



## Capacity Management and Building Closure – 2009 Frequently Asked Questions

*Updated January 15, 2009*

**Added January 15, 2009:**

- **Analysis of attrition rates – see page 8**
- **Functional capacity analysis – see page 11**

### What is the Net Effect of the Superintendent’s Final Recommendations?

- **Five buildings will be closed**, one of which will be closed temporarily and may reopen;
- **Eight programs will relocate** from one building to another;
- **One new program will be created** (a new K-8 school in Northeast Seattle); and
- **Five programs will be discontinued** and their students reassigned to new schools in fall 2009.

This plan would net an estimated savings of \$16.2 million (M) in general operating funds over five years, including implementation costs of \$1.9 M and savings of \$18 M. In addition, the district’s deferred maintenance (capital costs) would be reduced by an estimated \$33.1 M, including costs of implementation of \$500,000 and reductions in deferred maintenance of \$33.6 M.

#### SUMMARY OF SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINAL CAPACITY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

BUILDING CLOSURES	RELOCATED PROGRAMS	NEW PROGRAMS	DISCONTINUED PROGRAMS
Genesee Hill Mann T.T. Minor Van Asselt Old Hay (may be temporary, depending on enrollment)	Half of Lowell APP to Thurgood Marshall Half of Washington APP to Hamilton NOVA to Meany Pathfinder K-8 to Cooper SBOC to Meany T.T. Minor Montessori to Leschi Thurgood Marshall EBOC to Dunlap and Hawthorne Van Asselt to AAA	New K-8 at Jane Addams	African American Academy Cooper Meany T.T. Minor Summit K-12

## WHICH BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS WILL BE AFFECTED?

The Final Recommendations address the District's imbalance in capacity: there is currently too little classroom space in North Seattle to meet demand, but too much space in the Central, South, Southeast and West Seattle clusters. By balancing capacity with demand, the District can use its resources wisely, meet student needs and ensure that every student has equal access to a high quality educational program.

<b>SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINAL CAPACITY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS (1/6/09)</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>BUILDING</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>
Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC) at Old Hay building	CLOSE Old Hay building (may be a temporary closure depending on enrollment growth)	RELOCATE SBOC program to Meany building and co-locate with NOVA
Washington Middle School	CREATE space for Meany general education students at Washington Middle School building	RELOCATE half of the APP program to Hamilton Middle School Other half of APP program and other students remain
Meany Middle School	HOUSE co-located NOVA and SBOC programs in Meany building	DISCONTINUE Meany program and reassign students based on where they live
Hamilton Middle School	ADD half of the APP program from Washington Middle School to Hamilton Middle School	ADD half of the APP program from Washington Middle School
NOVA program at Mann building	CLOSE Mann building	RELOCATE NOVA program to Meany building and co-locate with SBOC
T.T. Minor Elementary	CLOSE T.T. Minor Building	RELOCATE T.T. Minor Montessori to Leschi DISCONTINUE T.T. Minor Elementary program and reassign students to Lowell Elementary
Leschi Elementary	ADD Montessori from T.T. Minor to Leschi building	ADD Montessori from T.T. Minor Current Leschi students remain
Lowell Elementary	CREATE space for general education students at Lowell building	RELOCATE approximately half of elementary APP to Thurgood Marshall with half remaining at Lowell Elementary REASSIGN T.T. Minor students to Lowell Elementary  At this time, no major relocation of the Special Education programs is contemplated. However, service needs and availability across the district continue to be evaluated in an effort to bring services closer to where students live
Thurgood Marshall Elementary	ADD half of elementary APP to Thurgood Marshall building	ASSIGN approximately half of elementary APP to Thurgood Marshall RELOCATE two EBOC classrooms to Dunlap Elementary and two EBOC classrooms to Hawthorne Elementary Other Thurgood Marshall students remain

**SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINAL CAPACITY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS (1/6/09)**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>BUILDING</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>
Dunlap Elementary	ADD two EBOC classrooms from Thurgood Marshall to Dunlap building	ADD two EBOC classrooms from Thurgood Marshall Current Dunlap Students remain
Hawthorne Elementary	ADD two EBOC classrooms from Thurgood Marshall to Hawthorne building	ADD two EBOC classrooms from Thurgood Marshall Current Hawthorne students remain
Van Asselt Elementary	CLOSE Van Asselt building	RELOCATE Van Asselt program to African American Academy building
African American Academy (AAA)	HOUSE Van Asselt Elementary program in AAA building	DISCONTINUE AAA K-8 program. REASSIGN AAA K-5 to Van Asselt or schools in their home cluster REASSIGN AAA 6-8 students based on where they live
Summit K-12 at Jane Addams building	HOUSE a new traditional K-8 in Jane Addams building	DISCONTINUE Summit K-12 program. REASSIGN students based on where they live
Pathfinder K-8 at Genesee Hill building	CLOSE Genesee Hill building	RELOCATE Pathfinder K-8 program to Cooper building
Cooper Elementary	HOUSE Pathfinder K-8 in Cooper building	DISCONTINUE Cooper program. REASSIGN Cooper students to other schools in West Seattle

**HOW WILL SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BE SERVED?**

The Final Recommendations above apply only to general education students (except where specified) and students whose needs can be met with resource room services. Seattle Public Schools has also developed recommendations for special education students who require other specialized services.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION FINAL CAPACITY RECOMMENDATIONS (1/6/09)**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>CURRENT LOCATION</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
Autism self-contained primary program at Summit K-12	Summit K-12 at Jane Addams building	REMAIN at Jane Addams building to become part of the new K-8
Generic self-contained high school program	Summit K-12 at Jane Addams building	REASSIGN students based on where they live. These services are offered at all comprehensive high schools
Internalizing Disorder Program (IDP) secondary program	Summit K-12 at Jane Addams Building	RELOCATE to Meany Building as part of NOVA
Autism self-contained program at Meany	Meany	REASSIGN students to existing autism self-contained program at Mercer building

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>CURRENT LOCATION</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
Behavior Intervention Program	Meany	REASSIGN students based on where they live. These services are offered at all comprehensive middle schools.
Low Grouping Program	Meany	RELOCATE to Washington MS
Low Incidence A Programs (2)	Meany	RELOCATE one program to Washington MS and one program to Hamilton MS
Medically Fragile Program	Meany	RELOCATE to Washington MS
Primary and Intermediate Behavior Intervention Programs	T.T. Minor	REASSIGN students based on where they live to schools that offer appropriate services
Generic self-contained primary and intermediate programs	Van Asselt	RELOCATE to African American Academy building to remain part of the existing continuum
Two autism self-contained and one inclusion program	Cooper	REMAIN at Cooper to become part of Pathfinder K-8

## HOW WILL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES BENEFIT FROM THESE RECOMMENDATIONS?

These recommendations will benefit students and families by focusing available resources on fewer buildings and balancing capacity based on neighborhood demand. In particular, the recommendations will provide a number of academic benefits for students and families, including:

- More Advanced Learning Opportunities for students, with the location of elementary APP and middle school APP at two schools;
- More integration of special education programs with school communities;
- A new neighborhood elementary school in Northeast Seattle;
- The possibility of a new neighborhood elementary school in Queen Anne/Magnolia in fall 2010 if demand continues;
- Enrichment opportunities with the co-location of NOVA and the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center.

## PUBLIC PROCESS

### HOW WERE COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, STUDENTS, STAFF, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY CONSIDERED IN THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS?

The School Board engaged in multiple public discussion of recommendations at board meetings and at board workshops. Questions and suggestions from School Board members were instrumental in shaping the final recommendations. Feedback and comments from staff, families and community also were considered as new options were considered and the recommendations finalized. Input was reviewed based on emails, in-person discussions, two community workshops, public hearings and public testimony at School Board meetings.

### HOW CAN I KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THIS PROCESS?

Updated information about the process and timeline will be provided via the district's Web site, [www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/capacity). In addition, you can check your school or PTSA newsletter and the local media for more information.

A motion on Final Recommendations will be introduced at the School Board meeting on January 7, 2009, and the Board will vote on the Final Recommendations on January 29, 2009. Families, community members and staff are encouraged to provide comments. Opportunities include:

Date	Time	Type of Meeting	Location
January 7	6:00 PM	School Board meeting	John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence
January 20	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Public Hearing	Lowell Elementary, 1058 E. Mercer Street
January 21	6:00 PM	School Board Meeting	John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence
January 22	6:30 -8:30 p.m.	Public hearing	John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence
January 29	6:00 PM	School Board Vote	John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence

*\*John Stanford Center for Education Excellence: 2445 3rd Avenue South*

### HOW CAN I PROVIDE FEEDBACK AND OPINIONS?

Comments may be emailed to [capacity@seattleschools.org](mailto:capacity@seattleschools.org) or mailed to School Board, PO Box 34165, MS 11-010, Seattle, WA, 98124-1165. The School Board office phone number is 206 252 0040.

You may also sign up to speak at the Lowell public hearing on January 20, at the Lowell building, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This hearing was rescheduled from December 18 due to inclement weather. Individuals who were signed up to speak on December 18 have first priority for the January 20 hearing. Others may sign up by calling 206-252-0042 or emailing [hearing@seattleschools.org](mailto:hearing@seattleschools.org).

The final public hearing, which relates to all buildings proposed for closure, is scheduled for 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 22. Individuals may sign up for the final public hearings by calling the School Board office at 206-252-0042 or email [hearing@seattleschools.org](mailto:hearing@seattleschools.org).

Public testimony is also welcome at School Board meetings. To sign up to testify at a regular School Board meeting, call 206 252 0040 or email [boardagenda@seattleschools.org](mailto:boardagenda@seattleschools.org) with the topic you wish to address. Sign-up for the board meeting is accepted beginning at 8 a.m. on the Monday prior to the Wednesday evening board meeting.

## TIMING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Why was the process so fast?

- We designed a process to ensure that we could make decisions in time to have a strong start to the next academic year
- That means that decisions about closing buildings need to be made in January to have staff in place and buildings ready for the start of school this September

### When would schools close or be repurposed?

The Superintendent has proposed that the changes would happen in June 2009, at the end of this school year.

### How will the building closure process affect student enrollment for 2009-10?

The open enrollment period for students for 2009-10 will be delayed.

- Open Enrollment for 2009-10 has been rescheduled from February to **March 2-31, 2009**.
- The School Fair that was originally scheduled for January 10, 2009 has been cancelled.
- Information on School Tours and Open Houses is posted at [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org).
- Siblings of current students who registered and applied during fall 2008 will receive assignments in the mail at the end of February.
- Students affected by these recommendations will receive assignments by the end of February and may apply for an alternative assignment during March.
- Assignment letters for those who apply during open enrollment will go out by the end of May.

Families may visit or contact Enrollment Services at 206.252.0760. Enrollment services is located at the John Stanford Center, 2445 Third Avenue South (3<sup>rd</sup> and Lander). The Bilingual Family Center at Aki Kurose Middle School is open for families needing assistance in a language other than English. Aki Kurose is located at: 3928 South Graham Street (room 104). Tel: 206.252.7750; Fax: 206.252.7751 Or, visit [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org) and choose "Enrollment" from the navigation menu.

Both locations are open 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

## BUDGET IMPACT

### **What are the savings realized by the Superintendent's final recommendations? What are the costs?**

This plan would net an estimated savings of \$16.2 million (M) in general operating funds over five years, including implementation costs of \$1.9 M and savings of \$18 M. In addition, the district's deferred maintenance (capital costs) would be reduced by an estimated \$33.1 M, including costs of implementation of \$500,000 and reductions in deferred maintenance of \$33.6 M.

### **Will the implementation of the final recommendations satisfy the budget shortfall?**

No, the implementation is but one of multiple strategies to make up the budget deficit. Other strategies include securing additional revenue (increased enrollment, additional funding for special education safety net); and expenditure savings (hiring freeze effective December 2008, proposed cut of \$5 million from central office budgets; proposed reduction in student funding formula of \$4 million, transportation savings through operational efficiencies, and other strategies).

### **If closing buildings will not solve the budget gap issue, why are closures being recommended?**

- The speed and severity of the recession gave us no choice but to move immediately; we have delayed making tough decisions for too long, and in the context of our new strategic plan, the Board directed us to accelerate the capacity management work identified as a priority in Excellence for All.

There are a number of reasons why these recommendations are important to the long-term academic achievement and fiscal health of Seattle Public Schools and bring excellence to every classroom:

- We are focusing resources on strengthening programs and not spreading resources too thinly across too many buildings (more fully enrolled schools allow schools to support more services, such as librarians, counselors, nurses and additional enrichment for students)
- The recommendations increase equitable access to programs across the city (APP in multiple locations. SPED and SBOC closer to where children live, better opportunity to build communities and increase family involvement with EBOC relocation)
- The recommendations help to balance capacity with demand and projected enrollment across the city. Currently, there is a significant geographic imbalance between where children live and the amount of space available in those areas.
- The recommendation closes buildings that are old and in need of substantial maintenance. If they remained open, the district would need to eventually invest many millions of dollars in renovations and renewal.
- The recommendations will duplicate success in more parts of the city (elementary and middle school APP in additional areas of the city).

**The summary report on the 2006 closure process indicates that 20% of students assigned to schools that were closed were not enrolled in the district in October 2007. Does SPS expect a similar loss of students through this closure process? Won't the decreased revenue from fewer students offset the savings from closure? Added 01/15/09**

In summary, the attrition of students from the schools closed in 2007 is consistent with the typical attrition rates from these schools and so can not be solely attributed to closure.

- 20% of the students assigned to the schools that were closed in 2007 (as of December 2006) were not enrolled in the district in October 2007.
- The total district K-11 attrition rate from January to October is about 11%, and is about 9% for grades K-4. It's reasonable to assume that some students in closed schools may choose to enroll in other districts or private schools, but the higher rates among the closed schools cannot be attributed solely to the fact that the schools were closed.
- The schools that were closed in 2007 already had higher attrition rates than the district total before they were closed. Between January and October 2006, 19% of Fairmount Park students did not return to the district; 17% of Rainier View; 13% of Viewlands; and 19% of Whitworth. So we would have expected high rates of attrition at these schools even if they had not closed.
- Elementary students who live in clusters along the District border (North, Southeast, and West Seattle South) have the highest rates of attrition. Family mobility may cross back and forth across district boundaries, or students may choose to attend nearby schools in bordering districts for various reasons. More than half of the students in the closed schools lived in the Southeast (31%) and North (21%) clusters, where we would already expect higher rates of attrition.
- Non-residents (students who live outside of the SPS District) have the highest rates of attrition (35% in 2006 and 26% in 2007). The closed schools had a disproportionately high number of non-resident students (8% compared with 3% district-wide), so we would also expect a higher rate of attrition due to this particular population.
- Total district attrition has actually been decreasing, and was in fact lower in 2007 (9.8%) than in 2006 (10.6%). So any possible attrition because of closure was offset by less attrition at other schools.
- Any loss of students from year-to-year is offset (though not fully) by the thousands of new students who enroll in SPS each year. Our gross loss is always much higher than our net loss, and so can't all be counted as lost revenue. Between January and October 2007, the district lost 4,643 students in grades K-11. But it gained 4,318 new students, so the net loss was 325 students.
- Three of the five schools currently recommended for closure have higher attrition rates than the district overall (between January and October 2008, 15% of AAA students left the district; 15% of Summit; 17% of T. T. Minor; 11% of Meany; and 10% of Cooper).
- While we may see an increase in the attrition at schools affected by closure, given the current economic conditions and the fact that district-wide attrition rates have already been dropping, it is reasonable to expect we could offset that loss with new students coming in.
- Many factors go into a family's decision about where to send their child to school. As the District continues to implement *Excellence for All's* strategies to improve academic achievement, families will find Seattle Public School an increasingly attractive option.

## **Why don't you spend down reserves instead of closing buildings?**

- The purpose of reserves is to maintain a pool of funds for extreme emergencies
- Using reserves doesn't solve the structural financial problem we would face next year or help advance academic achievement the way focusing resources can
- The Board mandated holding 3.8% or approximately \$17 million in reserves
- Spending down reserves is a financial ploy that would work one time but leave us in the same situation next year

## **INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **How will the district communicate with students, families, staff and community affected by the recommendation?**

Superintendent Goodloe-Johnson and her leadership team are committed to doing everything possible to make the transitions as smooth as possible. The District will communicate with affected students, staff and families in a variety of ways, including:

- Letters to families and staff
- Assignment information to families
- Opportunities for school-based meetings
- Opportunities to visit new schools and buildings
- Human Resources support for staff
- Program and Logistics support teams

### **How will I find out about my child's assignment for 2009-10?**

New assignments will be mailed, by the end of February, to students affected by this plan. Assignments will be made in accordance with the process described in the full report and appendices.

### **If I want a different assignment for my child, what do I do?**

Students affected by this recommendation may apply for a different assignment during the Open Enrollment period, March 2-31. The regular assignment policy rules and tie-breakers will apply. Assignments for students applying during open enrollment will be mailed by the end of May, 2009.

### **How can I learn more about my child's new school?**

Most schools have Web sites. Select "Schools" from the navigation bar at [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org). Many schools are conducting tours during January, February and March. Families are welcome to take advantage of those tours. In addition, in instances where a program is moving from one building to

another building, principals will work together to plan opportunities for staff, students and families to visit the new location.

### **Will the content of programs change when they move to a new building?**

The amount of change will vary from program to program. Programmatic design teams will be established and will be supported from central office. The teams will work with staff, students and families to plan for transitions.

Principals will inform staff, students and families about the programmatic design teams and how they can be involved and contribute.

### **Will my student receive yellow bus transportation to the new location?**

Provision of transportation services will vary, depending on the program. Additional information will be provided to schools and to families.

## **REASONS FOR STUDYING CAPACITY AND BUILDING CLOSURE**

### **Why is Seattle Public Schools studying capacity management and building closures?**

A number of recent studies have confirmed that the District has more buildings than needed for our current and projected number of students. Capacity is not equally distributed, however. There is a shortage of space for students in North Seattle, but excess space in the Central, South, Southeast, and West Seattle clusters.

### **Why is it necessary to close or repurpose buildings now?**

A review of capacity across the district was due to begin early in 2009.

However, the national economic crisis resulted in a projected \$24 million shortfall for 2009-10 for SPS as of October 2008. In response to this shortfall, the School Board asked the Superintendent and staff to move quickly to start the capacity review, including building closures as needed.

### **I've heard there's a shortage of space for students in some schools. If that's the case, why would you close buildings?**

The recommendations on building closures will help us provide more classroom space in neighborhoods where there is a shortage and will close schools in areas where there is too much classroom space.

## METHOD FOR STUDYING CAPACITY AND SCHOOL CLOSURES

### **SPS adopted a strategic plan in June 2008. How will capacity management and building closures fit with that plan?**

Excellence for All, our District's strategic plan, provides the framework for us to work together to raise academic achievement for all students.

Capacity planning is one of the priority strategies included in Excellence for All. It is important that we have enough space in schools where students live and that all students have equal access to high quality educational programs.

### **How were decisions made about which buildings will be closed?**

Staff used three foundational questions:

1. Do programs need to **move to other areas** of the district to improve access to these programs?
2. Do programs **need to be added in areas** of the district to improve access to these programs?
3. How do closures or program moves relate to our students' **academic needs** and strengthen our **fiscal health**?

Staff then evaluated each building against five guidelines: (1) geographic need, (2) building condition, (3) cost per pupil, (4) proximity to other schools and (5) academic performance.

### **What will happen to buildings that are closed?**

- There are specific guidelines and policies we must follow in terms of future use of any surplus property. We will conduct a comprehensive facilities master plan review to determine whether to retain it, lease it or sell it. Community members will be included in this process and then the School Board will make a final decision.
- Proceeds from sales of buildings can't be used for general operating costs
- We have an excellent track record of working with the community on future use of our surplus property – many examples of former school buildings that now house non-profits offer excellent educational and cultural activities for our community.

### **What is the difference between planning capacity and functional capacity? Added 01/15/09**

An analysis of functional capacity at school buildings is now complete. An overview of results is available [here](#), and a school-by-school analysis is shown [in this document](#).

### **What is the plan for the historic names of buildings that will be closed?**

We will address naming issues as a whole, determining whether these names should be retained on closed buildings, or if buildings that continue to be used for instructional purposes should be renamed in honor of the local and national figures for whom the buildings were named. Any proposed renaming of buildings will follow School Board policy, and will involve the school community. Final decisions on building names must be approved by the School Board.

### **What is being done to address the expected capacity shortage in North Seattle, Queen Anne and Magnolia?**

Over the past several years, an increasing number of kindergarten and elementary age students have enrolled in schools in the Queen Anne and Magnolia areas. Actions we are taking include:

- **Catharine Blaine K-8** – renovate existing space to add four additional classrooms.
- **BF Day** – change student assignment plan to allow dual-cluster choice and transportation to BF Day elementary from the Queen Anne/Magnolia clusters.
- **BF Day** – complete four spaces at BF Day for general education classrooms.
- **Cluster-generated solution** – accept additional capacity into the four elementary schools in the Queen Anne/Magnolia cluster (Catharine Blaine K-8, Coe, John Hay and Lawton).

In addition, the Superintendent's capacity management recommendations include that a new cluster elementary school could be opened in the Old Hay Building in fall 2010 if demand continues.

### **What is being done to address the immediate needs in North, Northeast and Northwest Seattle?**

Over the past several years, an increasing number of kindergarten and elementary age students have enrolled in schools in North Seattle. Actions we are taking include:

- **Repurpose the Jane Addams building** (which currently houses the Summit K-12 program) for a new K-8 school.
- **Olympic Hills** - Amend the student assignment plan to allow for dual-cluster choice and transportation for the Northeast cluster to Olympic Hills elementary.
- **Northgate** – one classroom can be used for additional capacity
- **Olympic Hills** - work with staff at Olympic Hills to increase capacity through improved utilization of existing spaces.

## STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND STAFF

### **What are the benefits from students and families from these recommendations?**

The recommended building closures and program moves will benefit students and families by focusing available resources on fewer buildings and balancing capacity based on neighborhood demand.

The recommendations will also result in a new elementary school in Northeast Seattle to meet demand, more locations for Advanced Learning Opportunities, more integration of special education programs and many chances for program enrichment.

### **What will happen to staff who work at schools that are closed or repurposed?**

We know that school closures and program changes are very difficult for everyone, and we will work with building staff to make the transition as smooth as possible. A respectful process will be followed, based on Seattle Public Schools' contractual agreements with our labor associations. More details will be provided directly to affected staff.

### **Will students whose schools close be reassigned to quality schools?**

The fundamental goal of our new strategic plan, Excellence for All, is to ensure that every student has access to a high quality program, that every student has the resources to succeed academically.

That is one of the key reasons we are proposing to close or repurpose schools: to devote more resources to the classroom so that every school can become a high quality school. Achieving this goal will take time, but we are working vigorously, in partnership with community members, to move forward as quickly as possible and ensure that we truly provide excellence for all.

These recommendations are made with the intention to strengthen programs across our system.