

Rebuilding Stronger Reorganization Plan Committee

Small Group Discussion Notes

March 17, 2022

Reflection:

Target capacity, fall 2021 enrollment, and 2021-2022 utilization rate

(see slides 33-34 and the FOS handout)

- What do you notice about the data?
 - Good number of buildings are underutilized; seems like there would be an opportunity to redistribute and take advantage
 - Buildings with inefficient use of space seems to be east of Meridian; approaching adequate space on the west side; middle evenly distributed
 - Southside facilities inefficiently used; suggests priorities based on geography, race, and income levels
 - Obvious lack of options for HS or MS in many geographic areas
 - Owe it to the community to keep Shortridge, Tech, and Attucks open based on historical significance
 - \$, resources, and stature brought by sports continues to go to other districts; impact of sports on income needs to be considered
 - Will need to be uncomfortable to disrupt some things
 - Exceptions are present – do you utilize those as a focus or as an outlier?
 - Composite and utilization are sometimes inverse
 - Underutilization based on enrollment
 - Utilization % is dependent on choice versus neighborhood school and quadrant
 - Too many schools have low utilization
 - There are any schools in the red for utilization
 - Choice schools are in the green for utilization

- What does the data make you wonder?
 - What about the southside is creating a lack of investment?
 - Why do we accept the townships? Why don't we have 1 school district for the entire county?
 - What is the effect of underutilized schools on the broader community?
 - Choice – Innovation – are they pulling from neighborhood schools? Does it take away from neighborhood schools?
 - Does this mean more schools need to be closed? If so – what is the plan? Vacant buildings become a problem for the neighborhood.
 - What played into the decrease in enrollment in the NE and SE?
 - What are the effects of overutilization on student learning?
 - To what extent will the district consider consolidating small schools with under 50% utilization?
 - Schools were not originally built to include expansion for student support services (nurses, social workers, family engagement, etc.) in the building – how do we address and plan for this?

- How do innovation partner contracts affect the conversation about facilities? (i.e. Would we choose to close a facility at the end of a contract?)
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
 - How do the Magnet schools show up? Are they green or blue? Or are they purple? Interested to know where they are.
 - If you look in the data set, you can see that in many cases schools labeled “Choice” are more often blue, green or purple when it comes to building utilization. (IPS moved away from using the term “magnet” and now calls them “Choice schools.”)
 - Are the Charter schools included in the map?
 - Our data set in the Facilities PowerPoint includes IPS-affiliated schools. So, if a charter is in the Innovation Network, then it is included in both the Google sheet and the map.
 - Where did all the students go?
 - Depending on what time period is being asked about, there might be a different key factor. Overall, it’s complicated. There’s no one key reason. Bussing during desegregation is one factor. The continued growth of charter schools and increased access to private schools are as well. In some areas of the city, residential patterns have shifted to either be less populous overall, or shifted to having fewer families with school-aged children.
 - How do we anticipate capturing/retaining families as they move to MS/HS?
 - Being strong stewards of the transition between grade levels is in the Guiding Principles delivered to the IPS administration by the IPS Board, so retention is definitely something that we are looking to strengthen.
 - What is the deferred maintenance budget we are carrying? In excess of \$450 million?
 - The actual total amount of deferred maintenance is \$1.3 billion estimated by a third-party review. So, there is about \$850 million difference between that and what it would cost to bring all facilities to “good.” Our budget for maintaining facilities is informed by our operations dollars, as well as some use of debt, the amount of which is limited by statute.
 - If we do invest \$450 million for facilities, what will the plan be in 5-10 years?
 - We are looking out across a longer-term financial horizon to ensure that any investments we make will be reasonable and in response to possible future-use needs of our facilities.
 - Practical, objective considerations versus politics/stakeholder interests
 - Enrollment cannot be viewed in a vacuum when discussing facilities (choice, school performance)
 - What are the trends in each building? We do have the 7-year enrollment trends by building, and we’ll dig into that in our April 14th session.
 - To what extent are township schools and geographic proximity affecting utilization (on the eastside specifically)?
 - That is certainly a factor. When we meet on April 14th, we will look into regional enrollment (and hence utilization trends) and data on where IPS-resident students are choosing to attend school.
 - To what extent are current trends in utilization due to school closures?

- Our utilization at the high schools did increase when we consolidated during the High School Reinvention in 2018. Beyond that, we'll need more clarification on your question so please email us to follow up or ask us at the next meeting.

Composite score and the cost per potential student

(see slides 35-36 and the FOS handout)

- What do you notice about the data?
 - Some underutilized spaces have better building scores – why are these spaces in better condition but not full?
 - High schools are highest ratio – more specialty areas and more underutilized spaces
 - Poor school conditions, coupled with utilization, makes strong objective case for consolidation
 - #69 (59), #9707 (50), #724 (58) – the cost per potential student does not correlate with a low utilization %
 - Low composite scores generally have a high cost
 - Closed schools are in the red
 - Lots of yellow overall
- What does the data make you wonder?
 - How is the decision made to improve a building? No obvious pattern
 - Interested to look at race/income for the neighborhoods to explore correlation to building quality and associated patterns.
 - Technology is swaying composite
 - What does it truly cost to operate smaller schools (cost differential versus larger schools)
 - Wonder why the district would put that much money into those buildings
 - Will Paul Miller and Emma Donnan be the next to close based on composite and utilization?
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
 - Interested to see the data for capacity side by side/overlaid with composite scores
 - This information is accessible in the Facilities Data Google document. Please email jamie.vandewalle@myips.org with additional questions.
 - What programs are offered that affect underutilized spaces/specialty areas – also admin/specialty services impact?
 - We do have community partners co-sharing spaces; using some spaces as offices; or, for example, our IPS Police Department headquarters. We also use some space for storage.
 - What role does local community involvement play in decisions?
 - We're excited to continue to take community input via the committee structure, and then engage additionally within school communities as the plan begins to take shape.
 - To what extent does the technology score take into consideration the reliability of Wi-Fi?
 - Network connectivity and network performance account for 40 points out of the possible 100 points in the IT Readiness score. So, it's heavily weighted in that category.

- Is parking taken into consideration for grounds?
 - Parking lot condition is 17.91 possible points of the 95.6 points available for the Grounds score (so, worth about 18%). If we're thinking about adequate parking spaces for a particular grade-level school (for example: Does a high school have enough parking for students and athletic events?), that will show up in the Flexibility score that assesses how well a school is able to be used for certain grade bands. It also carries a small weight for the Academic Readiness score.
- How is handicap accessibility factored in?
 - Handicapped accessibility isn't part of the scoring system that was used by MGT. However, IPS does have specific accessibility checklists and procedures to assure that all facilities are in line with requirements as determined by the federal and local government.

Geographic quadrants and districtwide

(see slide 37 and the FOS handout)

- What do you notice about the data?
 - S. footage per special services personnel
 - SE has worst utilization rates
 - SW has low presence
 - NW has 2/3 high utilization
 - Arbitrary divisions may skew the data
 - High concentration of underutilized elementary schools in NE quadrant
 - SE and NE lower utilization % - more neighborhood than choice schools
 - All the choice schools in NW and SW have better scores
 - NE has higher concentration of low utilization and lower composite scores
 - NE and SE have lower building utilization
- What does the data make you wonder?
 - What challenges or impacts are affecting utilization rates in NW and SE quadrants? What is driving decisions?
 - Neighborhood context takes precedent
 - Relationship with choice proliferation overall
 - Is community involvement different in NE quad compared to others?
 - Why is Tech/Attucks' cost per student less than Shortridge/Washington?
 - What happens to the choice programs when they are over-utilized and in the red or orange like Francis Parker?
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
 - How many schools do you need in each quadrant?
 - That will depend upon what the population density and total population is for the area, as well as things like birthrate and projected changes to the area. It will also depend upon what the enrollment policy is for the schools, since a Choice program, for example, might draw students from a wider geographic area than a neighboring school. We have not determined a set number of schools per quadrant.