

**PROPOSAL TO SHIFT  
PROGRAMMING TO BHS  
CAMPUS  
JUNE 2020**

---

**BACKGROUND OF PROGRAMMING**

Phoenix Learning Center (PLC) is a student choice alternative high school program serving at-risk students in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District. Students from outside the district may open enroll as well. The program went through an evaluation and revision process in 2015.

Students who choose to complete their high school requirements at PLC are focused on the importance of earning a high school diploma. Students who are credit-deficient, need a smaller learning environment, have learning skill gaps, struggle with mental health, and/or seek strong teacher-student rapport to support their learning are often successful at PLC.

PLC has a small staff and small class sizes, averaging approximately 12-15 students per class. All students are served in one small building, with the option to attend Buffalo High School (BHS) for one block of the day for elective courses. PLC has 2.5 FTE in general education allocated to the program, .66 FTE in special education, 1.0 secretarial staff and a .5 administrator who is shared with Buffalo High School.

**PHOENIX LEARNING CENTER MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION STATEMENT**

Phoenix Learning Center programming is centered around the idea that ALL students can learn, and when learning challenges arise, it takes a more individualized approach to support learning for each student. The environment at PLC is flexible, yet structured with high expectations; the curriculum is often individualized and focused on communication, collaboration, accountability, reflection, respect and relationships. The “family” type culture at PLC supports learners to achieve success and students are encouraged to utilize the available resources at Phoenix to do this.

Some benefits to this learning environment are that students have the opportunity to help each other, create culture and partner with the community.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- BHS is welcoming PLC Programming to the BHS Campus for Fall of 2020. This programming

change for both BHS and PLC will move all of our programs from good to great.

- Desired Outcomes and Goals:
  - All students
    - feel safe and welcome at school,
    - have equitable access to resources,
    - receive instruction from licensed staff,
    - engage in credit recovery options,
    - stay enrolled in the BHM district, and
    - are successful upon graduation.
- This program shift promotes equity of access for all students to:
  - Course options and high-interest electives
  - Counselors
  - Health Office
  - LLC
  - SRO/administration
  - Tutoring
  - Gym facilities
  - Cafeteria options
  - Substitute teacher coverage
  - Alignment of interventions for students needing support
- This programming shift allows better utilization of available administrators at BHS, allowing all five administrative personnel to be at BHS at all times, serving the needs of staff and students.
- Potential challenges include the logistics of moving, minor construction updates to the proposed site, and working with students and families in being comfortable with the transition to the large setting; support for keeping the PLC program feeling like a “small setting” is an important focus. Rooms B203 and B204 at BHS would be restructured to support the programming space, with the potential of an additional room being used.

## **FACTORS CONSIDERED**

Equity of access for all students drives the need for this programming shift. All students deserve to be able to access all that a large high school like BHS has to offer.

Factors considered include:

- Overall health of PLC and BHS schools
- Equity of access for all
- Balance of administrative and school safety support
- Continuing to support students in need of a small setting to access their education

- Staff needs and ability to collaborate
- Financial implications
- Need for alignment and development of tiers of intervention for students at BHS/PLC

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The transition of programming onto the BHS campus has a significant cost savings in the area of transportation. This would be an annual savings of approximately \$14,944.56, based on the 2019-2020 school year costs. Additionally, there are cost savings to this transition, as the PRIDE programming moves from its off-site location to the PLC building, meaning an elimination of all costs at that site and a reduction to the net lease of the old PRIDE building. These cost savings total \$25,644.45.

There would be a cost savings of \$6,754.74 in the secretarial role per a reduction of need in moving the program to BHS. This brings the total annual cost savings of this move to \$32,399.19.

There will be one-time costs involved in restructuring/remodeling the space at BHS that will now house the PLC program (current classrooms B203 and B204, specifically) to allow for additional meeting space, breakout spaces, etc. These one-time costs total approximately \$23,000. Additionally, some curriculum writing and program planning time, as well as minimal packing/moving time, will be required for PLC staff and administration over the summer of 2020.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation of the program change throughout the year will be done both qualitatively and quantitatively. Students will be surveyed throughout the year, as they are now, by staff at PLC in regards to their experiences with school, their connections to adults and peers, and their feelings about the transition at the start of the year and end of the school year.

Quantitative data will include attendance tracking, grade distribution data, discipline and suspension data, and graduation data. Over time, continued tracking of data for students entering and exiting alternative programming, as well as other tiers of intervention at BHS, will help determine overall program effectiveness.

## NEXT STEPS

Next steps in the process, pending board approval, would be to move forward with additional communication with all stakeholders in the process, including students and families at PLC.

Beginning the construction process at BHS would need to begin immediately.

Staff and administration of PLC would begin the program planning process to work throughout the summer to ensure a smooth transition of the campus for the fall of 2020.

A detailed Task Completion List is attached and organized by the areas of Logistics, Personnel, Programming, and Finances.