



ENROLLMENT PLANNING

MARCH 18, 2026

Cropper G/S

Background

- Last districtwide redistricting 2009 - opening of 3½ new schools
- Smaller redistricting 2013 - a few specific areas, primarily Cedar & Brigham
- Use of Portable Classrooms
 - 1 at Towanda in 2019
 - 2 at NCHS in 2022
 - 2 at Cedar Ridge, 2 at Parkside Elementary, 2nd portable at Towanda in 2024
- Enrollment & Utilization (Capacity) Study - April 2024
- Facility Conditions Report - September 2024
- Facility County Sales Tax approval - April 2025

Path to Proposals

- Board Direction to District Administration
 - Short-term objectives - reduce reliance on portables, provide relief to schools at/near capacity, align enrollment with building capacity
 - Long-term objectives - ensure facility and financial optimization to best meet learning goals
- Goal 2 of Unit 5's Strategic Plan (Creating Foundations for the Future)
 - "Secure financial stability for sustainable programming and resource optimization"
 - "Plan for, develop, and maintain district facilities and resources that meet evolving needs of student, staff and community"

Cross-Functional Collaboration

- Internal Planning Committee
 - 25 district leaders representing various areas of expertise
 - Reviewed and discussed multiple ideas and options
 - Attendance centers
 - Changes to junior high grades
 - Construction of new buildings to address population growth in areas of the district
 - Reviewed and discussed input provided by the community
 - Narrowed down an array of options while focusing on solutions that best met district goals
 - Prepared proposals to bring to the Board of Education
- Contracted Cropper GIS

Cropper GIS

Worked with Unit 5 for almost 20 years

- Enrollment projections
- Boundary alignment
- Capacity studies

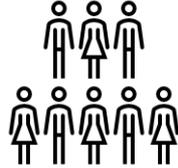
Scope of the enrollment and boundary study

- Demographic analysis, forecasting and development
- School enrollment planning (enrollment patterns and forecasting projections)
- Data collection and analysis/assimilation
- School boundary options and development
- Planning team and public meetings

Enrollment Planning Criteria



- Balance school facility utilization – Make every effort to have equitable utilization (where possible) across the district and in accordance with school capacities. Make efficient use of available space.



- Consider economic, cultural, and ethnic diversity – Ensure schools are inclusionary.



- Close Proximity – Students should be assigned to the school within the closest proximity to their homes where possible.



- Maximize busing efficiencies in transportation of students – Make every effort to account for transportation (school bus, car rider and walker), parent commuting patterns, balance busing travel time, and costs.



- Make every effort to establish contiguous zones – Avoid creating zones that are not connected to the primary attendance zone, where possible.



- Account for future growth – Allow for increasing attendance in high growth areas.



- Minimize impact on students - Attempt to minimize the number of students impacted when making boundary adjustments.



- Use major roads and natural boundaries wherever feasible to define attendance zones – Minimize the number of students who need to cross major intersections and other barriers to maximize the safety and security of students.

Operational Goals

Operational Efficiency

- Evaluate school utilization and programming across the district (Early Learning, Elementary, Junior High, High School, 18-22 transitional program)
 - Balance utilization - address portables at Cedar Ridge, Parkside Elementary, Towanda, and NCHS as well as buildings at or near capacity (Benjamin and Evans JH)
 - Account for changes in enrollment
- Transportation/busing efficiency
- Future Facility Needs
 - Account for current and future facility needs
 - Early Learning - currently in two locations, one of which will require a significant future investment
 - Eugene Field - 18-22 year old transitional program

Proposal 1 Highlights

- Creates a new early learning center customized for PreK students
- Reduces reliance on portable classrooms
- Provides enrollment relief at Benjamin, Cedar Ridge, Parkside Elementary, Towanda, Evans Junior High, and Normal Community
- Accounts for future growth in the district
- Improves building utilization to ensure students have adequate space for learning
- Proposes operational and staffing efficiency
- Provides for an accessible learning environment for the 18–22 transitional program

Proposal 1 (Common to Both Proposals)

Brigham

- Close Brigham and build a new Early Learning Center (ELC) combining Brigham and Sugar Creek early learning students.

Benjamin Elementary Boundary Changes

- Neighborhoods north of Empire (currently zoned to Benjamin) are reassigned to relieve enrollment pressure at Benjamin.
- The area west of Hershey (currently zoned to Benjamin) moves to Hoose Elementary.

Cedar Ridge Boundary Changes

- The western portion of Cedar Ridge (west of Morris Ave / west of N 1375 East Rd) moves to Pepper Ridge to relieve Cedar Ridge.
- Tracy Drive, Oak Creek Plaza, Donnie Drive, and Urban Street become an Open Attendance Area.

Parkside Elementary

- The neighborhood south of Raab Rd and north of Orlando Ave (Northbrook/Golfcrest) becomes an Open Attendance Area to relieve Parkside Elementary.

Sugar Creek Elementary - Becomes a K-5 school.

- The northeastern corner of Sugar Creek (east of Veterans Parkway) is reassigned to Grove Elementary due to proximity.

Parkside Junior High

- Pepper Ridge students, including boundary changes above, are reassigned to Parkside Junior High to provide relief at Evans Junior High. An addition to Parkside Junior High is recommended to add capacity.

High School Changes

- Neighborhoods east of Linden Street, north of Pine Street, and west of Henry Street are moved to Normal West.

To better distribute programming, some Specialized Services (SS) classrooms will be moved to schools with available space.

Proposal 1

Benjamin Boundary Change

- Neighborhoods north of Empire are moved to Towanda

Close Carlock Elementary

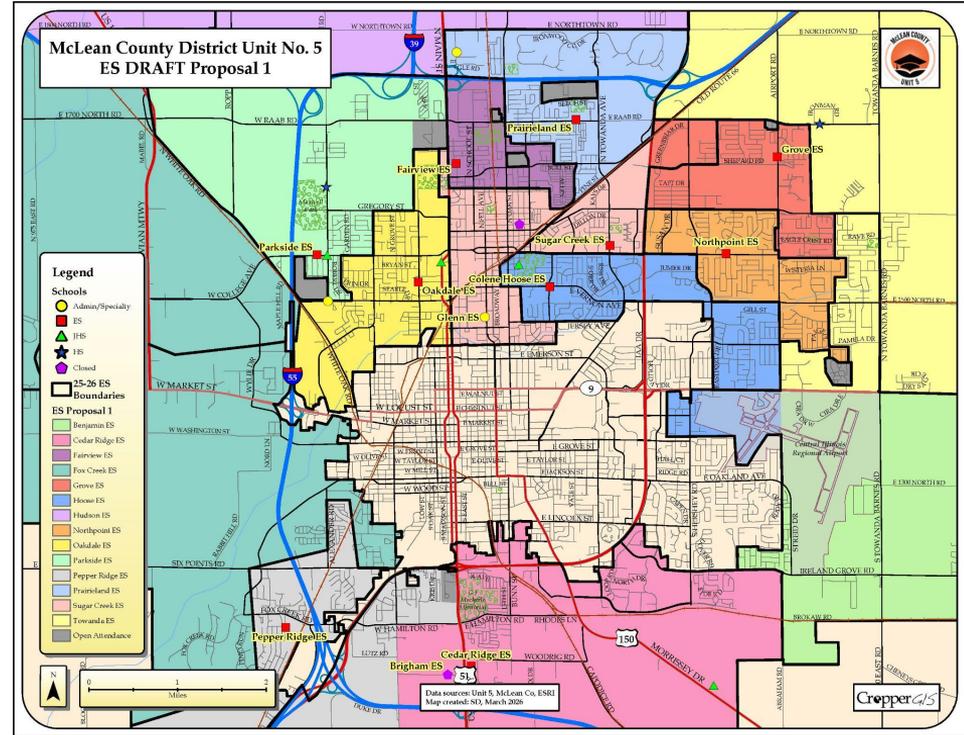
- Hudson Elementary takes on the former Carlock zone predominantly north of I-74, north of 1800, west of 1200 East, and one small area south of I-74.
- Fox Creek takes on most of the former Carlock zone south of I-74, bordered by 900 East and 1400 North.

Repurpose Glenn Elementary

- Glenn's attendance zone and students currently attending Glenn from OAA2 is redistricted to Sugar Creek, which will have 11 open classrooms after the removal of Early Learning.
- Glenn Elementary is repurposed to serve the district's 18–22 program (currently Eugene Field).

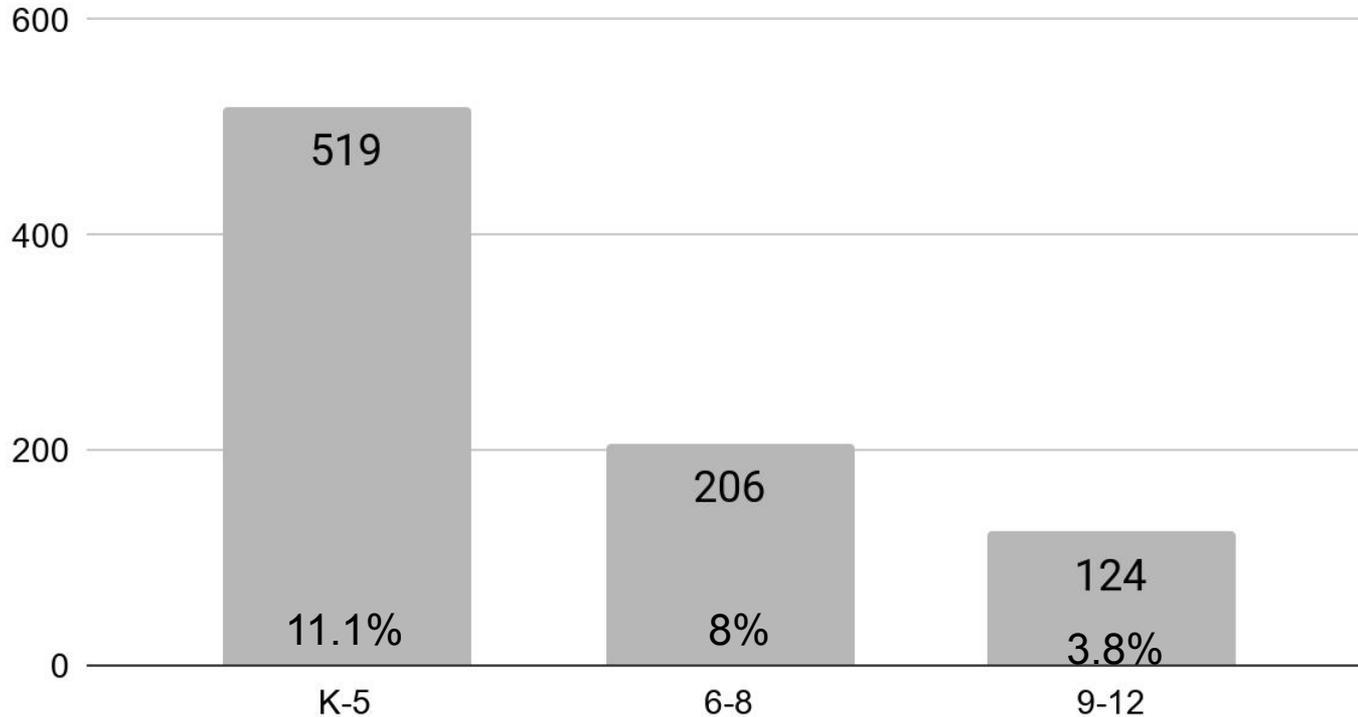
Towanda Expansion

- A building addition increases Towanda's capacity by 250–300 students.
- Eliminates the need for portables and provides enrollment relief to Benjamin.



Proposal 1 Impacts

Students Impacted: Total Live and Attend In



Early Learning: Current enrollment is approximately 543 students (enrollment available for up to 640). Actual enrollment fluctuates as children turn three and become eligible throughout the year.

Eugene Field: Current enrollment is approximately 50 students. Enrollment fluctuates based on IEPs.

Proposal 1 Impacts

School Boundary	Race								Ethnicity		Lunch Code	
	# of K-12 students impacted	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific	White	Two or More Races	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	F/R	Paid
West of Hershey (Benjamin to Hoose)	7	0%	0%	71%	14%	0%	0%	14%	14%	86%	57%	43%
North of Empire (Benjamin to Towanda)	142	1%	26%	6%	14%	0%	47%	5%	14%	86%	8%	92%
N of I-74 (Carlock to Hudson)	87	0%	0%	6%	9%	0%	77%	8%	9%	91%	37%	63%
S of I-74 (Carlock to Fox Creek)	34	0%	0%	0%	12%	0%	82%	6%	12%	88%	12%	88%
Western Portion of Cedar Ridge (Cedar to Pepper Ridge)	150	0%	1%	10%	11%	0%	68%	11%	11%	89%	35%	65%
Tracy Drive Area (Cedar Ridge to new OAA)	40	0%	0%	35%	13%	0%	28%	25%	13%	88%	90%	10%
Glenn (current zone and OAA 2 students)	207	1%	29%	14%	10%	0%	38%	8%	10%	90%	37%	63%
Northbrook/Golfcrest (Parkside E to new OAA)	35	0%	0%	66%	3%	0%	14%	17%	3%	97%	86%	14%
Sugar Creek NE Corner (Sugar to Grove)	11	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	91%	0%	9%	91%	0%	100%
Pepper Ridge (EJHS to PJHS)	134	0%	1%	16%	14%	0%	57%	11%	14%	86%	51%	49%
HS Neighborhoods (NCHS to NCWHS)	77	0%	3%	27%	10%	0%	49%	10%	10%	90%	32%	68%
Total	924	1%	11%	15%	11%	0%	52%	10%	11%	89%	37%	63%

Proposal 1 Timeline

2027-28

- Benjamin to Hoose (boundary change)
- Carlock Closes (Carlock sold)
- Western portion of Cedar to Pepper
- New OAA (Tracy Drive)
- NCHS boundary change to NCWHS
- New OAA (Northbrook/Golfcrest)
- Sugar Creek to Grove

2028-29

- Pepper Ridge to PJHS (instead of EJHS)

2029-30

- Benjamin to Towanda (building expansion)
- New ELC opens (Brigham sold)
- Glenn students to Sugar Creek, building repurposed for 18-22 program. (Eugene Field sold)

*Open Attendance Areas (OAA) will apply to new families residing in the OAA. Students currently residing in an OAA will remain at their current school unless they move.

**Enrolled students may remain at their current school through their final grade (5th, 8th, or 12th), provided the school remains open. Younger siblings may attend the same school if there is no gap in family enrollment. Upon implementation, families assume responsibility for all transportation.

***Students who wish to begin at their newly assigned school sooner than the implementation date may do so through the attendance exception process.

Proposal 1 Construction & Renovation Cost Estimates

- New Early Learning Center - \$20 to \$30 Million
- Glenn 18 - 22 Program Renovation - \$750k to \$1.5 Million
- Towanda Elementary Expansion - \$8 to \$10 Million
- Parkside Junior High Classroom Addition - \$4.4 Million

Total Cost Range: \$33.15 Million to \$45.9 Million

*Additional cost for utilities will be incurred with one new building and expansions to other buildings

Projects will be financed by selling bonds. Bond payments will be made with revenue from the County School Facilities Tax allowing for no increase in property taxes from construction or renovation.

Proposal 1 Annual Savings Estimates

Carlock

- Staffing - Range \$721k to \$922k
- Utilities & Maintenance - \$41k
- Transportation Route - \$61k

Brigham

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$97k

Eugene Field

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$25k

Glenn

- Staffing - Range \$572k to \$1.27 Million

Total Annual Savings \$1.5 to \$2.4 Million

Staffing estimates are based on average cost of new hire in each position in 25-26, not the cost of existing staff. Existing staff would have positions in other buildings.

Proposal 1 Capital Project Savings (1 to 5 years)

Brigham - \$1.70 Million

- Roof, Fire Alarm System, Geothermal Equipment, Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Carlock - \$1.18 Million

- Roof Section, Fire Alarm System, Geothermal Equipment, Parking Lot, Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Eugene Field - \$290k

- HVAC Equipment (Asbestos Abatement Will Be Required. Cost Not Included), Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Total Savings - \$3.17 Million

* Additional costs not included: Technology Infrastructure, Replacement Kitchen Equipment, Updates

Proposal 1 - Potential Benefits & Risks

Benefits

- Utilizes existing classroom capacity to reduce the number of buildings, providing taxpayer savings short and long term
- Reduces reliance on portables
- Accounts for growth in the district
- Provides enrollment relief for buildings at/near capacity
- New early learning center customized for PreK students
- Accessible learning environment for the 18-22 year old transitional program

Risks

- Closure of schools and impact to families
- Renovation & construction actual costs may come in higher than expected

Proposal 2 Highlights

- Creates a new early learning center customized for PreK students
- Reduces reliance on portable classrooms
- Provides enrollment relief at Benjamin, Cedar Ridge, Parkside Elementary, Towanda, Evans Junior High, and Normal Community
- Accounts for future growth in the district
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Proposal 2 (Common to Both Proposals)

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Benjamin Elementary Boundary Changes

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- The area west of Hershey (currently zoned to Benjamin) moves to Hoose Elementary

Cedar Ridge Boundary Changes

- The western portion of Cedar Ridge (west of Morris Ave / west of N 1375 East Rd) moves to Pepper Ridge to relieve Cedar Ridge.
- Tracy Drive, Oak Creek Plaza, Donnie Drive, and Urban Street become an Open Attendance Area.

Parkside Elementary

- The neighborhood south of Raab Rd and north of Orlando Ave (Northbrook/Golfcrest) becomes an Open Attendance Area to relieve Parkside Elementary.

Sugar Creek Elementary - Becomes a K-5 school.

- The northeastern corner of Sugar Creek (east of Veterans Parkway) is reassigned to Grove Elementary due to proximity.

Parkside Junior High

- Pepper Ridge students, including boundary changes above), are reassigned to Parkside Junior High to provide relief at Evans Junior High. An addition to Parkside Junior High is recommended to add capacity.

High School Changes

- Neighborhoods east of Linden Street, north of Pine Street, and west of Henry Street are moved to Normal West.

To better distribute programming, some Specialized Services (SS) classrooms will be moved to schools with available space.

Proposal 2

Benjamin Boundary Change

- Neighborhoods north of Empire are moved to Sugar Creek (rather than Towanda).

Carlock Enrollment Adjustment

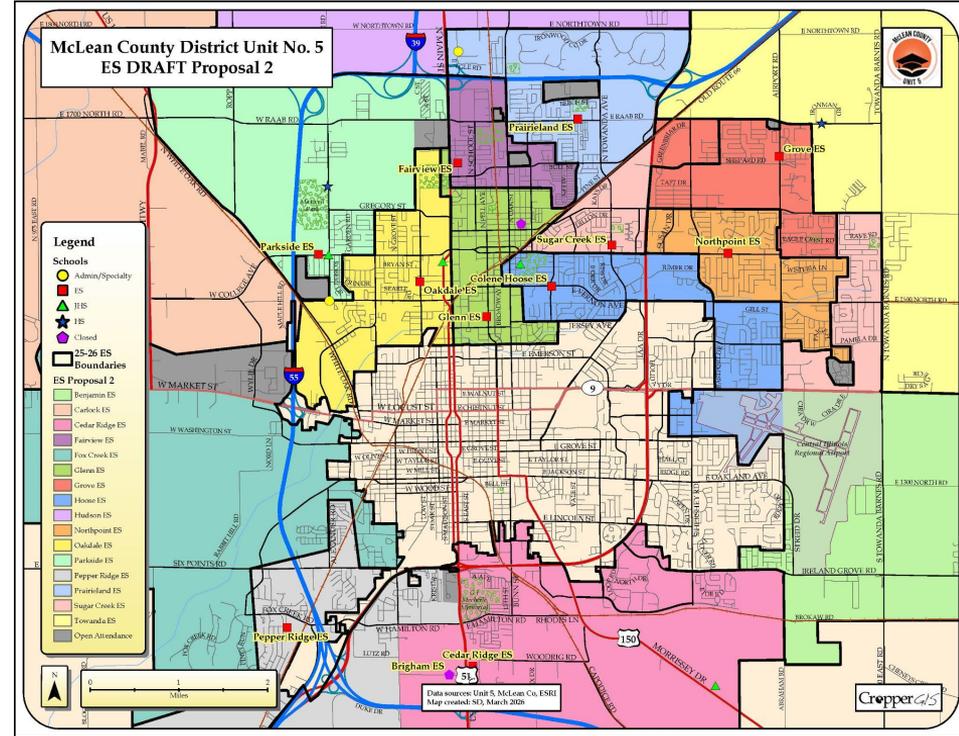
- Carlock remains open.
- The Traditions neighborhood becomes an Open Attendance Area, allowing approximately 50 additional students to enroll at Carlock.

Towanda

- A smaller addition is made to the Towanda building to accommodate current needs only.
- Eliminates portables

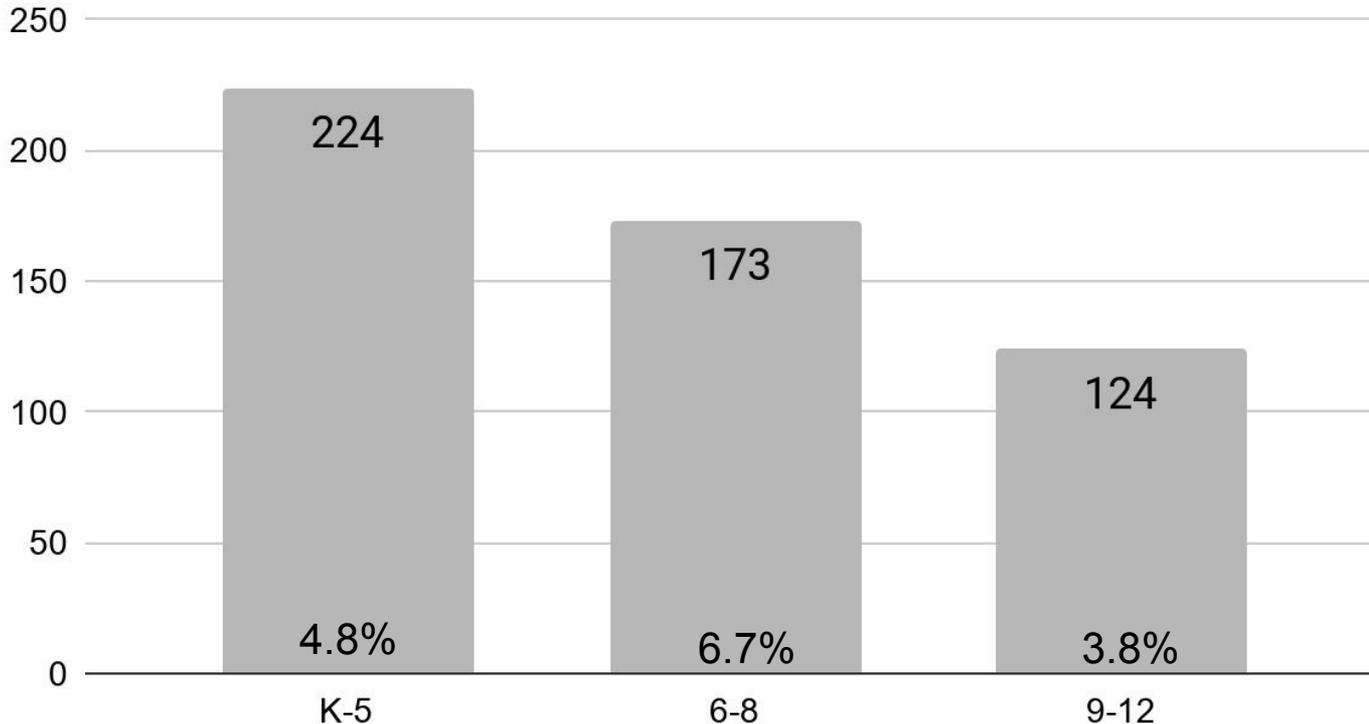
Eugene Field / 18–22 Program

- A new facility would be built or purchased to serve students in the district's 18–22 program.
- Glenn Elementary is not repurposed under this proposal.



Proposal 2 Impacts

Students Impacted: Total Live and Attend In



Early Learning: Current enrollment is approximately 543 students (enrollment available for up to 640). Actual enrollment fluctuates as children turn three and become eligible throughout the year

Eugene Field: Current enrollment is approximately 50 students. Enrollment fluctuates based on IEPs.

Proposal 2 Impacts

School Boundary	Race								Ethnicity		Lunch Code	
	# of K-12 students impacted	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific	White	Two or More Races	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	F/R	Paid
West of Hershey (Benjamin to Hoose)	7	0%	0%	71%	14%	0%	0%	14%	14%	86%	57%	43%
North of Empire (Benjamin to Sugar Creek)	142	1%	26%	6%	14%	0%	47%	5%	14%	86%	8%	92%
New OAA 8 (Traditions)	95	0%	2%	74%	3%	0%	11%	11%	3%	97%	94%	6%
Western Portion of Cedar Ridge (Cedar to Pepper Ridge)	150	0%	1%	10%	11%	0%	68%	11%	11%	89%	35%	65%
Tracy Drive Area (Cedar Ridge to new OAA)	40	0%	0%	35%	13%	0%	28%	25%	13%	88%	90%	10%
Northbrook/Golfcrest (Parkside E to new OAA)	35	0%	0%	66%	3%	0%	14%	17%	3%	97%	86%	14%
Sugar Creek NE Corner (Sugar to Grove)	11	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	91%	0%	9%	91%	0%	100%
Pepper Ridge (EJHS to PJHS)	134	0%	1%	16%	14%	0%	57%	11%	14%	86%	51%	49%
HS Neighborhoods (NCHS to NCWHS)	77	0%	3%	27%	10%	0%	49%	10%	10%	90%	32%	68%
Total	691	0%	6%	26%	11%	0%	46%	11%	11%	89%	46%	54%

Proposal 2 Timeline

2027-28

- Benjamin to Hoose via boundary change
- New OAA (Traditions)* to Carlock
- Cedar Ridge (western portion) to Pepper
- New OAA (Tracy Drive)*
- New OAA (Northbrook/Golfcrest)*
- Sugar Creek to Grove
- Small Towanda addition
- NCHS boundary change to NCWHS

2028-29

- Pepper Ridge to PJHS (instead of EJHS)

2029-30

- New ELC opens (Brigham sold)
- Benjamin to Sugar via boundary change
- 18-22 year old program moves to new or renovated space. (Eugene Field sold)

*Open Attendance Areas (OAA) will apply to new families in the OAA. Students currently residing in an OAA will remain at their current school unless they move.

**Enrolled students may remain at their current school through their final grade (5th, 8th, or 12th), provided the school remains open. Younger siblings are eligible to attend the same school if there is no gap in family enrollment. Upon implementation, families assume responsibility for all transportation.

***Students who wish to begin at their new assigned school sooner than the implementation date may do so through the attendance exception process.

Proposal 2 Construction & Renovation Cost Estimates

- New Early Childhood Center - \$20 to \$30 Million
- Towanda Elementary Addition - \$4.4 Million
- Parkside Junior High SS Classroom Addition - \$4.4 Million
- 18-22 Program - \$3.5 to \$6.5 Million

Total Cost Range: \$32.3 Million to \$45.3 Million

*Additional cost for utilities will be incurred with one new building and expansions to other buildings

Projects will be financed by selling bonds. Bond payments will be made with revenue from the County School Facilities Tax allowing for no increase in property taxes from construction or renovation.

Proposal 2 Annual Savings Estimates

Brigham

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$97k

Eugene Field

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$25k

Total Annual Savings \$122k

Proposal 2 Capital Project Savings (1 to 5 years)

Brigham - \$1.70 Million

- Roof, Fire Alarm System, Geothermal Equipment, Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Eugene Field - \$290k

- HVAC Equipment (Asbestos Abatement Will Be Required. Cost Not Included.), Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Total Savings - \$1.99 Million

* Additional costs not included: Technology Infrastructure, Replacement Kitchen Equipment, Updates

Proposal 2 - Potential Benefits & Risks

Benefits

- Keeps two elementary schools open
- Reduces reliance on portables
- Accounts for growth in the district
- Provides enrollment relief for buildings at/near capacity
- New early learning center customized for 3, 4, and 5 year olds
- Accessible learning environment for the 18-22 year old transitional program

Risks

- Renovation & Construction actual costs may come in higher than expected
- Number of students and grade levels in OAA is unknown and may not be sufficient to reach capacity
- Less savings (staff & buildings)

Estimated Proposal Cost & Savings

	Annual Savings	Capital Improvement Savings (1 - 5 Years)	Renovation & Construction Cost
Proposal 1	\$1.5 - \$2.4 Million	\$3.17 Million	\$33.15 to \$45.9 Million
Proposal 2	\$122k	\$1.99 Million	\$32.3 to \$45.3 Million

Enrollment Planning Criteria Adherence

	Proposal 1	Proposal 2
Reduces Reliance on Portables	✓	✓
Provides Relief to Buildings At/Near Capacity	✓	✓
Improves Building Utilization	✓	⊖
Considered Economic, Cultural, and Ethnic Diversity	✓	✓
Proximity	⊖	⊖
Busing Efficiencies	✓	⊖
Contiguous Zone & Major Roadways	⊖	⊖
Accounts for Future Growth	✓	✓
Minimizes Impact on Students	✓	✓

✓ Achieved

⊖ Partially Achieved

✗ Not Achieved

The criteria were evaluated from a districtwide perspective. While individual schools or neighborhoods may experience different impacts, this shows the overall effect of each proposal districtwide.

Next Steps and Questions

