

DRAFT

Grade Reorganization
Final Report
January 28, 2010

Background

The Shorewood School District has periodically reviewed utilization of space in the district for many years. Historically, reviews were done throughout the 1980's and 1990's resulting in remodeling and several additions. More recently, the district studies enrollment trends (study conducted by The Applied Population Laboratory of the University of Wisconsin – Madison). This study was finished in the fall of 2005 and projected enrollment trends through 2014. This was followed by a “space utilization” study conducted during the 2005-06 school year. Public Business Consulting Group was contracted to accomplish the work; it resulted in a Facilities Assessment Report dated September 16, 2006. A Reorganization Study Update was provided to the community in August of 2007.

The Grade Reorganization Committee was formed in November of 2009 to study the issues surrounding facilities use and enrollment and to recommend to the Superintendent of Schools potential changes to the current delivery of services, changes which would:

- Save a significant amount of money
- Improve efficiency
- Provide an educationally sound grade/school configuration

Process

The committee structure included a mix of parents, teachers, community members and business leaders (see Appendix A for committee make-up).

The committee met five times, November 2009 – January 2010. During the meetings the committee:

- Reviewed the Facilities Assessment completed by the district in 2006 and floor plans of each school (See Appendix B)
- Reviewed enrollment projections completed by the district in 2005 (See Appendix C)
- Updated enrollment projections with actual counts from 2005-2009 (See Appendix D)
- Reviewed information about potential grade level configurations and the educational impact of each configuration (See Appendix E)
- Assessed financial implications of potential changes to the current grade configuration

The committee carefully studied potential options and vigorously discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each option. This led to a narrowing of options and the creation of a list of

criteria against which each option was weighed. The criteria included: 1) cost savings, 2) preservation of middle level education (different from either an elementary or high school experience), 3) the ability to provide a strong, educationally sound program, and 4) potential community response.

Recommendations

The committee has identified three potential configurations that met the criteria. They are listed in the table below.

The committee also had additional comments that must be considered as the district moves toward making a decision:

- There must be community education about the need to close space
- There must be community education regarding the potential options and the effects of those options
- The options have no dollar figures for remodeling—each scenario has potential remodeling effects, and though the committee understood that funds for remodeling are non-existent, prior to a final choice being made, consideration of even minor remodeling must have costs assigned
- The budgetary savings of this configuration should be weighed against other proposed cuts, including potential cuts in teaching staff as a result of combining schools (See Appendix F)
- A timeline for closure must include adequate time to plan for the new configuration
- It is obvious to the committee that the current enrollment trends will necessitate the closing of space in the near future

Configuration	Savings*	Comments
K – 4 at Lake Bluff 5 - 7at SIS 8 – 12 at SHS Close Atwater	\$534,881	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savings are realized in cutting utility costs as well as reducing administrative, custodial and secretarial staff • Younger middle school students have a defined and separate space • Eighth grade students can be somewhat separated from the 9-12 population (homeroom, core academics), but will be a part of the high school campus • Children at the elementary level will have to travel to one building • The district loses a historic building as an educational site
K – 4 at Lake Bluff 5 - 8 at Atwater 9 – 12 at SHS	\$395,986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savings are realized in cutting utility costs as well as reducing administrative, custodial and

Close SIS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> secretarial staff • Middle school students have a defined and separate space • Children at the elementary level will have to travel to one building • The high school is maintained as a separate site
K – 6 at Atwater K – 6 at Lake Bluff 7-12 at SHS Close SIS	\$343,487	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savings are realized through cutting utility costs as well as reducing administrative, custodial and secretarial staff • No changes at the elementary level • The high school will need to be reconfigured to meet the needs of middle level children who will be somewhat separated from the 9-12 population (homeroom, core academics), but will be a part of the high school campus

*Savings do not include teaching staff reductions or costs of remodeling (See Appendix G for details)

The Shorewood School District provides exceptionally high quality education. Closing a facility is a weighty decision, one which has long term effects. The Grade Reorganization Committee presents these options as three different approaches, each with different outcomes. Talking about the potential changes in the most open way possible will provide informed decision-making when the time comes to close space.