

To: Members of Central and East Lawrence Elementary School Consolidation Working Group

From: Andrea Albright, Karla Hughes, Alison Nye, David Unekis, Stacey White (Pinckney Group)

Re: Pinckney Revised Scenario

Date: January 8, 2012

Summary:

The Pinckney group has revised its initial scenario in light of additional information gathered and ideas generated during our working group discussions.¹ Based on our criteria and analysis (see Appendix A), we remain convinced of the merits of our proposal to consolidate Hillcrest and Sunset Hill Schools on the Sunset Hill site. We remain similarly convinced of the benefits of a Kennedy and New York merger at or near 15th and Haskell, though we think this could happen at the Kennedy site if the preferred midway location proves unworkable. We have, however, reconsidered some of our earlier thoughts on how these consolidations would affect the current Hillcrest ESL cluster. We now propose that:

- 1) The consolidated Kennedy and New York school would become a new ESL neighborhood site. This school would serve the 51 ELLs (as of 2011) who live in these two schools' attendance areas and who currently attend Hillcrest. It would also serve the 9 students eligible for ESL services who currently decline those services to stay at Kennedy or New York.
 - a. In order to maintain small class sizes in the early grades (K-2 or 3), it might make sense to have 4 sections each of these grades, and 3 sections each of the higher grades.
- 2) The consolidated Hillcrest and Sunset Hills school would continue as an ESL cluster site. Though the details remain to be ironed out, we think it would likely include children from Stouffer Place as well as those in the Quail Run attendance area.
 - a. In order to maintain small class sizes in the early grades (K-2 or 3), it might make sense to have 4 sections each of these grades, and 3 sections each of the higher grades.
- 3) A new cluster site would be created, likely at Prairie Park School, to accommodate ELLs from Broken Arrow (n = 38) and Prairie Park (n = 23). This cluster site would be similar in size to that currently at Cordley School.

In addition, we believe that Pinckney School can, as needed, be expanded to a 2-plus or 3-section school in order to accommodate expected growth in enrollment and/or boundary changes (see Appendix B). The sections below outline our process and findings, and provide our rationale for this revised scenario.

Our Process

Since the development of our initial proposal, the Pinckney group:

- Re-reviewed documents prepared by last year's Task Force
- Re-reviewed the 11/14/2011 ESL Program Update Presentation for the School Board

¹ In response to working group interest in the "special" elements of each of the 6 schools, we are providing that under separate cover. We would like to reiterate, however, that all 6 schools are abundantly special.

- Reviewed and transcribed the ESL discussion that took place when our “School Board liaison group” attended the 10/24/2011 School Board meeting, in order to clarify directions provided to our group regarding the ESL clusters
- Reviewed the relevant literature to discern what is known about best practices in ESL delivery
- Consulted with Dr. Karen Jorgensen from KU's School of Education (Dr. Jorgensen has a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, with dual program areas of Second Languages and Cultures Education and Literacy Education.)
- Analyzed our scenario and others in light of our criteria (see Appendix A).

Our Findings

Dr. Jorgensen confirmed that, to the best of her knowledge from reading through available research within and beyond the U.S., there haven't been any publications, position statements, or white papers that specifically address the academic benefits of cluster sites for ESL program delivery. There is similarly no research to support an optimal ratio of ELLs to native English speakers in an ESL program. The one exception to this would be a *dual-language* program, where it is best to have roughly half of the students speaking each of the instructional languages (typically a majority and minority language).

Our information-gathering on ESL program delivery does illuminate several key lessons that seem especially important to our working group:

- The SIOP® (Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol), used by USD 497, has been shown to improve student performance (Echevarria, Short and Powers, 2006).
- Teachers using SIOP® believe learning benefits extend to *all* students, not just ELLs (Gibson, 2010). This model may be particularly effective with at-risk learners.
- The number of years of prior formal schooling a student has in his or her home country is a significant factor in his or her achievement in the U.S. school system (Thomas and Collier, 2002).
- A key study of academic achievement of ELLs over time shows that children whose families decline ESL services are in jeopardy. While elementary school performance of these students was adequate, by the time they reached 11th grade, their scores on standardized tests were in the 22nd percentile (Thomas and Collier, 2002). ***In Lawrence elementary schools, 17% of students eligible for ESL services at a cluster site (n = 83) do not accept those services, electing instead to attend their neighborhood school*** (Working Group Handout, 2011).
- Groundbreaking research on language acquisition and vocabulary development in Kansas children found that by the age of 3, impoverished children had a ***30 million word deficit*** compared to their peers in higher income groups (Hart and Risley, 1995). In other words, these children are exposed to much less language overall, and their vocabularies are extremely limited, even though they are native English speakers. We would submit that SIOP®-based instruction could be a critical intervention at the time these children enter the public school system.

Our Reasoning

The scenario described above is, we feel, our best possible effort to meet the charge of our working group. In addition to the reasonable application of our evaluation criteria, key elements of our thinking are as follows:

- The population of English language learners (ELLs) in Lawrence has grown considerably in recent years, and demographic trends suggest this growth will continue. Accordingly, it is imperative that the School District have both short and long-range plans for ESL program models and delivery.
- While Dr. Doll has indicated that the District expects to maintain ESL cluster sites in the near term (at least the next 5 years), there are many ways this can happen. When the liaison group met with the School Board on October 24, the Board and Dr. Doll indicated that it was possible for our group to consider ESL programming as part of our efforts.
- Last year's Task Force recognized the need for additional ESL sites at the elementary level. In its 1/31/11 report, the Task Force stated: "Assume in the next 5 years that there will be at least a 3rd neighborhood site."
- Further, the Task Force listed the following as one of the 12 criteria they felt our group should use in our deliberations: "Incorporate best practices that research suggests have a greater impact on student achievement than school and class size." SIOP® seems to us to be one such best practice.
- One of the Lawrence Public Schools' ESL goals is that "All students who are eligible for ESL services will be served." Our proposal would accommodate approximately 30 students who currently decline ESL services, by placing those services in their neighborhood schools. It's a start, and a critical one based on the research findings noted above.
- Dr. Jorgensen's professional opinion is that it would take two years for school communities (personnel and families) to prepare adequately to become an EL/ESL cluster or neighborhood site. This proposal could be carried out over two or three years, therefore fitting in with District policy to "Identify schools well in advance of establishing an ESL program in the school."
- Our working group has expressed concerns over the large number of low-SES students in a combined Kennedy and New York school. We think the addition of SIOP® and the academic benefits of that Instructional Model for all learners would be an excellent resource for this new school. Having four sections of early grades would also facilitate small class sizes in those critical years.
- The recent school finance recommendations from Governor Brownback throw the current state funding formula for ESL programming into uncertainty. The District may need to revisit its substantial annual busing costs, and this proposal would be a first step towards minimizing some of those.
- Our proposal maintains schools in geographically logical areas of the City, siting schools in the north, south, east and west portions of the core, with no two schools less than one mile apart.

Conclusion

The Pinckney group has learned an incredible amount during this process. We have moved in directions and drawn conclusions we did not initially expect, but that we retrospectively realize are in line with conclusions drawn by last year's Task Force. Throughout the process, though, we have remained committed to the need to apply measurable criteria to any scenario. As we

show in Appendix A, we believe our proposal stacks up favorably against the criteria put forth by the prior Task Force as well as additional criteria our group has come to see as important.

Our group further recognizes that these scenarios will require the School Board to assess and likely adjust current school boundaries in light of enrollment projections.

Finally, we found it ultimately impossible to separate plans for consolidation of buildings from plans for academic programs. We believe strongly that any consolidation decision by the School Board *must* have a sustainable vision, and that academic programs, particularly ESL, cannot be separated from the vision for our buildings.

References:

Echevarria, J., Short, D., & Powers, K. (2006). School Reform and Standards-Based Education: A Model for English-Language Learners. *The Journal of Educational Research* 99(4): 195-211.

Gibson, C. (2010). At Sugarland Elementary, Language Lessons are Key to All Learning. *The Washington Post* (Thursday, October 21, 2010; LZ18). Available online at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/19/AR2010101907121.html?nav=mbot>.

Hart, B., & Risley, R. T. (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

The SIOP Institute. Online resource: <http://www.siopinstitute.net/index.html>.

Short, D.J. and Echevarria, J. (1999). The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol: A Tool for Teacher-Researcher Collaboration and Professional Development. ERIC Development Team Report. Available online at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED436981.pdf>.

Thomas, W.P. & Collier, V.P. (2002). *A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement*. UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE). Available online at: http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/llaa/1.1_final.html.

Unified School District 497 Board of Education Meeting, October 24, 2011. Videorecording.

APPENDIX A: CRITERIA AND ANALYSIS

<u>CRITERIA</u> Bold = criteria suggested by last year's Task Force <i>Italics</i> = additional criteria the PK group feels are important	<u>APPLICATION TO OUR SCENARIO</u> Part A = HC/SH consolidation Part B = KD/NY consolidation Part C = Additional comments
Fully utilize elementary school locations before constructing new schools at new locations	Part A: Would utilize existing building and location on largest available site. Part B: Might require new building and location to accommodate walkability, unless existing KD building was expanded instead.
Plan for a capacity of approximately 300-500 students at all elementary schools	Part A and B: Resulting schools would be within this parameter. Part C: A new ESL cluster at Prairie Park (PP) accounts for significant capacity at that facility and limited capacity at Broken Arrow (BA). Boundary adjustments should be explored, regardless of consolidation plan. It is easily possible to have 300 students at PK and CD, and more if expansions to those facilities occur.
Plan for equity in terms of learning environments across the District	Part A and B: Addition of SIOP would provide learning benefits to additional students. Part C: Successful passage of a bond issue will ensure all elementary facilities will receive their needed upgrades.
Plan for all-day Kindergarten at all schools in the future	Part A and B: Resulting schools would have all-day Kindergarten. Part C: The School Board will undoubtedly look for ways to implement and fund all-day Kindergarten District-wide.
Eliminate all portables at elementary schools	Part A: An expanded facility at the SH site would allow elimination of portables currently in use at both SH and HC. Part B: An expanded facility at 15 th and Haskell or the KD site would allow elimination of portables currently in use at NY. Part C: Boundary adjustments involving Deerfield (DF) and PK could eliminate the current DF portable.
Plan for flexibility to accommodate changes to programs in the future	Part A: With its more westerly location, the consolidated HC-SH school could serve as a safety valve for overcrowding at schools further west if the ESL program diffuses to neighborhood schools over time. Part B: A consolidated KD-NY allows for flexibility concerning ESL and Early Childhood Programming. Part C: Providing improved and renovated facilities District-wide will allow current and future School Boards to make program changes, such as more provision of neighborhood ESL services, in the future.

Plan for investment to address aging facilities	<p>Part A and B: Construction supported by a bond will address facility concerns at those four schools.</p> <p>Part C: Bond-supported improvements to other facilities with substantial needs, especially Cordley, would also be possible.</p>
Deploy services in a differentiated manner such that all schools receive the services and programs they need	<p>Part A: The consolidated HC-SH school would continue to receive funding available for its ESL cluster.</p> <p>Part B: Adding ESL services to a consolidated KD-NY school would provide an additional educational resource to that at-risk population.</p> <p>Part C: Equitable deployment of services requires a needs assessment and long-range plan for addressing those needs. In that this scenario resolves a decades-old concern over excess numbers of elementary schools, thereby reducing operations costs over time, we trust that differentiated services will be provided to each and every school in the District.</p>
Strive to create and maintain schools that embody such a community that every school is a community school <i>Keeping neighborhoods intact</i>	<p>Part A: HC has extolled the international community created by its ESL cluster. This would be retained in large part here. In addition, contiguous neighborhoods in the vicinity of 9th Street, Harvard and Iowa would now be together in a single facility.</p> <p>Part B: KD and NY also share contiguous neighborhood boundaries, highlighted by the boundary changes associated with the movement of the Early Childhood Program that brought a large number of students to NY from KD two years ago. These existing ties should help guide the transition to a consolidated school.</p> <p>Part C: The reintroduction of ELLs to schools where their neighbors are their classmates, as well as the utilization of best practices and lessons gleaned from establishing 3 new ESL sites in the past 5 years will help rapidly integrate ELLs into the new communities. Maintaining PK and CD schools allows 5 Lawrence neighborhoods to stay intact with respect to their elementary schools.</p>
Ensure that as many children as possible are able to walk or bike to school if they choose to do so <i>Traffic impacts/Overall mobility</i>	<p>Part A: SH retains its walkability, and improves walkability for students west of Iowa but currently in the HC catchment. Stouffer Place and Quail Run ELLs will continue to receive busing services. There will be some loss in walkability for students in HC catchment east of Iowa, but these numbers do not appear to be very large. Traffic impacts will increase at the SH site, but a staggered start time for the new elementary building and West Middle School would help.</p> <p>Part B: The midway location of 15th and Haskell would maintain maximum walkability for the current KD and NY boundary areas. Should the consolidated school need to happen at the KD site, we recommend addition of a bus route from the northern portion of the current NY boundary. Traffic impacts would need to be considered as part of the planning process for either of these options.</p> <p>Part C: Maintaining CD and PK schools maintains their inherent walkability, which is especially important for their at-risk populations who would find it very difficult or impossible to get to un-walkable schools.</p>
Incorporate best practices that research suggests have a greater impact on student achievement than school and class size	<p>Part A: The consolidated HC and SH school would be an ESL cluster site, with the full benefits of SIOP shown in the research.</p> <p>Part B: The consolidated KD and NY school would be an ESL neighborhood site, which could accrue benefits of staff trained in SIOP.</p> <p>Part C: We believe SIOP is one of the Instructional Model best practices that will positively impact student achievement</p>

	across the District.
Plan to provide a minimum 720 square foot classrooms for grades 1-5 and 900 square foot classrooms for Kindergarten at existing schools	<p>Part A and B: The consolidated schools will exceed these requirements.</p> <p>Part C: All other District elementary facilities appear to have appropriately sized rooms, based on the 2/25/2011 Gould Evans space comparison.</p>
<i>Minimize negative impacts on poorest and other at-risk students</i>	<p>Part A: Privacy law does not allow us to know how many or which of the ELLs affected by the HC-SH consolidation are also at-risk because of their SES. But, continued bus service for the Stouffer Place and Quail Run ELLs would negate any potential transportation impacts to this group. The larger school would receive all full time support and specials staff that neither school currently receives.</p> <p>Part B: A consolidated KD-NY school would be a larger school (by District standards) with low SES. However, this larger school would then get resources currently unavailable at either KD or NY – full-time specials teacher, full time counselor, full-time nurse, etc. The addition of the ESL program would be another positive academic benefit to these students. Maintaining walkability and overall mobility would also be very important.</p> <p>Part C: CD's ESL cluster would remain intact. PK's low SES population would be able to attend the closest possible school facility.</p>

APPENDIX B: Two Potential Plans for Pinckney Expansion



