

# School Board Action Report

*“Every student achieving, everyone accountable”*



**DATE:** June 13, 2009

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## **STRATEGIC THEME/**

**FOCUS AREA:** Building an Infrastructure that Works Well

## **TITLE AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Motion to designate Cleveland High School as an option school for the new student assignment plan.

For Introduction:	June 17, 2009
For Action:	July 1, 2009

## **TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION/EVALUATION**

If this motion is approved Cleveland High School would be designated as an option school for the purposes of the new student assignment plan. This designation would be used in boundary planning, with implementation of programmatic changes specified in the transition plan for the new student assignment plan.

## **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that Cleveland High School be designated as an option school for the new student assignment plan.

## **ISSUE**

STEM high schools are unique, and offer a systematic, four-year course of study with an intense focus on preparing students for academic and professional futures in science, technology, engineering and math. Because of this, a STEM school is not necessarily desirable to all students. Therefore, we recommend designating Cleveland High School as an option high school.

By becoming an option school (with a geographic zone around the school, similar to other option schools) students from across the district will have the opportunity to apply to attend this school. In the event of more applicants than available seats, tiebreakers to get into the school will be (1) sibling, (2) geographic zone, and (3) lottery, the same as at the other option schools.

## **BEST PRACTICES**

The STEM Foundation currently expects to work primarily with six states: California, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington. The states were chosen deliberately, based on a compilation of regional representation, national visibility, concentrations of high-needs students, and evident willingness to take bold action to improve, expand, and transform STEM education. These states have a high degree of science and technology.

Although there are many different approaches to pedagogy and program design, the STEM Foundation leans toward “those schools and alternative learning settings that are directly connected to the worlds of science and engineering, where students are engaged in inquiry and solving real problems, where local businesses and universities are deeply involved.”

### **STEM Foundation Goals**

**College Readiness** – increasing the percentage of K-12 students in STEM-oriented schools graduating college-ready and with a mastery of mathematics, science, engineering and technology.

**Equity** – Quadrupling the number of successful STEM students who are poor, African American, or Hispanic.

**Economic Competitiveness** - Doubling the number of students graduating from college with STEM degrees.

**Teaching Effectiveness** – Substantially increasing the numbers of K-12 math and science teachers with the content and capacity to teach STEM subjects.

**Knowledge Capture and Transfer** – Transferring new practices, innovation and knowledge from STEM-oriented schools to regular non-STEM schools.

**‘Real’ Science** – Increasing the number of STEM students taught in real-world setting by practicing scientists and engineers; where the science that is taught is much closer to ‘real science’ than ‘school science.’

### **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Design Principles:**

1. Focus on STEM content and themes, where students take at least four years of math and four years of science, including engineering
2. Explicit set of core STEM skills, processes, language, critical thinking, design and problem solving that is integrated and reinforced across the grades and disciplines
3. Evident culture that honors STEM and inspires and helps students to pursue it while expressly integrating STEM with the humanities and the arts
4. Formal relationship with local STEM companies, institutions and universities that provide both students and faculty deliberate STEM projects and internships; where they engage with real math, science, and engineering.

## **RESEARCH AND DATA SOURCES**

Numerous Board work sessions and community meetings included discussion of how different schools would be categorized, what tiebreakers would apply, and how the different types of schools would interact in the new assignment plan.

### **POLICY IMPLICATION**

A decision on what type of school Cleveland will be in the new student assignment plan will allow staff to proceed with boundary planning work over the summer.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

Incorporating new program components at Cleveland will require additional funding, and is contingent on availability of funds.

Implementation of an option school program will build upon and leverage expenditures previously made through the Southeast Education Initiative. In conjunction with program development work, projected costs of program components will be developed.

**Expenditure:**    **One-time**    **Annual**

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

The course of study offered at Cleveland High School has increasingly been driven by a science and mathematics focus. As a result of this, the Cleveland Building Leadership Team and the district plan to further transform the school's academic program to be one focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Discussion of Cleveland as an option school has occurred at numerous School Board work sessions and community meetings. Future stakeholder engagement will involve both school and community stakeholders in conjunction with program development work. The purpose of the engagement will be to obtain feedback on the analysis and recommendations, and will be at the level of "Involve" in the district's stakeholder engagement protocol. Implementation steps will be specified in the transition plan for the new student assignment plan.

### **CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that this motion be approved.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None