Ultimately, this will aid in the effort to redirect district dollars to where they can have the greatest impact on our children's future.

VI. Appendices

CONTENTS

Appendix A: Accelerated School Closure Timeline

This timeline describes how the school closure process might be accelerated from 18 months to 12 months (first board meeting to actual relocation of students and staff). Note that there is a greater risk of stakeholder dissatisfaction in this model.

Appendix B: Functional Capacity Approach (Seattle)

This document describes the approach Seattle Public Schools took in the 2008-2009 school year to determine the number of total “seats” present in their school system.

Appendix C: Functional Capacity Analysis (Seattle)

These documents describe the results of Seattle Public Schools’ 2008-2009 functional capacity analysis.

Appendix D: Analysis of Number of Schools to be Closed (Pittsburgh)

This PowerPoint document was used by Pittsburgh Public Schools in 2005 to frame the supply and demand argument to the local community.

Appendix E: Examples of Criteria Used for Recent School Closures

These documents were developed by Oakland Unified School District and Charleston County School District in order to describe the criteria they would each use to determine which schools would be closed.

Appendix F: Facilities Planning School Board Policy (Dallas)

This planning document was developed by the Dallas ISD school board to formalize the district’s approach to school closures.

Appendix G: SPI Academic Criteria for Selecting Closing Schools (Pittsburgh)

This is an op-ed published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on the topic of Pittsburgh Public Schools and the SPI.

Appendix H: Budget Impact of School Closures (Seattle)

These documents provide details on the budget impact estimated for Seattle’s 2009-10 school closings.

Appendix I: Sample Community Engagement Materials (Washington, D.C.)

This is a PowerPoint presentation used by the DC Public Schools in their community engagement meetings.

Appendix J: Student Re-assignment Criteria (Seattle)

These materials are an excerpt from a document describing Seattle’s approach to student re-assignment, including specifics on “riser” students, Accelerated Progress Programs (APP), and Special Ed students. For the full complement of materials, please visit the appropriate page on the Seattle Public Schools website at:

http://www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity/appendix_g.pdf

Appendix K: Letter to Families Regarding Student Assignment (Oakland)

This is a letter written by Oakland Unified School District to parents and caregivers with details regarding the re-assignment process. It was sent one week after the formal decision was made to close Sherman School.

Appendix L: Boundary Adjustment Memo (Oakland)

This is a sample board memo regarding attendance boundary adjustments from Oakland Unified School District.

Appendix M: Staffing FAQ (Boston)

This is a FAQ that Boston Public Schools used to help address questions that school staff might have in response to school closures.

Appendix N: Communication to teachers (Washington, D.C.)

This is a communication that was sent by DC Public Schools to teachers whose schools were being closed to describe the approach that would be taken regarding teacher re-assignment.

Appendix O: MOA with teachers union (Washington, D.C.)

This is a memorandum of agreement between DC public schools and the teachers’ union. It describes the rules that would apply to teacher re-assignment in closing and receiving schools.

Appendix P: Memo to Closing Schools Regarding Packing and Move Procedures (Oakland)

This is a sample memo that Oakland Unified School District sent to principals regarding packing and move procedures. It describes the protocol that was to be followed for shutting down schools and transferring important documents and materials from closing to receiving schools.

Appendix A: Accelerated School Closure Timeline

This timeline describes how the school closure process might be accelerated from 18 months to 12 months (first board meeting to actual relocation of students and staff). Note that there is a greater risk of stakeholder dissatisfaction in this model.

School Closure Timeline (reduced to 1 year)

Activity	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3	
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep		
Decision Process - do we close schools and, if so, which ones?																										
Balancing the budget: the role of school closures																										
Identification of maximum number of seats that could be eliminated																										
Identification of initial criteria to select schools for closing																										
Revision of criteria based on community feedback																										
Evaluation of all schools against criteria: select initial list																										
Revision of school closing list based on community feedback																										
Community engagement and communications																										
Engagement: Phase I: The need for school closures																										
Engagement: Phase II: Initial list of schools for closure																										
Engagement: Phase III: Finalized list of schools for closure																										
Implementation - execution of school closures																										
1. Student Assignment																										
Policy decision: how students will be re-assigned																										
Facilities capacity analysis																										
Re-draw attendance boundaries																										
Application of re-assignment policy and informing of families																										
Integrating students from closing schools into new schools																										
2. Revised Enrollment Projections & School Budgets																										
Create multiple enrollment scenarios																										
Finalize enrollment projections																										
Generate school budgets (using district timeline)																										
3. Staff Reassignment																										
Decide upon approach to staff reassignment																										
Staff meetings with all impacted staff																										
Staff re-assignment (using district timeline)																										
4. Use of Facilities																										
Determine new use for closing schools' facilities																										
5. Miscellaneous School Operations																										
School Moves																										
Develop comprehensive move plan for closing schools																										
Inventory all closing buildings																										
Implement move																										
State, Federal & Private Grants																										
Identify discretionary funding and seek transfer options																										
Student Cumulative Records																										
Develop a plan to transfer and/or store records																										
Implement transfer of records																										
Notifications of School Closure																										
Notify all district entities (food services, after school, etc)																										
Notify state and county departments of education																										

Appendix B: Functional Capacity Approach (Seattle)

This document describes the approach Seattle Public Schools took in the 2008-2009 school year to determine the number of total “seats” present in their school system.

Posted January 14, 2009

Functional capacity at our buildings was determined by a walk of each facility by individuals who have held principal-level appointments, together with assessment by facilities and research, evaluation and assessment. We anticipate that this data will change in minor ways on a school by school basis based on continuing review and discussions. These changes should not have a material impact on the overall results.

Functional capacity is defined as the target number of students per school based on each school's particular programs. This is different from planning capacity, which is a formula designed to identify a high-level, average possible enrollment for each building. Both numbers are important: planning capacity provides a blueprint that can be used district-wide; functional capacity provides an on-the-ground number that is specific to a particular school at a particular time given the needs of its students. Functional capacity will change as programs are moved in or out of buildings. In addition, functional capacity more realistically reflects the realities of master schedules and what levels of efficiency (including classroom usage and class size) that schools can maintain. Because the model is dynamic, we can quickly adjust it to reflect these changes as they occur. In addition to supporting the current capacity management work, going forward this analysis will provide more detailed information on where to place programs and will be major input into the development of the student assignment plan in terms of developing reference areas.

For elementary & K-8 schools, the planning and functional capacities are very similar at the district-level with more variation on a school-by-school basis depending upon the number of special programs such as self-contained special education, pre-schools, and bilingual orientation centers. For schools with an above average number of special programs, functional capacity tends to be lower than the planning capacities. Conversely for schools with a below average number of special programs, functional capacity tends to be higher than planning capacity. Additionally, there are some schools with higher enrollment than functional capacity and this is typically accomplished through a combination of half-day kindergarten, higher class sizes, and above average space utilization.

For secondary schools, there is a wider discrepancy between planning and functional capacity. Functional capacity in the comprehensive middle schools is **8% lower** than planning capacity (or 750 seats lower) while functional capacity at the high school level is **10% lower** than the planning capacity (or 1,498 seats lower). There are four main reasons for this: some classrooms have been lost as educational models have changed; special programs such as special education and bilingual have significantly lower class sizes; there is less than full-day usage of some specialty rooms such as gyms; and there is a slightly lower average class size (28 vs. 30) that is more consistent with actual average class sizes. Additionally, there are some schools with higher enrollment than functional capacities based on fewer than average special programs and higher classroom utilization.

If the Final Recommendations for building closure are approved, our capacity would be brought more into line with our current enrollment. The planning capacity overall would be reduced by 2,297 seats (resulting in a total planning excess capacity of 6,767 or approximately 15% of current enrollment) and our functional capacity would be reduced by 2,110 seats (resulting in a total functional excess capacity of 4,319 or approximately 10% of current enrollment).

Appendix C: Functional Capacity Analysis (Seattle)

These documents describe the results of Seattle Public Schools' 2008-2009 functional capacity analysis.

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary Queen Anne/Magnolia					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Coe	407	463	-56	418	463	-45	
Hay	424	461	-37	456	461	-5	
Lawton	424	442	-18	432	442	-10	
TOTAL	1,255	1,366	-111	1,306	1,366	-60	

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary North					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Bagley	353	327	26	360	327	33	
Greenwood	354	322	32	322	322	0	
Northgate	318	245	73	274	245	29	
Olympic Hills	355	237	118	298	237	61	
Olympic View	425	463	-38	452	463	-11	
TOTAL	1,805	1,594	211	1,706	1,594	112	

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary Northeast					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Bryant	479	546	-67	519	546	-27	
Laurelhurst	389	504	-115	384	504	-120	
Rogers	283	311	-28	288	311	-23	
Sacajawea	265	344	-79	264	344	-80	
Thornton Creek	355	324	31	318	324	-6	
View Ridge	457	458	-1	534	458	76	
Wedgwood	407	461	-54	428	461	-33	
TOTAL	2,635	2,948	-313	2,735	2,948	-213	

* Buildings are or will be renovated. Functional capacity figures are based on current plans but may change slightly as new information becomes available.
** Updated to reflect an error in 1-13-2009 analysis

Page 1 of 6

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary Northwest					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Adams	423	410	13	428	410	18	
BF Day	444	280	164	471	280	191	
Green Lake	319	259	60	284	259	25	
Loyal Heights	353	381	-28	346	381	-35	
North Beach	283	328	-45	279	328	-49	
Stanford International	355	366	-11	360	366	-6	
West Woodland	415	435	-20	490	435	55	
Whittier	427	419	8	480	419	61	
TOTAL	3,019	2,878	141	3,138	2,878	260	

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary Central					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Gatzert	458	298	160	467	298	169	
Leschi	425	274	151	394	274	120	
Lowell	484	528	-44	472	528	-56	
McGilvra**	248	250	-2	240	250	-10	
Minor	388	206	182	332	206	126	
Montlake	266	237	29	240	237	3	
Stevens	392	342	50	356	342	14	
Thurgood Marshall	422	264	158	366	264	102	
TOTAL	3,083	2,399	684	2,867	2,399	468	

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary South					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Beacon Hill International	373	405	-32	432	405	27	
Dearborn Park	356	352	4	394	352	42	
Hawthorne	428	240	188	428	240	188	
John Muir	427	342	85	456	342	114	
Kimball	514	482	32	466	482	-16	
Maple	408	453	-45	418	453	-35	
TOTAL	2,506	2,274	232	2,594	2,274	320	

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary Southeast					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Brighton	406	388	18	380	388	-8	
Dunlap	480	373	107	418	373	45	
Emerson	478	392	86	486	392	94	
Graham Hill	391	346	45	360	346	14	
The New School*	1,000	387	613	760	387	373	
Van Asselt	550	492	58	491	492	-1	
Wing Luke	302	324	-22	370	324	46	
TOTAL	3,607	2,702	905	3,265	2,702	563	

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary West Seattle North					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Alki	344	354	-10	312	354	-42	
Cooper	461	300	161	452	300	152	
West Seattle	424	284	140	356	284	72	
Lafayette	480	450	30	495	450	45	
Schmitz Park	319	321	-2	336	321	15	
TOTAL	2,028	1,709	319	1,951	1,709	242	

* Buildings are or will be renovated. Functional capacity figures are based on current plans but may change slightly as new information becomes available.
** Updated to reflect an error in 1-13-2009 analysis

Page 3 of 6

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level: Cluster:		Elementary West Seattle South					
Program	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Arbor Heights	428	297	131	428	297	131	
Concord	407	313	94	408	313	95	
Gatewood	372	305	67	408	305	103	
Highland Park	479	405	74	466	405	61	
Roxhill	390	257	133	337	257	80	
Sanislo	284	301	-17	312	301	11	
TOTAL	2,360	1,878	482	2,359	1,878	481	

Grade Level:		Middle Schools						MS Region
Program	Elementary Cluster	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Meany	Central	813	419	394	683	419	264	Central
Washington	Central	976	1,036	-60	1,031	1,036	-5	Central
Eckstein	Northeast	1,267	1,193	74	1,205	1,193	12	NE
Hamilton*	Northwest	950	670	280	890	670	220	NE
Whitman	Northwest	1,116	892	224	967	892	75	NW
McClure	QA/Magnolia	686	552	134	646	552	94	NW
Mercer	South	1,022	699	323	861	699	162	SE
Aki Kurose	Southeast	974	434	540	842	434	408	SE
Madison	West Seattle N	877	902	-25	886	902	-16	SW
Denny*	West Seattle S	980	619	361	900	619	281	SW
TOTAL		9,661	7,416	2,245	8,911	7,416	1,495	

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level:		High Schools						
Program	Cluster	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Garfield	Central	1,650	1,684	-34	1,508	1,684	-176	
Nova	Central	383	312	71	343	312	31	
Ingraham*	North	1,342	1,052	290	1,274	1,052	222	
Hale*	Northeast	1,420	1,075	345	1,229	1,075	154	
Ballard	Northwest	1,554	1,642	-88	1,550	1,642	-92	
Roosevelt	Northwest	1,741	1,675	66	1,606	1,675	-69	
Center School	QA/Magnolia	TBD	276	TBD	284	276	8	
Cleveland	South	1,000	706	294	928	706	222	
Franklin	South	1,708	1,278	430	1,447	1,278	169	
Rainier Beach	Southeast	1,350	453	897	1,016	453	563	
Chief Sealth*	West Seattle N	1,397	887	510	1,180	887	293	
West Seattle	West Seattle N	1,417	1,199	218	1,099	1,199	-100	
TOTAL		14,962	12,239	2,999	13,464	12,239	1,225	
Alternative								
South Lake	Southeast	175	137	38	195	137	58	

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Functional Capacity Analysis

As of 1-21-2009

Grade Level:		K-8s						
Program	Cluster	Planning Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	Functional Capacity	Current (08) Enrollment	+/(-)	
Blaine K-8	N/A	473	515	-42	516	515	1	
Broadview-Thompson K-8	N/A	728	717	11	723	717	6	
AS 1 K-8	N/A	282	191	91	304	191	113	
Salmon Bay K-8	N/A	709	597	112	716	597	119	
Madrona K-8	N/A	491	411	80	538	411	127	
TOPS K-8	N/A	521	523	-2	524	523	1	
Orca K-8	N/A	443	403	40	522	403	119	
African-American Academy K-8	N/A	639	344	295	728	344	384	
Pathfinder-AE 4 K-8	N/A	493	391	102	512	391	121	
TOTAL		4,779	4,092	687	5,083	4,092	991	
Other								
Secondary Bilingual	N/A	483	229	254	432	229	203	
Summit K-12	N/A	823	532	291	768	532	236	
TOTAL		1,306	761	545	1,200	761	439	
GRAND TOTAL		53,181	44,393	9,064	50,774	44,393	6,381	
Less: Final Recommendations		-2,297		-2,297	-2,110		-2,110	
GRAND TOTAL (After Final Recommendations)		50,884	44,393	6,767	48,664	44,393	4,271	

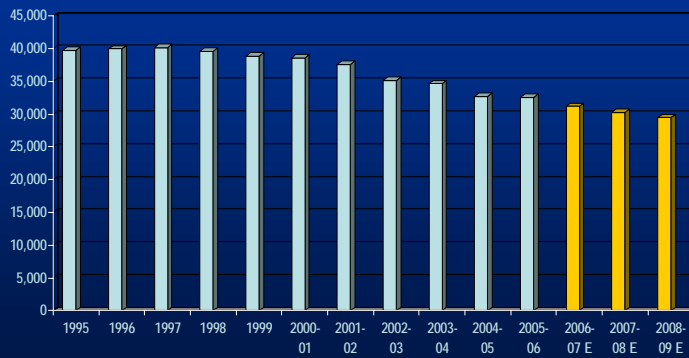
Appendix D: Analysis of Number of Schools to be Closed (Pittsburgh)

This PowerPoint document was used by Pittsburgh Public Schools in 2005 to frame the supply and demand argument to the local community.

Right-Sizing the District

- Structured for nearly 50,000 students
- Serving 32,000, projecting 30,000 in 2008-09

Declining PPS Enrollment



Right-Sizing the District

- Inefficient utilization of facilities
 - 1 in 3 seats will be empty in 2006-07
- Operating expenses larger than revenues
 - By \$47 million next year
- 44 schools below optimal enrollment
 - Inequitable use of resources

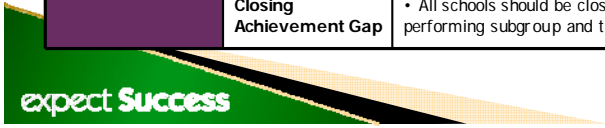
Right-sizing will allow us to focus resources on improving student achievement.

Appendix E: Examples of Criteria Used for Recent School Closures
 These documents were developed by Oakland Unified School District and Charleston County School District in order to describe the criteria they would each use to determine which schools would be closed.

OAKLAND

Right Sizing Plan: Criteria

Category	Criteria	Rationale
Enrollment	Current Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current enrollment directly impacts the current sustainability of each school The facility size will be taken into account: some schools are limited in how large they can grow because they are located in small buildings
	Neighborhood Residential Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Residents Future Residents
Equity	Proximity to Historical Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certain neighborhoods have been disproportionately impacted by historical school closures; it is important that this is factored into the criteria
	Free / Reduced Lunch %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certain schools have more students who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch than other schools; it is important that this is factored into the criteria so that the plan impacts a diverse range of schools across the city
Academic (OUSD Tiering Criteria)	Absolute Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools should be meeting NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress targets
	Student level Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools should be improving the performance of each student, regardless of how the student performed before they entered the school
	Closing Achievement Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools should be closing the achievement gap between the lowest performing subgroup and the overall school performance



School Redesign Criteria Definitions

- I. ***Educational Quality***: Provides a summary of the academic achievement of the individual school
- A. Adequate Yearly Progress – Indicates whether the school met a measure by which the district is held accountable; determines whether students on average are making progress towards meeting state academic content standards
 - B. Absolute Rating – Conveys the value of the school’s level of performance based on factors associated with student success during the school year (on state report card)
 - C. Improvement Rating – Measures a school’s progress since the previous year (on state report card)
 - D. Program Standards/Fidelity of Mission – Compares course offering and activities to school action designs; for magnet schools, demonstrates whether the school remained true to the original mission of the school as approved by the county board
- II. ***Demographic Factors***: Summarizes data specific to the individual school and geographic area
- A. Enrollment Decline – Tracks enrollment trends over the past 10 years
 - B. Enrollment vs. Building Capacity – Measures the school’s enrollment compared to the capacity of the building
 - C. Population Trends – Measures the current and past attendance zone population
 - D. Per Pupil Cost – Total cost to educate each student per year
- III. ***Facility Conditions***: Summarizes the condition of the physical school building and the land where it resides
- A. Building Condition – Rates the condition of the building
 - B. Campus Size – Measures the size of the school campus in relation to optimal campus size
 - C. Time and Miles to Nearest School – Time and distance it takes to get to nearest school
 - D. Available Space in Nearest School – Amount of space in nearest school

Appendix F: Facilities Planning School Board Policy (Dallas)

This planning document was developed by the Dallas ISD school board to formalize the district's approach to school closures.

PURPOSE FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY	<p>When considering the matter of closing schools, it is the intent and desire of the Board of Trustees to provide students high quality academic opportunities in a supportive educational atmosphere. The Board also recognizes that good financial stewardship requires efficient and economical use of school facilities. School closings must be in accordance with property title requirements.</p>
SCHOOL CLOSINGS FOR NON-ACADEMIC REASONS	<p>The Board may close a school for any or all of the following non-academic reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Space Utilization Level. The space available at a school or schools in close proximity is not being used in the most efficient, cost effective manner; orB. Physical Condition of Building. The physical condition of the school building(s), including the cost to repair safety hazards and make structural changes necessary to ensure compliance with all city, state and federal laws, makes continued operation of the site cost-prohibitive or continued occupancy of the site unsafe or impractical; orC. Alternative Use of School Facilities. The Board may close a school to use its facilities for other programmatic/educational purposes, for support services, to open a new school, or to expand an existing school; orD. Conversion To Charter School. The Board may decide to close a school and convert it to a charter school as provided in Section 12.052 of the Texas Education Code; orE. Changing Demographics. Demographic studies indicate a change in the continued need for the school; orF. Legal Requirements. The Board may decide to close a school to comply with legal requirements.
SCHOOL UTILIZATION TASK FORCE	<p>The Board may create a School Utilization Task Force to consider issues relating to current and future use of school facilities and make recommendations to the Board. Each trustee shall appoint one member and the Superintendent of Schools shall appoint one member. The Superintendent's appointee will be the chair.</p> <p>The School Utilization Task Force shall consider input from district personnel, PTA, local chambers, SBDM's, parents and students, available demographic data, information concerning the physical condition of the schools, current and projected utilization data and</p>

such other information relevant to decisions concerning current and future use and possible closing of school facilities.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS
FOR ACADEMIC
REASONS**

The Board may determine that a school closure is necessary due to state and or federal accountability standards.

For additional information regarding school closings for academic reasons see EHBD (Legal) and EHBD (Local).

**PUBLIC MEETINGS
ON SCHOOL
CLOSURE
PROPOSALS**

If the Superintendent of Schools proposes to recommend the closing of a school or schools, the District shall conduct public hearings.

- A.** The Board shall convene one public hearing at the Central Administration Offices.
- B.** The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall convene at least one meeting on proposed closings held at a location intended to foster maximum participation by persons per affected school(s).
- C.** In addition to (a) and (b) above the public may comment on the Superintendent of Schools proposal during the public forum portion of an official Board meeting in accordance with Board policy BE (Local).

Following the decision of the Superintendent of Schools to recommend the school closing(s) to the Board, he/she or a designee shall prepare a final board report regarding the school closing(s) based on all pertinent information, including relevant information received at the public hearing. The Superintendent's report and recommendation shall be submitted to the Board for final action. The Board shall make a decision on any recommended school closure/restructuring prior to the beginning of the next school semester or school year as applicable.

**EXCEPTION FOR
IMMEDIATE SCHOOL
CLOSURE**

If the Superintendent of Schools recommends immediate closing of a school in order to protect public welfare and safety, the provisions for public meetings described above shall not apply. The board shall make the final decision on any such closing recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Instances when this provision would be applicable may include but are not limited to: natural disasters, (such as floods or tomados) fires, and or structural damages.

IMPLEMENTATION
OF SCHOOL
CLOSINGS AND
OVERSIGHT

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for the orderly closing of school(s). The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall assemble a support team to provide necessary and appropriate services as identified by the Superintendent of Schools or designee, to assist those students who attended a school that is closed under this policy.

The Superintendent of Schools shall report to the board the impact on the district of any school closings that occurred during the previous fiscal year. The report to the Board shall be made publicly available.

REASSIGNMENT OF
STUDENTS UPON
SCHOOL CLOSING

Unless otherwise required by law, when a school is closed, the students will be reassigned to a school or schools that can meet their educational needs.

Students with disabilities at a neighborhood school closed pursuant to this policy will be placed at the closest school to their homes that can implement their Individualized Education Program.

Students may apply for a transfer to a school other than the school to which they are reassigned as provided in board policy FDB (Local).

PURPOSE OF
POLICY FOR THE
DESIGN OF
ATTENDANCE
ZONES

For a number of reasons, including opening of new schools or closing of current schools, rapid growth or decline in enrollment in some areas of the city, lack of space in a building or inadequate number of students in a building, class size caps, and the fact that the schools are sometimes not located where the children live, the Board of Trustees may choose to redraw attendance zones in order to provide better safety for students and more equitable classroom utilization among schools.

FACTORS IN THE
DESIGN OF
ATTENDANCE
ZONES

Several factors will be taken into consideration in the design of an attendance zone:

1. Classroom capacity of the school
2. Acreage of the site
3. Natural boundaries
4. Long-range projections
5. Proximity of the students to the campus
6. Input from Board Members
7. Input from the involved principals and staff
8. Input from the involved communities
9. The bond program
10. Major thoroughfares which cannot be crossed safely by pedestrians
11. Contiguity of the school zone.
12. Alignment of the feeder pattern.

PROCESS IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ATTENDANCE ZONES

Following are steps to be followed in the design of attendance zones:

1. Using enrollment, geo-coded addresses, capacity, and utilization data, preliminary zone changes are prepared in September of each year by administrative staff, with the aid of a geographic information software system (GIS).
2. Reaction to the preliminary zone changes is sought in individual meetings with board members, learning community executive directors, other administrative staff, and community members.
3. If bond schools are expected to open, input is also taken from the Attendance Boundary Advisory Committee, which is composed of community members appointed by the Board.
4. Upon determining final recommendations, the Board approves the attendance zone changes at the January board meeting.
5. In the month of March, after approval of the zone changes, parents of students affected by zone changes are notified by mail which schools their children will attend the following year. Elementary school students whose zones have changed for the following year are required to move to the newly assigned school. Secondary school students have the option to complete all grade levels in the current school. High school students who choose to stay in their current school may stay until graduation. Middle school students who choose to stay in their current middle school through 8th grade will then move to the 9th grade in the newly assigned feeder pattern.

REASSIGNMENT OF TEACHERS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED SCHOOLS

Teachers at schools closed pursuant to this policy shall become reassigned teachers pursuant to board policy DK (Local). Regularly certified and appointed teachers at closed schools whose entire student population is reassigned to one school will be reappointed to the receiving school consistent with district staffing formulas.

SITE BASED DECISION MAKING TEAMS AT CLOSED SCHOOLS

Local Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) teams at schools that are closed for any reason shall be dissolved when the school closes.

USE OF PORTABLE CLASSROOMS

Portable classrooms are necessary to handle the shifting demographics of an urban school district and are basically a temporary solution that should be used in relatively small numbers.

To ensure adherence to the above philosophy, the administration shall prepare an annual report that lists all schools in which more than four portable classrooms exist and/or those campuses on which portable classrooms have existed for three or more years. This report shall be submitted in October following the known effects of the leveling process in the fall.

In the second quarter of the fiscal year the Board shall conduct a study session to evaluate alternatives to the use of portables. Options shall include additions to the buildings in question and/or the shifting of attendance boundaries to relieve overcrowding. This shall be accomplished no later than November so adjustments in boundaries can be made with community involvement and appropriate approvals.

As additions and modifications are made, classroom portables shall be evaluated and eliminated or retained, dependent upon their condition.

Appendix G: SPI Academic Criteria for Selecting Closing Schools (Pittsburgh)

This is an op-ed published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on the topic of Pittsburgh Public Schools and the SPI.

By Brian Gill

This commentary appeared in *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on December 4, 2005.

Closing schools is never an easy or pleasant decision. Parents understandably want their local schools to stay open, as do educators and neighborhood advocates. School boards around the nation have often chosen which schools to close based on the strength of community opposition to closures. If closing School A sparks more protest than closing School B, School B gets closed.

But Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Mark Roosevelt wanted to put the interests of Pittsburgh's children first. He determined that decisions about school closings should consider, above all, their effect on the achievement of Pittsburgh's students. He wants a district that is "right-sized" so that its resources are used most effectively in raising student achievement. The superintendent therefore turned to the Rand Corp. to obtain information about the performance of individual schools across the district.

Making use of a comprehensive electronic data system developed by the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Rand analyzed Pittsburgh's student achievement data, creating a new School Performance Index on a scale from one to four. Results for each school were published in a Rand report and in the Post-Gazette. (The full report is available at www.rand.org/publications/WR/WR315/)

Parents and educators may be wondering what the School Performance Index (SPI) means, and why the district did not use existing, publicly available measures. The proportion of students achieving proficiency on state exams, for example, is the measure used for accountability purposes under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, and it has also been used by the Allegheny Conference in assigning grades to schools across the region.

Although the proportion of students achieving proficiency is an important measure of achievement in a school, it does not distinguish the education provided by the school from the education a child receives outside of school, from family, peers and community.

Superintendent Roosevelt's aim is to close schools that are not effective at raising the achievement of the students they serve, regardless of the educational advantages that those students bring to school with them. He therefore needs a measure that attempts to identify each school's contribution to increasing the achievement of its students. Without such a measure, the district might inadvertently close schools that are effectively raising the achievement of the students they serve, sending students to schools that have higher average proficiency results but that will be less effective in raising the achievement of those students.

No statistical analysis can perfectly assess a school's contribution to student achievement, but a variety of methods, when applied carefully to high-quality achievement data, can provide much better information about school effects than is available from a snapshot of the proportion of students achieving proficiency. Rand used three different methods of analyzing school effects — each of which has advantages and disadvantages — combining them to create an SPI that is more robust than any single analytic method.

These methods examine achievement results for individual students over time, to assess their achievement gains and to examine how their achievement varies when they attend different schools. We also use information on student background characteristics — including poverty, special education status and family structure, among others — to account for some of the differences in the out-of-school academic resources of students who enroll at different schools in Pittsburgh. The aim of each of these methods, combined into the four-point SPI, is to fairly estimate the school's contribution to student achievement.

Schools that earn an SPI of four are among the strongest in Pittsburgh at raising the achievement of the students they enroll, according to our best estimate. The educators in Pittsburgh's 13 "four-star" schools, which encompass all grade levels and regions of the city, deserve praise.

SPI results do not always correspond to average proficiency results or to assessments of "adequate yearly progress" under No Child Left Behind. Pittsburgh has some high-performing schools that have not been previously recognized as such. Proficiency levels at these schools are not at the top of the scale, but the schools are serving disadvantaged students who are making larger gains than those of other students in the district.

Arsenal Middle School, for example, took a group of students who entered the school with only 14 percent achieving proficiency in math and raised their proficiency rate to 44 percent by the time they finished. Conversely, Pittsburgh also has a few schools with high levels of achievement and disappointing performance. These schools are serving relatively advantaged students who, Rand's analyses suggest, should be doing even better.

Although the SPI was created for the limited purpose of informing urgent decisions about school closings, it will undoubtedly be used by educators and parents for other purposes as well. With additional evaluation and development, the analytic methods used for the SPI may serve a variety of purposes in the future.

Rand is now working with the Pittsburgh city schools to develop a new school accountability system, compatible with federal requirements, which will examine the annual achievement growth of students in each school as one factor for determining "adequate yearly progress" under NCLB.

Still, the SPI results should be interpreted cautiously. No statistical method can unequivocally distinguish school effects from the effects of families, peers and communities. Moreover, the SPI measures only reading and math results. It doesn't assess the extent to which students are learning science, the arts, and civic skills.

Parents who are examining SPI results should keep these limitations in mind. There is no substitute for visiting schools and classrooms and talking with teachers, principals and other parents. We encourage parents to consider a wide variety of information in their assessment of the suitability of the school for their own child.

Despite these limitations, the SPI represents an important input to the district's realignment process and a key first step in larger efforts to improve instructional performance and student achievement across Pittsburgh. Challenges remain ahead. To reap an academic benefit from closing low-performing schools, the district will have to ensure that schools receiving new students have the capacity and the staff to perform better than the closed schools.

In the longer term, the development of the SPI points toward more ambitious analyses that will identify the key features of Pittsburgh's high-performing schools, laying the groundwork for system-wide improvement of school performance.

Brian Gill is a social scientist in the Pittsburgh office of the Rand Corp., a nonprofit research organization

Appendix H: Budget Impact of School Closures (Seattle)

These documents provide details on the budget impact estimated for Seattle's 2009-10 school closings.

General Fund Cost / Benefit

Costs	2008-2009	2009-2010	Total
TT Minor	\$199,612	\$71,000	\$270,612
Old Hay/Mann	\$301,186	\$238,600	\$539,786
Washington	\$47,491	\$7,200	\$54,691
Van Asselt	\$234,681	\$108,600	\$343,281
Genesee Hill	\$169,485	\$89,000	\$258,485
Jane Addams	\$35,640	\$0	\$35,640
Summit K-12	\$128,339	\$0	\$128,339
Central Costs	\$343,700	\$0	\$343,700
Total	\$1,460,134	\$514,400	\$1,974,534

Savings			5-Year
TT Minor	\$0	\$684,374	\$3,421,870
Old Hay/Mann	\$0	\$1,216,331	\$6,081,655
Washington	\$0	(\$98,634)	(\$493,170)
Van Asselt	\$0	\$833,584	\$4,167,920
Genesee Hill	\$0	\$516,646	\$2,583,230
Jane Addams	\$0	(\$575,797)	(\$2,878,985)
Summit K-12	\$0	\$1,150,916	\$5,754,580
District Wide	\$0	(\$91,101)	(\$455,505)
Total	\$0	\$3,636,319	\$18,181,595
Less Costs	\$1,460,134	\$514,400	\$1,974,534
Net Savings	(\$1,460,134)	\$3,121,919	\$16,207,061

¹ Staffing Costs use 2008-09 Average Total Salaries and are based on enrollment estimates by Enrollment Services.

There are increased staffing costs when building enrollments rise above staffing standard levels

² Utility savings are reduced by 17% for ongoing costs

³ Custodial savings are reduced by \$850 per site for ongoing boiler/building maintenance

⁴ Transportation savings are net of State funding

⁵ Based on closure of 5 buildings.

School Closure Capital Cost / Benefit

	2009-2011
Capital Cost:	
* Jane Addams	\$47,000
* APP to Thurgood Marshall	\$6,400
* APP to Hamilton	\$37,491
TT Minor	\$17,400
Old Hay	\$1,500
Mann	\$57,700
Van Asselt	\$11,200
Genesee Hill	\$128,300
Central Costs	\$199,748
Total Cost	\$506,739
 Capital Savings:	
Maintenance Cost Avoidance	
TT Minor	\$5,971,472
Old Hay	\$6,786,437
Mann	\$5,801,459
Van Asselt	\$9,136,393
Genesee Hill	\$5,239,904
	\$32,935,665
 Deferred Project Savings	
Genesee Hill	\$595,541
Van Asselt	\$139,181
	\$734,722
Total Savings	\$33,670,387
Less Cost	\$506,739
Net Capital Savings	\$33,163,648

Notes:

Backlog of Maintenance and Repair (Adjusted from 12/31/05 to 6/30/09) estimate is adjusted for construction (inflation) escalation by 1% per month for 42 months from January '06 through June '09. The deferred maintenance, had it been completed, would have produced a building that meets building code standards to continue in good operational condition.

* Note: these costs are improvements for instructional purposes to buildings impacted by program moves.

Appendix I: Sample Community Engagement Materials (*Washington, D.C.*)

This is a PowerPoint presentation used by the DC Public Schools in their community engagement meetings.

Reorganize. Revitalize. Renew.
Community Dialogues Regarding DCPS Proposal

Reorganize	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus resources and structure schools to support successful programs
Revitalize	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide schools with staffing necessary to achieve goals
Renew	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create innovative programs that offer students challenging academic and life-enriching opportunities

Reorganize. Revitalize. Renew.
The Foundation for Change

- February 2006 – DCPS Master Education Plan described the need to right-size the system, align grade configurations and feeder patterns, and offer new programs across the city. This proposal provides a path towards achieving all three goals.
- April 2006 – DCPS Board of Education resolved to close 3 million square feet of space.
- December 2006 – DCPS Facility Master Plan proposed specific buildings to be closed and consolidated over 15 year period.

Reorganize.

Rightsize and realign

- Rightsize the DCPS school facilities inventory
 - Reduce the number of buildings with low and declining enrollment and underutilized space
 - Move successful school programs to buildings better able to support high quality education
- Realign grade configurations and create logical, coherent feeder patterns
 - Fully enroll middle schools and former junior high schools by moving all 6th grades to middle schools
 - Create PK-8 schools in low density planning areas with underutilized elementary schools
 - Feed elementary schools to related middle schools
 - Feed middle and PS-8 schools into related comprehensive and large magnet high schools

Why Reorganize?

Focus resources on students

- With 49,000 students, DCPS is operating enough building space to accommodate 85,000.
- We have 101 elementary schools, but could meet our need - and still leave room to grow - with 86 elementary schools.
- Middle schools and former junior high schools are not viable without 6th graders.

Revitalize.

Comprehensive Staffing Model

Where we are today:

Many DCPS schools are unable to support what we believe should be basic components of a comprehensive school program – art, music, PE, counseling. Without adequate administrative staff, principals are unable to focus on supporting instruction.

Where we want to be:

By concentrating resources in fewer school buildings, we can provide students with the full complement of academic, enrichment, wellness, and administrative staff necessary to support a comprehensive program.

Where We Are Today: Inadequate staffing at many schools

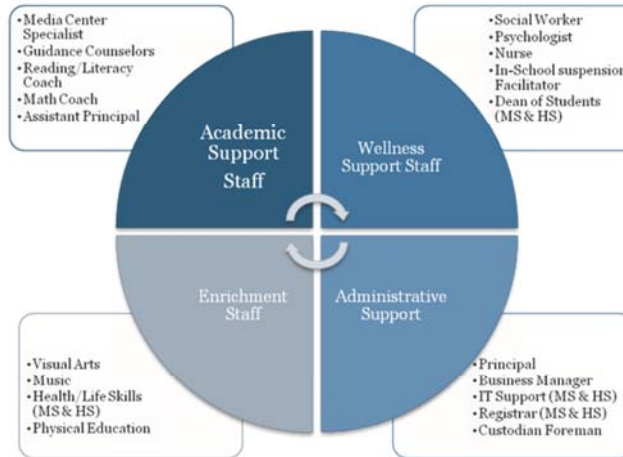
Ward		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Number of schools with staff							
Art	Full-time	7	5	6	4	8	7	9	13
	Part-time	4	1	0	4	4	4	5	3
	None or less than 1/3 time	3	6	4	9	10	9	8	9
Librarian	Full-time	6	7	9	7	6	11	8	13
	Part-time	7	5	0	10	11	8	13	11
	None or less than 1/3 time	1	0	1	0	5	1	1	1
Music	Full-time	9	4	4	6	10	6	6	17
	Part-time	1	2	0	3	3	0	10	3
	None or less than 1/3 time	4	6	6	8	9	14	6	5
Phys Ed	Full-time	9	5	5	8	7	8	9	16
	Part-time	3	2	0	5	3	3	4	1
	None or less than 1/3 time	2	5	5	4	12	9	9	8
Total Schools		14	12	10	17	22	20	22	25

Where We Want to Be: Staffing for achievement

GOALS:

- Provide each school with Art, Music, PE, and media specialists/librarians
- Ensure schools have a team of practitioners to help students & families with socio-emotional needs
- Free up principals' time to focus on instruction
- Provide additional academic support to students

Comprehensive Staffing Model



Renew. Innovative Programs

With resources more efficiently concentrated, and every school on its way to providing a comprehensive baseline program, DCPS proposes to offer new specialized programs, equitably distributed across the city.

1. Early Childhood Programs
2. Inclusive & Integrated Special Education Programs
3. Gifted and Talented Programs
4. Fine Arts Programs
5. High-Tech Programs
6. Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Programs

Criteria for Proposed Rightsizing

Primary Criteria

Enrollment decline between 2002-2006 greater than the 5-year DCPS median change:

- Elementary - 21% decline
- Middle/Junior High - 29% decline
- Comprehensive Senior High - 14% decline
- Specialty Senior High - 7% increase

Total 2006 enrollment less than the DCPS median:

- Elementary: less than 272 students in grades PS-5
- Middle/Junior High: less than 334 students (before moving 9th graders to HS)
- Senior High less than 825 students

Application of these joint criteria generated 33 ES and 7 MS/JHS as candidates for closing, co-location or consolidation.

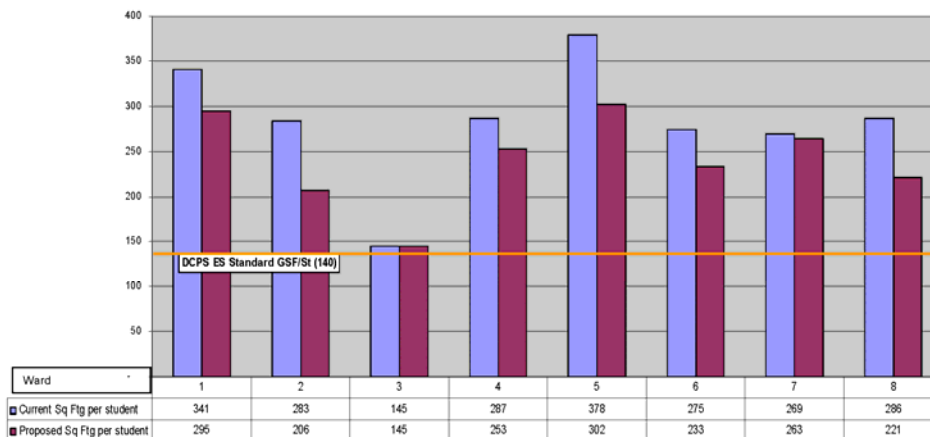
Secondary Criteria

Application of additional factors removed schools from the initial list and informed alternative choices and configurations:

- Geographic isolation
- Student growth projections, based on population growth and on new or planned housing
- Neighborhood and school-level enrollment patterns, along with capacity of likely receiving schools
- Characteristics of likely receiving schools - building size; the presence of a gymnasium, auditorium, and/or outside play space; resource to the community
- Safety and walkability for elementary school children; accessibility of schools to major public transportation
- Growth potential of DCPS as a result of system-wide improvement
- Characteristics of individual programs

Current and Proposed Capacity by Ward

Square Footage per Student by Ward



Schedule of Community Dialogues

Meeting Focus	Dates & Times	Wards	Planning Areas	Locations
Community Dialogue #1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the basic proposal and how it was developed • Communicating concerns and questions 	December 10 6 – 8pm	1, 2, 3, 6	F, D, G	Tubman ES 3101 13 th Street, NW
	December 11 7:30 – 9:30pm*	4, 5	H, E	Noyes ES 2725 10 th St, NE
	December 12 6 – 8pm	7, 8	C, B, A	Patterson ES 4399 South Capitol Terr, SW
Community Dialogue #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about the programmatic and budget implications of the proposal • Communicating concerns and questions 	December 17 6-8pm	1, 2, 3, 6	F, D, G	Francis JHS 2425 N St, NW
	December 18 6 – 8pm	4, 5	H, E	Barnard ES 430 Decatur St, NW
	December 19 6 – 8pm	7, 8	C, B, A	Plummer ES 4601 Texas Ave, SE
Community Dialogue #3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flagging implementation issues that could alter the final decision and/or impact the process for moving forward • Communicating concerns and questions 	January 9 6 – 8pm	1, 2, 3, 6	F, D, G	Miner ES 601 15 th St, NE
	January 10 6 – 8pm	4, 5	H, E	Emery ES 1720 1 st St, NE
	January 11 6 – 8pm	7, 8	C, B, A	Hart MS 601 Mississippi Ave, SE

For more information, including this and other documents, visit: www.k12.dc.us or www.dc.gov

Appendix J: Student Re-assignment Criteria (Seattle)

These materials are an excerpt from a document describing Seattle's approach to student re-assignment, including specifics on "riser" students, Accelerated Progress Programs (APP), and Special Ed students. For the full complement of materials, please visit the appropriate page on the Seattle Public Schools website at:

http://www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity/appendix_g.pdf

This appendix provides details on the process for determining where students affected by building closures and/or repurposing would be assigned. In summary:

- All students affected by this recommendation would receive a new initial assignment for 2009-10.
- Families would be notified of these new assignment for 2009-10 by personal letter prior to the Open Enrollment time period.
- Families could decide to apply for a different assignment through the Open Enrollment process this spring.
- Open Enrollment has been rescheduled to March 2 – 31, 2009. This assures that all families would have the opportunity to participate equitably in the school choice process for next year if they want to request a different school assignment.

Factors in determining student reassignments include:

- Current reference area school.
- Nearby buildings with excess capacity.
- Transportation eligibility and/or feasibility of modifying the current student assignment plan and related transportation to support reassignments.
- Continued attendance in a cluster where the student is not eligible for district provided transportation but the family has chosen that cluster and is providing transportation on its own.
- Availability of programs and services to meet student needs for bilingual and/or special education services.
- Reassigning affected siblings to the same school (unless appropriate services for siblings are not available in the same school).

Elementary reference areas would be used as the starting point for reassignment to assure consistency in the reassignment process, with the same rules applying to all students attending the same school who live in the same reference area.¹

¹ The only exceptions would be for individual students whose program or service needs cannot be met if assigned under the consistent decision rules applicable for each group of students.

“Riser” Students

Some students are “risers” moving from the last grade in their current school to the next level (e.g. 5th graders in a K-5 school to middle school, or 8th graders in a K-8 or 6-8 school to high school). Those students would not have an assignment for next year under the current circumstances, and would not receive a pre-Open Enrollment assignment.

However, every student who would have had an assignment for next year would receive a pre-Open Enrollment assignment. Specifically:

- African American Academy
Current K-7th grade students reassigned prior to Open Enrollment.
Current 8th grade students participate in the regular Open Enrollment process.
- Cooper
Current K-4th grade students reassigned prior to Open Enrollment.
Current 5th grade students participate in the regular Open Enrollment process.
- Meany
Current 6th and 7th grade students reassigned prior to Open Enrollment.
Current 8th grade students participate in the regular Open Enrollment process.
- Summit
Current K-11th grade students reassigned prior to Open Enrollment.
- T.T. Minor
Current K-4th grade students reassigned prior to Open Enrollment.²
Current 5th grade students participate in the regular Open Enrollment process.

Program Relocations

In the case of program relocations, reassignments are not needed. Students would still be assigned to the same school, which would be at a different location. Specifically:

- Pathfinder – Program and all students relocated to Cooper.
- Van Asselt – Program and all students relocated to AAA building.
- Nova – Program and all students relocated to Meany (co-located with SBOC).

² There are still a few 4th graders at T.T. Minor who were assigned there when Martin Luther King was consolidated with T.T. Minor. The families of these students would be contacted personally and be given a pre-Open Enrollment assignment to any school of their choosing that offers the appropriate services for the student. (Standard transportation rules would apply.)

- Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC) – Program and all students relocated to Meany (co-located with Nova).³

It should also be noted that one of the Elementary Bilingual Orientation Center (EBOC) programs is currently located at Thurgood Marshall (4 classrooms), and would be relocated to Hawthorne (2 classrooms) and Dunlap (2 classrooms.) This locates the services closer to where most of the students live. Central Cluster EBOC students would be assigned to the EBOC program at Hawthorne.

Impact of Transportation on Reassignments

If students are attending a reference area school outside of their current transportation eligibility area, they would be assigned to a school in the same cluster as at present. Middle school students would also be reassigned to a school where they would be eligible for school bus transportation.⁴ This respects family arrangements for factors such as child care or convenience to work. If students are attending an alternative school with all city transportation, they would be reassigned to an elementary or middle school where they would be eligible for transportation.

For example:

- A student in the T.T. Minor Montessori program who lives outside of the Central Cluster would be reassigned to Leschi with the relocation of the program to Leschi. The student is currently attending a school without district provided transportation, and it is assumed that the family would want to continue in the same cluster as at present.
- Elementary students at AAA who live in the Southeast Cluster would be reassigned to Van Asselt at the AAA building; standard transportation rules mean they would receive transportation to Van Asselt because both AAA and Van Asselt are located in the Southeast Cluster. Other students at AAA would be assigned to a school where they would be eligible for transportation.

If the appropriate reference area is for a traditional K-8 (Blaine in the Queen Anne/ Magnolia Cluster, Broadview-Thomson in the North Cluster, or Madrona in the Central Cluster), both elementary and middle school students would be assigned there. This allows for siblings at both elementary and middle school grade levels to attend school together.

³ Many students typically transition out of the BOC programs at the end of each semester. Reassignment of those students would continue to be handled through the current process.

⁴ Whenever transportation eligibility is referenced, standard eligibility rules apply; this includes the requirement that students live outside the walk boundary of the assigned school to be eligible for transportation.

The same applies for the recommended traditional K-8 school at Jane Addams in the Northeast cluster, and some Northeast cluster students would be assigned to Jane Addams. Again, this allows for siblings at both elementary and middle school grades to attend school together, and also helps to address capacity needs in the Northeast Cluster.

Early Sibling Assignments

Early siblings applications are accepted each fall (October and November) for entry grade students who want to attend the same school as a sibling. The sibling must be currently attending the school and continuing at the same school the following year. In the case of early sibling assignments to a school that is recommended for closure or repurposing, the early sibling assignment would follow the reassignment of the older sibling to the new school.

Ordinarily, when an early sibling assignment has been made neither the sibling nor the entering student may submit a new application during Open Enrollment. However, if the students have been reassigned as a result of building closure or repurposing, families would be able to apply during the Open Enrollment period. Families would also be able to submit a new application in the case of a location change for the assigned school.

Accelerated Progress Program (APP)

Beginning fall 2009, elementary and middle school APP would be offered at two sites, with assignments based on elementary clusters.

APP students who live in the North, Northeast, Northwest and Queen Anne/Magnolia Clusters would be assigned as follows, with transportation provided to:

- Lowell
- Hamilton

APP students who live in the Central, South, Southeast, West Seattle North and West Seattle South clusters would be assigned as follows, with transportation provided to:

- Thurgood Marshall
- Washington

APP students could apply for available seats at either site, but transportation would be provided only to the designated site for each cluster. Assignment tiebreakers would be (1) sibling and (2) lottery.

APP students from both Hamilton and Washington would be assigned to Garfield for high school.

Cooper Elementary School

The greatest complexity in determining reassignments would be for students who attend Cooper and/or students who live in the Cooper reference area. This is because most of the excess capacity in West Seattle is in the West Seattle South Cluster, but Cooper is located in the West Seattle North Cluster.

There are several groups of students who would need to be addressed:

- Students who live in the Cooper reference area and attend Cooper.
- Students who live in the Cooper reference area and attend another school.
- Students who live in another reference area and attend Cooper.

See pages G - 8 through G -11 for more specific information.

Special Education Services

For each recommendation, information is provided about anticipated location changes for special education self-contained and specialty inclusion programs.

However, it is important to note that reassignments for students receiving these services are based on each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the availability of appropriate services at a particular school. Assignments for students with IEPs are always dependent upon the service needs specified in each student's IEP, and may result in assignment to a different school.

Non-Resident Students

Non-resident students are eligible to attend Seattle Public Schools under certain circumstances. State law requires that non-resident students apply for admission annually. Therefore, non-resident students attending any closed or repurposed school would need to apply for 2009-10 in any case; they are not reflected in the demographic analysis nor are they reflected in the following charts. A list of schools and programs open to non-resident students is generated each spring after Open Enrollment for resident students is complete, and is based on anticipated excess capacity in buildings and programs.

Appendix K: Letter to Families Regarding Student Assignment (Oakland)

This is a letter written by Oakland Unified School District to parents and caregivers with details regarding the re-assignment process. It was sent one week after the formal decision was made to close Sherman School.



Oakland Unified School District

**1025 Second Avenue, Room 301
Oakland, CA 94606**

March 5, 2007

Dear Sherman parent/caregiver:

As you are likely aware, Dr. Statham has made the decision to close Sherman school at the end of this school year.

We recognize that this will be a very difficult transition for you and your student. We are committed to working with **each individual family** to ensure that your student is enrolled in a high quality educational option for the 2007-2008 school year. To work with you through these transitions, we have the following meetings scheduled:

- Thursday, March 15th at 7:30 AM
- Thursday, March 15th at 6:30 PM
- Monday, March 19th at 7:30 AM
- Monday, March 19th at 6:30 PM

All meetings will be held in the Sherman Elementary School Auditorium. We strongly encourage you to attend one of these important meetings so that we can support you to select a high quality elementary school for your student.

In addition to these scheduled meetings, we are enclosing an options form which you can fill out and send directly to:

**Student Assignment Office
1098 Second Avenue, Portable 18
Oakland, CA 94606**

Options forms will also be available in the Sherman main office for your convenience. Please feel free to contact me anytime at (510) 879-2923. I am committed to helping each and every family through this difficult transition time.

Regards,

Appendix L: Boundary Adjustment Memo (Oakland)

This is a sample board memo regarding attendance boundary adjustments from Oakland Unified School District.

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Community Accountability

TO: Kimberly Statham, State Administrator
Board of Education

FROM: Kirsten Vital, Chief of Community Accountability

SUBJECT: Maxwell Park Attendance Boundary

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval by State Administrator of Resolution No. 0607-0156 for the expansion of the Maxwell Park attendance area to include the current Sherman Elementary School attendance area.

DISCUSSION

On February 28th, the State Administrator made the decision to close Sherman Elementary School, effective June 30, 2006. As such, there is an identified need for the area currently comprising the Sherman attendance area to be absorbed into another attendance area.

Maxwell Park is located in close proximity to Sherman elementary – approximately one mile away. The Maxwell Park facility has capacity to hold approximately 460 students. Based on 2006-2007 data, the number of elementary school students living in the current Sherman attendance area who attend OUSD schools is 190 students. Based on 2006-2007 data, the number of elementary school students living in the current Maxwell Park attendance who attend OUSD schools is 251. The facility capacity at Maxwell Park (460 seats) is sufficient to hold the number of students living in both the Sherman and Maxwell Park neighborhoods (190+251 = 441 students). Elementary school attendance is projected to decline in both neighborhoods over the next five years.

The addresses identified in Table 1 will be moved from the current Sherman attendance boundary to the Maxwell Park attendance boundary. The addresses indicated are provided for informational purposes only and are based upon the most current information available to the District as of this resolution. Any new addresses in the area within Sherman’s current attendance area, either through corrected information or new development, will be considered part of the new Maxwell Park attendance area.

Table 1 – Addresses To Be Moved From Sherman To Maxwell Park Attendance Areas

Address Range	Street Name	Side(s) of Street
2461-2499	55th Ave	Odd only (*)
2500-3099	55th Ave	Even and Odd
2600-3099	56th Ave	Even and Odd
2600-3099	57th Ave	Even and Odd
2900-3099	58th Ave	Even and Odd
2600-3099	60th Ave	Even and Odd
2700-3099	61st Ave	Even and Odd
2800-3099	62nd Ave	Even and Odd
2600-2699	Beal Ave	Even and Odd
2800-3199	Birdsall Ave	Odd only
5300-6199	Brann St	Even and Odd
5351-5499	Brookdale Ave	Odd only (*)
5500-5700	Brookdale Ave	Even and Odd
5000-5198	Camden St	Even only (**)
5200-5499	Camden St	Even and Odd
5900-6198	Camden St	Even only
5300-5499	El Camile Ave	Even and Odd
1-13	Faculty Rd	Even and Odd
5200-5655	Fleming Ave	Even and Odd
5700-6199	Foothill Blvd	Even only
5200-5499	Hillen Dr	Even and Odd
2601-2623	Kingsland Ave	Odd only (*)
5700-5899	Kingsley Cir	Even and Odd
5501-5699	La Verne Ave	Odd
5000-5839	Macarthur Blvd	Even and Odd
5841-5899	Macarthur Blvd	Odd only
2701-3099	Madera Ave	Odd only (*)
3100-3199	Madera Ave	Even and Odd
3201-3351	Madera Ave	Odd only (*)
2500-2599	Mason St	Even and Odd
2900-3099	Millsbrae Ave	Even and Odd
3200-3299	Millsview Ave	Even and Odd
2800-3349	Morcom Ave	Even and Odd
5526-6099	Morse Dr	Even and Odd
5518-5729	N Picardy Dr	Even and Odd
5300-5499	Normandie Ave	Even and Odd
5500-5899	Picardy Dr	Even and Odd
3301-3599	Pierson St	Odd only (*)
5400-5899	Roberts Ave	Even and Odd
5518-5724	S Picardy Dr	Even and Odd
2601-3099	Seminary Ave	Even and Odd
3320-3620	Seminary Ave	Even only
5950-6248	Seminary Ave	Even only
3300-3599	Simmons St	Even and Odd
5300-5899	Walnut St	Even and Odd

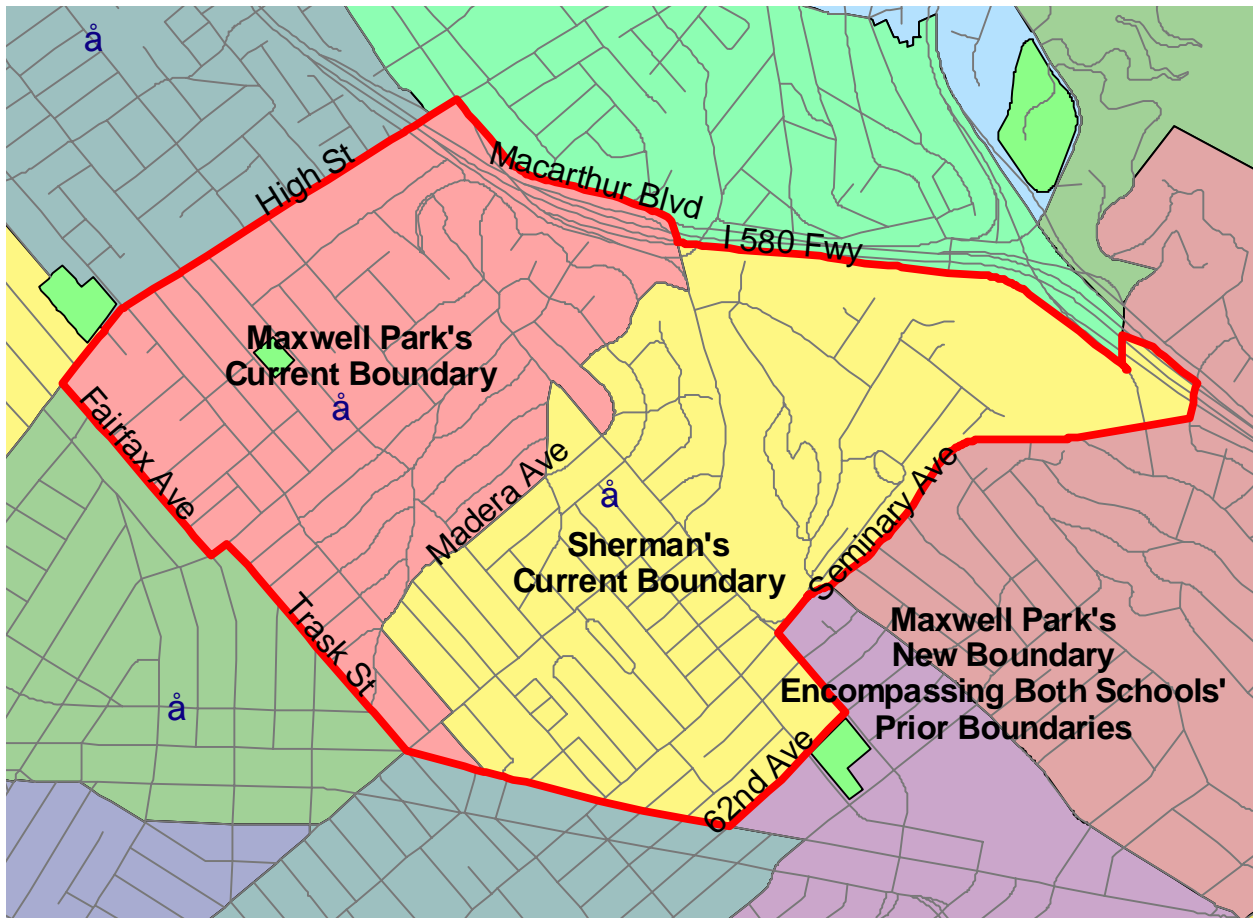
1-99	Wyman Pl	Even and Odd
3200-3499	Wyman St	Even and Odd
5300-5499	Yuba Ave	Even and Odd

(*) The even side of the street is already in the Maxwell Park attendance area

(**) The odd side of the street is already in the Maxwell Park attendance area

Refer to Figure 1 for a map of the proposed new Maxwell Park attendance area.

Figure 1 – Map Of Proposed New Maxwell Park Attendance Area



RECOMMENDATION

Approval by State Administrator of Resolution No. 0607-0156 for the expansion of the Maxwell Park attendance area to include the current Sherman Elementary School attendance area.

Appendix M: Staffing FAQ (Boston)

This is a FAQ that Boston Public Schools used to help address questions that school staff might have in response to school closures.

Frequently Asked Questions – Staffing

I am a school principal/headmaster and my school is being impacted. What should I do with regard to staffing for next year?

First off, constant communication with your Staffing Manager will help guide you through this process. HR representatives will be at the impacted schools throughout October to help work with you and your staff. We also plan to be out again in December, when more clarity around each school's staffing is known. Each school is in a slightly different situation, and so there is no standard answer. We plan to work with you and your staff individually to get the answers that you need. In some cases, clarity around the staffing implications for your staff may not be known until after the budgeting and staffing processes for all schools have been completed in January.

What does it mean if I am excessed?

Permanent, tenured teachers in some affected schools will be excessed as the teaching positions at these schools have been eliminated. In schools where only some positions have been eliminated, teachers are excessed in reverse seniority order. An excess status means that, as a permanent BTU member, you are entitled to another position in your program area elsewhere in the district if one is available. The questions below further outline this assignment process.

How do the Transfer and Excess processes work?

The permanent teacher Transfer Posting will be available in February 2009. This posting will be open for 10 school days online at the BPS Career Center, and will enable permanent BTU teachers to apply to openings in their program areas. Following this application period, school leaders and their school site council will interview applicants and select the best one for the job. If two or more qualified applicants apply for the position through the Transfer Posting, one must be selected by the building principal or headmaster.

Excess pools will be held in March 2009. The excess pools allow each unassigned permanent teacher an opportunity to bid, in seniority order, on three positions within his or her program area. School leaders will have an opportunity to describe their position at the pool before bidding. It will be important for all excessed staff to attend these meetings. Afterwards, principals will be provided with the names of those who have bid on each opening and will meet with each candidate, rank them, and submit those preferences to HR, who will ultimately confirm all assignments. Permanent teachers are guaranteed one of the three choices that they have bid on in the excess process.

What if, after the excess pools, not all permanent teachers are assigned?

Human Resources will offer any newly-identified vacancies to excessed permanent teachers until all in a given program area are assigned.

I am at a school building that is being taken over by a pilot school, am I considered excessed?

Yes. You should follow the procedure outlined above to look for another position in the district. Teachers in this situation will of course have the opportunity to apply for the vacant positions at the pilot school.

What is a program area?

A program area is the subject area(s) in which you are qualified to teach. It is a way of grouping similar teachers together for the purposes of re-assignment. At the school-level meetings with staff, a Human Resources representative will be able to confirm your program area for you. If you would like to apply for additional areas, called alternate program areas, the procedure for doing so will also be outlined for you in a Superintendent's Circular to be released later this year.

Will my new school continue to have the same programs (after-school programs, electives, etc.)?

These decisions are largely school-based, and will be decided on by the school leader and School Site Council.

What about other staff in the affected schools?

If you have questions and are not a paraprofessional or teacher, please attend the school-level meeting or contact the Staffing Manager for the applicable school. Their contact information is below. In addition, we will be meeting with representatives of all collective bargaining units that represent school-based employees to discuss these school re-programming proposals and the affect on their members.

Appendix N: Communication to teachers (Washington, D.C.)

This is a communication that was sent by DC Public Schools to teachers whose schools were being closed to describe the approach that would be taken regarding teacher re-assignment.

April 30, 2008

Dear [insert name]:

As you know, your current school, [insert school name], will be closing at the end of this school year. As a teacher at a closing school, you are officially identified as an excessed teacher, and guaranteed an involuntary transfer and placement in a teaching position for which you are certified.

It is our strong desire that DCPS teachers work with principals and school communities to find mutually beneficial placements for the upcoming school year. We know that many of our teachers at closing schools are effective educators and have a great deal to offer our students. We expect that each of you will be able to find a placement in your area of certification that fits your interests and abilities.

On May 10, 2008, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., DCPS will hold the first transfer fair of the year at Eastern High School. ***Only teachers at closing and restructuring schools will be eligible to attend this fair.*** All DCPS schools will be represented and school hiring teams are eager to hire for the upcoming school year. The enclosed flier provides additional information about this and other upcoming fairs. Please plan to attend at least one of these events. At the fair, you will need a copy of your current certification and multiple copies of your resume to distribute to principals.

I look forward to seeing you at the May 10 fair, and to your continued work on behalf of DC Public Schools students during the upcoming school year.

If you have any questions, please contact Jasmine Jose, Director of Staffing or Richard Shackell, Director of Instructional Staffing at 202-442-4090.

Sincerely,

Kaya Henderson
Deputy Chancellor
District of Columbia Public Schools

Appendix O: MOA with teachers union (Washington, D.C.)

This is a memorandum of agreement between DC public schools and the teachers' union. It describes the rules that would apply to teacher re-assignment in closing and receiving schools.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Between the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) regarding the placement of teachers impacted by school closure, school restructuring and school consolidation.

All references to "teacher" in this Memorandum of Agreement shall be inclusive of all WTU bargaining unit members.

CLOSING AND RECEIVING SCHOOLS

1. The Chancellor shall identify for the Union the name of each closing school and the corresponding receiving school(s) in a timely manner for the purpose of implementing these procedures.
2. All teachers in closed schools shall be identified as excessed teachers and are guaranteed an involuntary transfer and placement in a teaching position for which he/she is certified at another DC Public School.
3. Teachers from a closed school shall have first right of interview with the Personnel committee of the receiving school (s) for any vacancies at the corresponding receiving school for which the teachers are certified.
4. The personnel committee of the receiving school(s) shall interview interested teachers from the corresponding closed school and make recommendations to the principal or Chancellor's designee prior to interviewing other candidates.
5. On or before May 15, the vacancy list shall be posted on the DCPS website and provided to each teacher affected by school closings, consolidations, restructuring and excessing.
6. DCPS shall conduct a series of job fairs for all teachers affected by school closings, consolidations, restructuring and excessing. DCPS and WTU shall consult on the format and scheduling of the job fairs.

TRANSITION TEAMS

The Chancellor shall establish local school transition teams to develop and implement a plan to ensure effective collaboration between closing and receiving schools' personnel to address potential challenges, including but not limited to, school culture/climate, programs, personnel, materials/resources and other issues as defined by the transition team.

1. The team shall consist of the following representatives from both the closing and receiving schools: WTU building representative or designee, principal or designee, PTA president or designee, Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT) chairperson or designee, and two teachers from each school's LSRT.
2. The transition team shall remain in existence until a duly elected LSRT assumes the responsibilities of the transition team and determines through a consensus that the transition team is no longer needed.
3. The Chancellor shall provide an appropriate budget and training for the transition team to develop and implement the team's approved plan.

SCHOOLS IN RESTRUCTURING

1. The Chancellor shall identify for the Union the name of each school in restructuring and the NCLB restructuring option to be implemented at each school in a timely manner.
2. All teachers at restructured schools who are no longer assigned to the restructured school shall be identified as excess teachers and are guaranteed an involuntary transfer and placement in a position for which she/he is certified at another DC Public School.

In the staffing of restructured and consolidated schools, diversity shall be given strong consideration. Diversity is defined to include gender, race, ethnicity, age and years of teaching experience.

DCPS and the WTU agree to consult on all teacher staffing, placement and assignment issues resulting from school restructuring, school closure and consolidation that are not covered in this agreement. The parties shall execute a memorandum of understanding to address such issues.

Agreed to by the parties:

District of Columbia Public Schools

Washington Teachers' Union

Appendix P: Memo to Closing Schools Regarding Packing and Move Procedures (Oakland)

This is a sample memo that Oakland Unified School District sent to principals regarding packing and move procedures. It describes the protocol that was to be followed for shutting down schools and transferring important documents and materials from closing to receiving schools.

To: Closing School Principals

From: Allison Sands, School Portfolio Management

CC: Closing School Network Officers
Larry Bridges, Peter Hatcher, Neil Kalouner, Yvonne Allara, Sean Kimble, Paul Hoy, David Lewis, Barbara Mandolph

RE: Closing School Procedures

The purpose of this memo is to document the appropriate procedures for various elements of school closure. Each school has slightly different circumstances so please work with your Network Officer to ensure that you have the right plans in place. I am available to provide support as needed.

Packing & Cleaning

- Each teacher leaving the site will be provided with 10 boxes to pack their personal belongings.
- Anything bought with district funds must be packed up and redistributed with all assets from the site, including teacher manuals.
- Teachers are responsible for packing and cleaning their classrooms

Textbooks

- **East Oakland Community High, Merritt, Kizmet:** All books should be packed by subject area and sent to Shawn Kimball at the warehouse
- **Sherman:** Books for the number of students going to Maxwell Park should be sent to Maxwell Park. All other books should be sent to Shawn Kimball at the warehouse. New consumables should be left in their boxes and sent either to Maxwell Park or Shawn Kimball
- **Havenscourt, Simmons, Elmhurst:** Books should be divided up on site to accommodate the new schools

Technology

- Paul Hoy will be conducting walk-thrus of each site to tag which technology is obsolete
- Obsolete technology should be sent to the warehouse
- Coordinator for Instructional Technology will evaluate appropriate destination for good technology – items will be sent directly to these sites (vs. to the warehouse)

CUM files

- **EOCH, Merritt, Kizmet, Sherman:** All CUM files from **current** students should be packed and brought to the Network Officer office at 1025 2nd avenue. *** It is very important that these are brought downtown so that they are not lost ****
- **EOCH, Merritt, Kizmet, Sherman:** All **non-current files** should be sent to Barbara Mandolph at the warehouse
- **Havenscourt, Simmons, Elmhurst:** All CUM files should stay on site. Responsibilities for files should be shared between new schools on site.

Attendance Files

The principal and/or staff needs to make sure that all scantrons, attendance summary reports and any other records are signed by the Administrator. Please have the attendance records sent to Fiscal Services Department for availability for SCO auditors during 06/07. If you have additional questions, please contact me at 879-8118 or by e-mail david.lewis@ousd.k12.ca.us . The boxes should be label clearly: School name, list of contents and the Fiscal Year on the outside of all four sides of each box.

- Monthly attendance Reports by Students: Reg, Independent Studies and SDC
- Teacher Attendance Registers/Scantrons
- Absence Notes and Logs
- Attendance Policy and Procedures
- School Calendar and Bell Schedule
- Records pertaining to Staff Development(i.e. sign-in sheets and Agendas)
- Records pertaining to CSR (i.e. list of participating classes and all teachers who are new to the Class-Size Reductions program).
- Records pertaining to Kindergarten Continuation (i.e. listing of kindergartners who attended kindergarten during 04/05 and 05/06 and their continuation forms).
- Records pertaining to Independent Study (i.e. student contracts and work samples.)

For additional information or to communicate with those who contributed to this work, please email: tools@broadfoundation.org

