Elementary Grade Configuration Discussion

June 8, 2026

Agenda

- Introduction
- Research and Team Study
- Other Districts
- Financial Projections
- Yet to be studied
- Current Recommendations
- What else learned
- Questions and feedback

WACONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2024-2028 Strategic Plan

WACONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISD 110

OUR MISSION

ISD 110 maximizes opportunities for all students to **explore their passions and create their success** by committing to a community that includes academic rigor, social growth, and emotional wellbeing.

OUR VISION

ISD 110 commits to:

- Inspiring students to explore a variety of pathways including academic offerings and extracurricular activities that will allow them to recognize who they are and who they will become.
- Fostering a community with a collective sense of belonging and wellbeing.
- Establishing efficient systems and structures as part of a world-class school district that will create opportunities for staff to engage in innovative teaching and students to experience academic success.

OUR CORE VALUES

Respect
We honor and listen to all voices to ensure everyone feels valued.

Collaboration
We achieve our common goals through trust, teamwork, and partnership.

Inclusiveness
We welcome all and seek multiple perspectives to create one connected community.

Empathy
We listen and act with genuine care.

Resilience
We empower one another and persevere with courage, determination, and optimism.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Student Outcomes

- Evaluation of elementary student performance on MCAs.
- Assessment of middle school student performance on MCAs.
- Evaluation of high school student readiness for post-high school success.

Student & Staff Experience

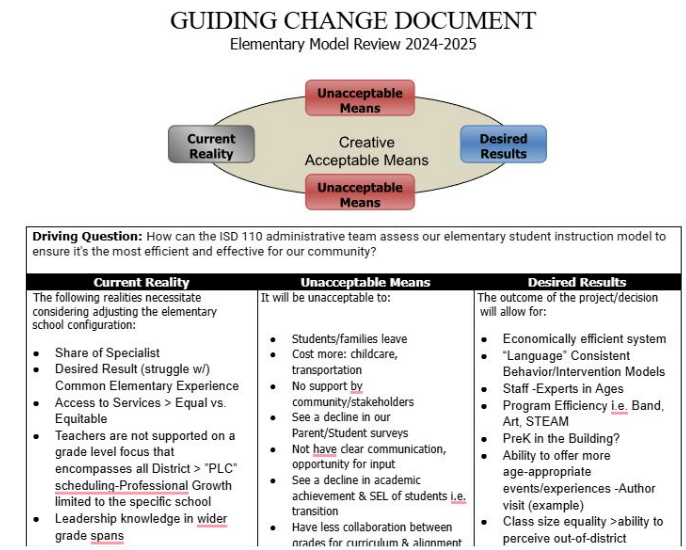
- Foster a physically and emotionally safe environment within the school.
- Promote recognition and responsiveness to cultural commonalities and differences, ensuring all individuals feel welcomed, respected, and heard.
- Provide access to inclusive academic, leadership, service, and social opportunities for all community members.

Systems & Structures

- Effective management of financial resources to support the school's mission and goals.
- Proactive planning for and maintenance of facilities to ensure a conducive learning environment.
- Monitoring and promotion of student enrollment to sustain and enhance the school community.

Introduction and Why

- **Why did we conduct this study?**
- **Team formation**
  - **Spring 2024**
- **Initiated process by discussing the Guiding Change Process**
  - **Helps frame the conversation**
  - **Determine commitments and ensure we are able to clearly describe our intended outcomes**



GUIDING CHANGE DOCUMENT

Elementary Model Review 2024-2025

Unacceptable Means

Current Reality

Creative Acceptable Means

Desired Results

Unacceptable Means

Driving Question: How can the ISD 110 administrative team assess our elementary student instruction model to ensure it's the most efficient and effective for our community?

Current Reality	Unacceptable Means	Desired Results
The following realities necessitate considering adjusting the elementary school configuration: • Share of Specialist • Desired Result (struggle w/) Common Elementary Experience • Access to Services > Equal vs. Equitable • Teachers are not supported on a grade level focus that encompasses all District > "PLC" scheduling-Professional Growth limited to the specific school • Leadership knowledge in wider grade spans	It will be unacceptable to: • Students/families leave • Cost more: childcare, transportation • No support by community/stakeholders • See a decline in our Parent/Student surveys • Not have clear communication, opportunity for input • See a decline in academic achievement & SEL of students i.e. transition • Have less collaboration between grades for curriculum & alignment	The outcome of the project/decision will allow for: • Economically efficient system • "Language" Consistent Behavior/Intervention Models • Staff -Experts in Ages • Program Efficiency i.e. Band, Art, STEAM • PreK in the Building? • Ability to offer more age-appropriate events/experiences -Author visit (example) • Class size equality >ability to perceive out-of-district

Research and study

Key Findings

Current research does not identify or support one grade configuration as the most effective.

Most districts decision to change grade configurations are usually due to:

- Budget
- Space
- Transportation

Research and study

Things to Consider

- Some research shows that there is academic loss when students transition to a new school.
- Some districts find that they are better able to tailor both academic and behavior programs when they have a smaller range of students.
- If deciding to reconfigure, it is important that districts:
  - are well planned and anticipate challenges or consequences of a reconfiguration.
  - allow the community to ask questions and give input.
  - have collaboration among all stakeholders.

Study of Districts

Grand Rapids (3,972)

- **What:** Moved 2 of 3 elementary sites to primary and intermediate building.
- **Why:** Budget

Howard Lake Waverly (1,312)

- **What:** Fall 2025 switching their 2 elementary sites to a primary and an intermediate building.
- **Why:** Budget and Teacher Collaboration

Little Falls (2,424)

- **What:** Switched 2 elementary sites to a primary and intermediate building.
- **Why:** Budget and Curriculum Alignment

Themes From Districts

Measurable savings

- All suggested FTE reductions ranging with class sizes, estimated about 1 FTE per grade level.

Perceived and realized benefits

- Class size balance
- Cost savings
- Instructional Alignment (field trips, curriculum, MCA prep)

Themes From Districts

Unexpected drawbacks

- Transportation and family drop off
- Special Education programming more fragmented, less ability for case managers to build longer relationships with students and families

Other notes

- Shift to full districtwide PTOs rather than site specific
- Transitions were hard for staff and families, mitigated by regular and deliberate communication
- Level of competition (open enrollment, private schools) not as “obvious” as metro

Financial Pieces and Projections

Potential Savings and Benefits:
- Staffing efficiencies through grade-level consolidation
- Improved class size balancing
- Operational alignment opportunities

Potential Offsetting Costs:
- Transportation adjustments and longer routes
- Additional supervision and operational support
- Facility modification and transition costs

Transportation Impacts

- **Routes would be longer, in some cases significantly**
- **Options**
  - Multiple drop offs (same routes, but drop kids off one site at a time)
  - “Transfers” (would be significantly more than now, which could lead to confusion with so many kids transferring.)
- **Would require staggering start times by about 10 minutes per site, plus some adjustments to WMS and WHS**
- **Cost projected neutral (best case) but potential for marginal increases if route times exceed contracted length.**

Staffing Scenarios / Comparisons

Staffing Scenarios / Comparisons

- **Each year assumes the goal of trying to stay within target ranges**
- **Noteable if we changed models, it would be much harder to justify being over targets if that's one of the desired benefits of a model change**
- **Also notable the impact of being over targets generally means 10 plus sections would be at or over target range compared to a single site (usually 3 at a time)**

Core Subjects:	Below Targeted Range	Within Targeted Range	Above Targeted Range
Kindergarten	0.00 - 19.99	20.00 - 23.00	23.10 +
Grade 1	0.00 - 20.99	21.00 - 24.00	24.10 +
Grade 2	0.00 - 21.99	22.00 - 25.00	25.10 +
Grade 3	0.00 - 22.99	23.00 - 27.00	27.10 +
Grade 4	0.00 - 23.99	24.00 - 28.00	28.10 +
Grade 5	0.00 - 24.99	25.00 - 29.00	29.10 +

Pause and Predict

- **If the goal is all sections within targets for a new model, how many FTE would we expect to save each year in this model?**
  - **Assume all grades at a single site**
  - **Exclude potential changes to specials**
- **Think of a number, be prepared to share it.**

Core Subjects:	Below Targeted Range	Within Targeted Range	Above Targeted Range
Kindergarten	0.00 - 19.99	20.00 - 23.00	23.10 +
Grade 1	0.00 - 20.99	21.00 - 24.00	24.10 +
Grade 2	0.00 - 21.99	22.00 - 25.00	25.10 +
Grade 3	0.00 - 22.99	23.00 - 27.00	27.10 +
Grade 4	0.00 - 23.99	24.00 - 28.00	28.10 +
Grade 5	0.00 - 24.99	25.00 - 29.00	29.10 +

Staffing Scenarios / Comparisons 2025-26 (67 sections)

Bayview	25-26		
	Core Sections (Estimated from 24-25)	Current Enrollment	Avg Class Size
Kindergarten	4	86	21.50
Grade 1	4	87	21.75
Grade 2	4	91	22.75
Grade 3	3	73	24.33
Grade 4	4	103	25.75
Grade 5	4	109	27.25
Total	**23**	**549**	**23.87**

Laketown	25-26		
	Core Sections (Estimated from 24-25)	Current Enrollment	Avg Class Size
Kindergarten	3	63	21.00
Grade 1	4	81	20.25
Grade 2	4	90	22.50
Grade 3	4	88	22.00
Grade 4	3	91	30.33
Grade 5	3	87	29.00
Total	**21**	**500**	**23.81**

Southview	25-26		
	Core Sections (Estimated from 24-25)	Current Enrollment	Avg Class Size
Kindergarten	4	82	20.50
Grade 1	4	91	22.75
Grade 2	4	89	22.25
Grade 3	3	85	28.33
Grade 4	4	100	25.00
Grade 5	4	103	25.75
Total	**23**	**550**	**23.91**

Staffing Scenarios / Comparisons 2025-26 Combined (65 sections)

- **Minimum sections to stay within range**

Grade	25-26		
	Core Sections (Estimated from 24-25)	Current Enrollment	Avg Class Size
Kindergarten	11	231	21.00
Grade 1	11	259	23.55
Grade 2	11	270	24.55
Grade 3	10	246	24.60
Grade 4	11	294	26.73
Grade 5	11	299	27.18
Total	**65**	**1599**	**24.60**

Staffing Scenarios / Comparisons Summary

- 2026-27 (Current enrollments) (1 section)
- 2025-26 (2 sections)
- 2024-25 (4 sections)
- 2023-24 (4 sections)
- 2022-23 (4 sections)
- 2021-22 (1 section)

Core Subjects:	Below Targeted Range	Within Targeted Range	Above Targeted Range
Kindergarten	0.00 - 19.99	20.00 - 23.00	23.10 +
Grade 1	0.00 - 20.99	21.00 - 24.00	24.10 +
Grade 2	0.00 - 21.99	22.00 - 25.00	25.10 +
Grade 3	0.00 - 22.99	23.00 - 27.00	27.10 +
Grade 4	0.00 - 23.99	24.00 - 28.00	28.10 +
Grade 5	0.00 - 24.99	25.00 - 29.00	29.10 +

Examples of what still would need to be studied

- Construction
- Cost of moving
- Additional purchase of equipment
- Special Ed - Ensuring center based student needs are still able to be served at each site.
- Accessibility issues at each site (i.e. bathroom/lift space/changing tables or playground)

Current Recommendations

- **With limited financial savings from staffing, partnered with potential increases in cost from transportation and building construction costs, our recommendation is to remain with our current model of three Prek-5 elementary schools.**

Current Recommendations

- **Throughout our research, we identified positives for staff in having an entire grade level in the same building including PLC's, but have not found data showing correlation to improved student outcomes. If moving forward with a proposal in the future, it would be critical to ensure we have plans in place to support additional student transitions as research does show this can have a negative impact on student outcomes.**

Current Recommendations

- **This recommendation also preserves the amazing culture and community built within each of our current sites while providing consistency for families throughout their elementary years.**

Looking Forward

Desired Outcomes

- Cross district PD, standards, pacing, expectations
- Class size ranges - guide staffing decisions
- Pre-K in all buildings
- Academic Programing & Support- equal at buildings vs student needs
- On-going communication between schools **WE ARE 110**
- Buildings reach capacity - in the future
  - Revisit 5th grade at the middle school


Thank You