

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 5, 2014

- Just need to look at differences on plans: more info on all plans: 1. Operating costs 2. Difference between new schools or expanded other schools
- Very informative meeting, love the idea of new elementary schools for the community. Excited about the future of RPS.
- Since the major difference between 3 plans is closing of Nelson and/or White Swan, the statistics/projection of remodeling those 2 schools should be included in this packet. In general, I like this plan (B) because reasonable funds are put to deferred maintenance and toward furniture.
- I feel it is more prudent to keep a sum of money to keep up with maintenance.
- A new school for Nelson would be a good thing for the area.
- I don't think it is a good idea to not leave any money for maintenance.
- I think the process should be similar to Transform Rockford so people have more info. I agree that older, less functioning schools should be closed & build new modern schools to accommodate technology.
- Attn: School Board Member, I would like to know why we are segregating our brightest students into an elitist environment while leaving our special needs students in the general populous. I would like to suggest that we return our brightest students to the general populous to increase averages district wide. Also we should be careful renovating schools to grow larger when populous shifts every ten years or so. Also, it is important to remember our lawsuit and the fact that we are making drastic changes to our west side of town.
- It is essential to have full-time psychologists & social workers in each building. Students who need these services aren't receiving them now.
- Not a plan question, but why is the Carlson zone spread so far west? Why not push Welsh's zone further west and Carlson's further east?
- Where are the new schools going to be located?
- I like the idea of additional staff – social worker, nurse, etc., saving money on transportation by moving bilingual to zones.
- I do not think that White Swan and Nelson should be renovated. Build NEW and improve our schools!
- A new building to combine two old buildings is a better choice for student & parents.
- Not a plan question: Why were the meetings at 2:30-3:30, when parents had to work?
- Zone for Carlson in all 3 plans is very far from home?
- Where is the new school going to be located? It is hard to "vote" when this is not stated in the plan? Could each building have a gifted strand, to cut down on buses.
- Again, where will the 2 "new" schools be located, exactly? If we are "splitting" up bilingual students to their "neighborhood" zones, think about integrating gifted into "pods" close to their homes. It is unfair to have a special school for 1 group & not others.

- I like the idea of new schools for those 2 neighborhoods. They need them! I'm worried for the bilingual students not getting enough input – none of the parents of bilingual students were present. Make an effort to include them please!
- To me it is imperative to make the best attempts possible to keep students together from the schools that will be closed. Friendships for children are a source of stability that will assist the kids when starting at a new school.
- I believe a new school should be built to have students from Kishwaukee & Nelson. Why patch up these old buildings. We've done that. Start fresh.
- I don't want to see classes max out because of the quality of education. I would like to see at least 1 more school built.
- This is a difficult decision. I do not fully agree with any of the plans. Have you looked at future housing?
- White Swan is on too busy of a road. Other buildings recommended need to be closed. They are too old and require too much maintenance.
- If no taxes will be increased, we might as well use the funds and build new schools. Will the middle school bilingual program that hosts grades 6, 7, 8 still be at Eisenhower? Ellis & Washington are K-8 buildings, and I noticed the bilingual programs K-5 will be moved there.
- New schools would be a huge advantage for our city and much needed.
- Make sure classroom space is large enough to fit the large number of students currently in regular education classes, storage, storage, storage! Gym sizes increased.
- Schools are old and in disrepair. New schools need to be added to accommodate students.
- Combine Nelson and Kishwaukee.
- Second choice overall. Not sure building two new schools is necessary.
- What renovations are planned for existing classrooms? How will technology be embedded in the classrooms and throughout the schools? What will be done to control the climate in existing classrooms (100+ degrees to 60 degrees, currently!)?
- I think a new school for the Nelson & Kishwaukee area is long overdue. It also makes a great deal of sense to have a new school out east.
- I like the idea of having 2 new schools that are innovative and keeping up with the new advances in education. This seems to be the best for all students in the district.
- I want to know exactly what renovations will be made to Welsh? Also what renovations will other buildings get?
- I think the proposed new building could be seen as unfair – our building is also in poor condition.
- The plan to buy houses for Cherry Valley does not make our District look good.
- Money upfront for furniture is encouraging.
- I like how there is also money up front for new furniture and things needed within this school.
- Remodel/additions are needed/larger classrooms

- I feel the renovations/addition to Welsh Elementary would have to include: new windows, bigger gym for the four strands as well as air conditioning and electrical updates. It seems that a new school would make more financial sense (even if it was 10 years down the line).
- Will actual classroom size be considered when redesigning/updating classrooms? Welsh has extremely small in 1-5th grades. Will some walls be knocked down to increase these room sizes?
- Will additional space be made available to mental health services in some schools?
- Will have to watch for more information on Website. Want more info on student population in these areas. Would these closure plans cause another "People Who Care"!??
- I would like to see student population in each area.
- I need more information on student population on west side. My concern is not to arouse public sentiment – east vs. west again.
- Nelson & Kishwaukee schools are both extremely old and ineffective uses of space. I agree they both should be closed. White Swan and Cherry Valley homes should not have to be torn down as mentioned in plan B. Plan C is the best plan in my opinion.
- For any of the plans, will you be using any "green" or alternative energy sources? (in the building)
- I feel some of our structures are past the point of "being saved."
- Are all of the plans for new buildings/renovations/improvements going to include ways to improve sustainability and other environmental considerations? i.e.-green energy being utilized.
- Was a new school facility at Welsh's current school site ever considered? It would seem more cost effective considering our current issues with windows, heat, cooling, electric, and classroom space/size.
- My greatest concern is if & when West View is closed that there will no longer be a playground for all of the children to play. I live next door to West View. Every day there are many children playing on the equipment, children of all ages, with and without the parents being present. If you don't make this into a park there will be many children with nowhere to play. They might take their playing into the streets. I cannot emphasize this enough. Everyone is complaining about the kids not getting enough exercise – don't close their opportunity to get that exercise.
- Bravo for its ethics, honesty and plan!
- High expectations for our new school system! Perhaps a hundred or so comments or questions but applaud your design for working towards excellence – for every child living in Rockford. Bravo! Parents Matter! Relationships of parents & school personnel are significant!
- Seems like wise information used in choosing your information at this 1st meeting.
- Information is important!
- Your plans for involving the community are much improved over past practices!
- I lean toward new buildings but defer to the staff and parents of the schools involved.
- The prime internal factor in student success isn't the building. It's the quality of the principal and teaching. And the prime external factor is income. If we are going to have slightly larger schools, this makes each one more critical -- twice as many students' lives and futures are at stake in a 4-strand school than a 2-strand. This means, for me, the quality of leadership and teaching at Ellis

and Beyer, in particular, and also McIntosh, Welsh, the new Washington, Conklin, Nelson, and Riverdahl must be the very highest quality.

- Plan to not just renovate and expand Marsh, but renovate it for Montessori. There is plumbing, etc, involved. Will Marsh permit a larger population? Is there money in the operating budget for teacher training?
- You should delay a decision on doing B or C. Approve A for now. Move the Kishwaukee kids to Nelson, but leave Cherry Valley/White Swan as is, until you've done at least two years-worth of work. Then see how much money there is. Do not skimp on deferred maintenance for west side and central buildings so that you can build a new school on the east side.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 6, 2014

- I agree that the Rockford District has thrown good money after bad for way too many years. I'm one of those parents that spent a lot of money to put my child in private schools to feel like she was getting a good education. I resent my tax bills, because so much goes to the school district, and I've never been proud to be in the Rockford district. Our schools and our children need better than they've gotten.
- New schools will be visual proof that our school district is "building up." It will show the tax payer their money is being put to use and not being hidden behind closed doors where they cannot see it. The new construction will also benefit our community with additional jobs/revenue to our city.
- I see school buses at 6:25 a.m. on Pepper Drive. That's too early, and there are way too many buses. Glad to hear we will reduce the need for so much travel.
- Finally I think that we have individuals who are thinking outside the box and getting our community going forward!
- I used to live off of Swanson Road in the Remington Creek Subdivision. It seems absolutely ridiculous to me that it is Rockford District. The majority of these children are in the private schools which only allow you to collect their tax money. Why not allow them to go to schools close to their homes?
- Well thought out plans – well presented.
- What a breath of fresh air! Enthusiasm and leadership from a Superintendent that is from Rockford with his heart here!! Bravo for explaining so clearly. I whole heartily agree with closing of old and outdated schools and build new where needed! Our town needs "college ready" students, no more just getting them to graduate. All students need opportunity.
- It's about time we are investing in our schools. Common sense plan w/neighborhood schools.
- We don't need new schools, we need renovated schools, this is more "equal" between east vs. west sides, and I believe it will be seen as such without hostility. Better education and better facilities for all equals fair for all. East vs. west is hurting Rockford in every way.
- Marsh school doesn't have enough property around it to expand.
- Marsh school does not have the capacity or space to house more children, plus the school needs desperate renovations. Building a new school seems the best option. Changing the zoning (busing

of students) in north east (Rock Cut) area where students in Argyle subdivision were being bused to White Swan to now go to Spring Creek is great!

- Where will the extra money in the transportation fund be used? I didn't think you could take transportation money and put it into the Ed Fund.
- I think this is the best plan - Same question as above - Savings w/transportation and can that money go to the Ed. Fund? Very concerned about length of bus ride for students w/Roscoe addresses.
- Money used for student success - 2nd choice
- Future growth - 1st choice
- Very impressed with Dr. Jarrett and for the goals and changes ahead! ☺ Unrelated to this Elem. situation - Is there any funding or grants available for changing the "factory type windows" of Lincoln Mid. School., to newer windows? Those are so ugly and speak so poorly of the condition - maybe it's okay inside but not for the public's perception!
- Unable to choose among A, B or C. Need more information about prospective outcomes for each plan.
- We have to stop deferring to the future.
- New schools would be a better investment.
- Rockford needs great improvement and new; new schools would be better improvement to bring more people here - to keep people here.
- Excellent presentation! Dr. Jarrett is Dynamic!
- I think the new schools are needed. Renovating White Swan would not provide what is needed in that area.
- It benefits families when children go to the same school. Brothers and sisters can play together and look out for each other and it strengthens family bonds. If all the neighborhood kids go to the same school, it strengthens neighborhood bonds.
- I would like to see an option for multi grades in the same school. I would also like to see an option for night classes to serve children whose parents both work evenings.
- Go with saving money and keeping kids off school buses for longer time.
- Without quality education housing values will not increase in any community.
- These are general statements and don't reflect a preference for one plan over another. I need to look at it more closely. I am in support of big changes.
- The booklet seems to show visually the situation w/school utilization very well. It made sense when Dr. Jarrett explained that smaller schools don't necessarily benefit kids.
- Thanks for your dedication.
- I liked the attitude and positivity of Dr. Jarrett. I have more info now but still unsure of bottom line. I am leaning toward plan C.
- If this plan had been around when my kids were younger we might have stayed in Rockford. We moved to Rockton area.

- Great presentation – It's about time there is interest in educating our children rather than passing them through school.
- New school needed to benefit inner city school for those students.
- Too much money spent on new buildings and not enough left (money) to benefit rest of district.
- Shouldn't all magnet schools be more centrally located within school district boundaries? I have 2 kids in 2 different magnet schools. If they were more centrally located parents that have kids in different schools could be more involved with less transporting issues to deal with.
- The landscape of Rockford is going to constantly change. People live where there are good jobs and therefore people will live where there are good schools. It seems that these plans are somewhat accommodating but there will always be changes. Children thrive on consistency so it would be nice if the district would look at all schools equally.
- It seems that all the decisions were made not considering "programming"/academic issues. I feel that the teachers and principals should have more input as they truly know the issues they have to deal with building-wise to teach students.
- You could at least think about the fact that Montessori needs a lot more things than a regular school. Also, consider that gifted will outgrow this building.
- I really dislike all of your plans.
- Think of new options, there are plenty.
- Are you accounting for multiple art/music/p.e. teachers, and spaces for those teachers (classrooms/materials) at four- strand schools who will need more art/music/p.e.?
- How did you calculate your utilization numbers? Were they found using the top class maximum numbers per contract, or using sizes allowable with special programs?
- How are you going to account for athletic (Title IX, etc.) equality for middle school students who attend special programs vs. what they are leaving. (For example, a pool swim team/middle school-sized gym/academic band/orchestra/arts/foreign language)
- How can you take children from a building with facilities and building equipment (air/sinks) to a building that's not quite appropriate or the same as before?
- I am pleased that consideration was given to locating Montessori at a location with green space. My concern is regarding the renovation and addition that will affect important considerations such as classroom size. It will be important for Montessori-trained teachers to be involved in the renovation process.
- Have you considered the classroom size needed to fully accommodate the needs of a Montessori program?
- Will you consult with your Montessori staff as you plan the addition/renovations to Marsh to accommodate the needs of the Montessori program?
- Have you considered the discipline Data? Smaller schools have less discipline problems when you average the discipline referrals in smaller schools versus larger schools.
- Have you considered that Montessori needs more space than a regular ed or gifted classroom – Marsh rooms are too small.

- Have you considered the population growth area in Rockford to determine where schools built?
- Please bring the minutes showing the vote to close Cherry Valley. What was the date on that?
- This was plan “no new schools” presented to public for bond vote
- Closing Walker and West View will harm northwest and west Rockford as a community.
- Pushing Fairground kids presently at Walker to Ellis and Lewis Lemon, and busing students west of N. Main to Carlson is so obviously racist. From North Main, i.e. Edgewater and Churchill’s Grove, there should be 5th map or superimposed map with the current zone of each school so we can see where students from each closed school will be placed.
- No region in four maps showing current zone boundaries in relationship to where kids will attend after their school closes there are faint lines but no Legend.
- You state that 23% of Walker is underutilized which is misrepresentation since we have a computer lab, tutor/RTI room, book rooms, sped rooms etc. Will there be areas for these needs of our students?
- Walker lost a number of students from this area to private schools when our zone was changed a few years ago, but there has been a change in thought and people are starting to come back. Thanks in part to principal’s and staff effort.
- I have a concern w/the effect of the choices (A, B, C) on the neighborhood/area.
- I can’t make a choice at this time.
- We are a 4 strand school at this time!
- Other than being land locked we are a 4 strand building and meet all other requirements listed to keep a school open.
- Where will my new job be? Will I have a choice? I can’t choose without knowing where I could possibly be.
- General Question – If we have bigger buildings and more specialists will we have multiple rooms for particular specials or will we be pushing into classrooms. Teachers prefer not to have push-in specialists!
- General Question – Where does the gross number of seats available come from? Walker’s 23% unoccupied is misleading. Those “unoccupied” classrooms are being used (social worker, computer lab, book room, etc) for other essential services! And we don’t want to max out class sizes.
- Seems like the plan that best meets the needs of the community. Money appears to be dispersed to more areas.
- I have no idea. I really don’t know what the new schools will look like. I guess we will wait and see.
- My class currently is at 21 students. 21 students feels a lot different than if my class was maxed out at 26. Those extra few students makes a big difference, especially when those students are low. I hope the classes aren’t all pushed to the limits, because learning is affected.
- If any new schools are built, I hope they are done well. Ellis – one of our newer schools doesn’t even have enough restrooms to accommodate the children going there. It wasn’t kept up in very good condition either, and was cheaply made.

- The maps would have been a lot more helpful with street names on them and a comparison of current and new boundaries.
- When you combined schools, did you consider what students were going together? You don't want four strands of underperforming students at each grade level in a building.
- I disagree with the new zones. Edgewater and Churchill Grove neighborhoods now being zones to Carlson. Carlson is 4 miles away from my home, Welsh 9/10 of a mile, Bloom 2 ½ miles. Why will my son be bused that far when there are closer schools? If you are expanding Welsh, expand it more to accommodate the children that live close to it so we can still have a neighborhood school.
- I don't understand how "nearby" schools is a guiding principle and Edgewater and Churchill Grove students will be bused 4 miles to Carlson School. Welsh is 9/10 of a mile from my home and even Bloom is 2 ½ miles. To me, there will be no neighborhood school for Walker's area. I did attend the focus group with DLR at the administration office.
- Where is the data that shows that a 3 or 4 strand school has higher educational attainment than a 2 strand school?
- Were school closings recommended as part of the referendum?
- Consideration should be made to major investment by City of Rockford in an area for example North Main/Auburn just being done. To close Walker does not make sense.
- There will be enough space for students but still money left over to service other buildings.
- Concern – shutting down 7 schools, building 1. How does this fit into the statement that there will be no reduction in staff?
- Hate to see Walker close. Will definitely have a negative impact on the neighborhood. No legal guarantees after the board sells the building.
- To move to a '21st century educational program it is essential to build new up-to-date schools that reflect the 21st century.
- This would give money to all schools for improvement. This would better accommodate students across the city.
- I feel this plan would be best for the whole district. It would still allow us to build one new school but still have enough funds to disperse throughout the district.
- By closing these schools, they are taking away the neighborhood school theory, also increasing number of students on buses which causes safety concerns.
- Walker school will have 3-4 strands 2014-2015.
- Where are over 500 students going to go? Other surrounding area schools are not easily going to absorb. These 3 plans are not community supported.
- Pie graph is not accurate in representing open seating. Is this really fair and is RPS heading right back into a segregation lawsuit? Rockford Public has to be very careful in which plan it heads currently, we have a lot of movement in which students placed in homeless program is not reflected. Walker has new students enrolling weekly from out of district.
- Closing of schools and rezoning = A large movement in housing market! Will parents have a choice so their children can attend the school without busing!

- How long before the schools that are left open need to be replaced or have even more renovations? How much larger are class sizes going to be? They say no reduction of teachers but how true is that? More busing? Kids bused further?
- For the schools that are going to be closed first, are those students only going to be moved once? Will the buildings that they are being relocated to be ready after the 2014-2015 year? Will those schools already be renovated? Or are they being moved to a building that has similar problems that they are coming from?
- When you say that the pie graph shows space not being used it sounds like space is available in the building which is not true. You are talking about increasing class size.
- Property values going down again! People buy houses based on neighborhoods and schools. You are changing the lives of these people without concern. Children will be going across town to a school when there are schools much closer to their homes. If I wanted my kids to go to a certain school, I would have bought my home there!
- From the presentation it is clear what buildings are being closed because of building condition, but what about the staff and students? Where are they going and when? Is uprooting the large number of students really in their best interest?
- My biggest question is how are these buildings going to be repaired before schools are closed and students are moved into these other buildings?
- Please put the "DLR Group" profiles of each school on the website.
- I would like to see a chart comparing current average class sizes for each grade at each school with optimum planned class sizes at each of the new schools.
- I find it curious that the Churchill Grove/Edgewater neighborhood is the only west side neighborhood being bused to the east side. Maybe West View should be left open and Walker students should go to Welsh which is much closer.
- West View seems to be in better shape than many of the schools being closed and has a large enough campus for expansion.
- How was historical value of buildings factored in? Is there data to show "green space" is more valuable to a community than a school? What is RPS projection for school age population and enrollment? What if enrollment increases? And Walker (+ others) already gone?
- Please give data re: actual bus miles travelled not just number of routes. What is average ride time per student, pre and post these plans?
- How will RPS collaborate w/other community groups to right the tax burden on homeowners and ensure we're not on the same downhill path in 10, 15, 20 years?
- At this point, there's too little info on the economic impact on our area. This is not necessarily part of the Board's elements for consideration, but it weighs heavily on the residents' ability to accept these changes.
- What would be the configuration for the new addition for Welsh?
- Is there any chance of building a new school for Montessori? If not – will classrooms at Marsh be re-sized to accommodate Montessori needs (perhaps every 4 rooms can become three?) If Marsh

is the place for Montessori, can we make that happen sooner rather than later to bring the two parts for the program back together sooner? We would like a task force of teachers (Montessori-trained) to help make renovation/addition suggestions.

- Why can't you build a Montessori Campus?
- Montessori: 7th/8th was planning on farming next school year. This is part of Montessori philosophy. Is this possible with a move to Marsh?
- Montessori should not be moved from their home. Montessori does need land.
- Kids don't get a good education without a proper environment ahead of time. Are you prepared to do this?
- I don't think decisions can be made without looking at the quality of programs, not just number of students. Was the square footage taken into consideration when deciding to move Montessori?

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 7, 2014

Plan A

- Very concerned that poverty level parents will not attend meetings or fill out surveys so their opinions will not play into final decision. Without their input the correct decision will not be made. It will be done to the poor families.
- Second-most conducive to neighborhood schools and parent involvement in areas where most needed.
- Well presented in an easily comprehensible form. My least favorite.
- In all plans Ellis will need more and updated bathroom facilities.
- Ellis, with all strands, needs a Family/Community Liaison.
- For all plans – Empowerment zoned schools need smaller class sizes.
- Not willing to make a choice until I feel more informed.
- Who is DLR Group? Are they a local group?
- Still not sure how the pie charts were figured.
- Class sizes need to be reduced, especially for high poverty areas and at K, 1, 2 level.

Plan B

- Does not appear – according to Guiding Principles – that improved student achievement is part of the plan.
- Most conducive to neighborhood schools and parent involvement where it is most needed. (Low-income areas)
- My 2nd choice
- For all plans – how can Ellis's strands decrease if we are remaining a neighborhood school? Is Ellis being rezoned? If not, where are these students going?
- Ellis students currently get only one day of each special per week with the district's commitment to fine arts, will these days increase?
- Again DLR Group?

- Larger student population will increase class size/keep it a large number. The older classrooms already do not accommodate the students and materials we have, what will be done for the existing classrooms?
- What will happen to the teachers in closing buildings?
- How will these changes accommodate that high number of unemployed?
- I appreciate the effort to gather staff & community input.
- I think the room sizes (sq. ft.) and numbers of students need to be considered when stating maximum class sizes. At Froberg, 24 is probably the maximum capacity for the size of the facility.

Plan C

- DLR Group?
- A long range plan is desperately needed and this fills that need.
- Not enough students in zone to warrant new building. More cost effective to add on to White Swan, less disruptive to neighborhood.
- Northwest Rockford is all families – yet schools are being closed and kids will be squeezed into Conklin and Welsh. A new school will be built where privileged people live – far East & Cherry Valley.

Ellis needs more restrooms/cafeteria space. All good plans butI like Plan C best. First choice At Ellis there will be logistic problems with one gym and a small cafeteria with increased students. Ellis has a traffic flow problem because the kitchen access is in the gym.

Ellis needs:

- Ellis needs increase in resource and intervention staff (tutors, resource teachers).
- Smaller class sizes with demographic of students, we need this.
- Alternative Learning Environments
- More support within classroom
- More bathrooms – older schools have 7-10 urinals for a boys bathroom – Ellis has only 2. This creates a stress & behavioral issues.
- Empowerment zones school – must have smaller class size 20-24 max for upper; 20 or less for lower grades.
- As a teacher at Ellis – we started the year with 30 students and only when we went down to 20-24 were we able to teach. (4th grade)

Questions:

- Why is Westview not being looked at to rebuild with all the land there? "Sell" is a new word. Before it was "green space." Are we selling or providing for charter schools?

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 8, 2014

Plan A

- I know that conditions at Nelson are not healthy enough for students or teachers. There must be some kind mold or similar issues.
- Air Conditioning? Where will you put all of the support specialists? Need more small offices/storage. We need a school which can address the mental health needs of students. Meltdowns are not good in the general classroom.
- Nelson needs to be closed with the threat of flooding.
- Not enough info on how these plans would impact teachers, children, families, neighborhoods, etc. The idea that bigger schools may have more full-time support staff sounds good. Also, more equal distribution of funds sounds interesting. Presentation too short to be able to make a rational decision.
- Will there still be special magnets such as CAPA?
- Is air conditioning a priority over new furniture? Many students suffer from allergies.
- Will ELL students be concentrated in buildings or will they follow the zones? Will all elementary schools be K-5 vs K-8?
- "A" is my favorite of all these – less schools closed – no new schools. There are lots of kids on west side, yet as always, west side more affected.
- Can't always put off building new schools when there is the opportunity to do so.
- Nelson needs to be closed.
- I like that there is a reserve balance for this plan. Would this plan have the quickest completion timeline?
- I can't answer this because there is not enough information.
- As a Cherry Valley resident I need more specific information in order to give input. I am also a Cherry Valley teacher and we were promised an individual meeting with our staff but never were given that meeting to give our input.
- White Swan renovations will be too expensive.
- Close Marsh & Kishwaukee
- Nelson needs a new school
- I have concerns about the changes to Walker/Carlson. Seems Walker students will have a long way to go on buses. Parent involvement is vital to student success. I feel this zone change will make it difficult for current Walker area parents to fully participate. I am also concerned with closure of Cherry Valley. Will improvements to White Swan be adequate? Six classes would need to be added, current conditions are poor. Walker students move to Bloom would seem better.
- Keep Early Childhood in elementary buildings.
- Early Childhood Centers do not teach younger children how to integrate with older children.

- I feel that there should be a better choice for Early Childhood. A lot of students and parents will not want to travel to Nashold for Early Childhood. There needs to be a school further east or northeast.
- Do not put all Early Childhood classrooms in centers. Ask the Early Childhood teachers for their input on this. Early Childhood students do better in elementary buildings. They use older role models in older students.
- Keep Cherry Valley open!
- I feel that Early Childhood students at White Swan should remain at White Swan since they enjoy seeing the older students at their school. The EC students will then see where/what they will be doing when going to K-2 grades.
- I feel White Swan has many old sections and it would not be beneficial to put an addition onto an old building. I do not feel adding to or renovating Nelson would be beneficial either. It is wrong to displace families from homes near White Swan.
- White Swan cannot be updated to function at the 21st century level. The road is dangerous for young children and the neighborhood can't handle the expansion. The owners of those homes should not be forced out!
- With all 3 plans, moving Early Childhood away from the far East side will limit attendance with no additional transportation.
- Need more info.
- Are the renovations to White Swan the same plans as proposed two years ago? Or are there updated plans? How are you going to maintain the older part of the school?
- West side closing 3 vs east side closing 3, most fair!
- Teardown & build! Closing is a necessity!
- The presentation was excellent and thorough. Plan A offers the most options for efficient & flexible use of money for deferred maintenance, upgrades, and furniture. It's a waste to build new buildings when we have buildings that are functional with a little TLC.
- Montessori needs to have input from Montessori teachers about what the classrooms/school looks like. Also, electives for 7/8 grade students seems like several steps down from what we have at Haight & Marshall. No air conditioning is not a good learning environment.
- Why are you going to bus students from Walker all the way to Carlson when Bloom is closer? Are you going to look more at the zones to make transportation more efficient and student balance more equitable? Are you looking at SES when developing zones?
- Add air conditioning.
- In the addition/renovation option, please remember the RTI and Special Education Resource staff. I have taught out of a closet for two years, and it is very difficult to work with groups in a 5 x 5 room. A separate space for teaching vs. meetings would be very valuable. We currently use a Special Education room for Team meetings, which means that teacher can't teach on those days.
- We must fix things and repair things. A lot of classrooms need to be painted and updated before we add on to the buildings.

- What are the specific details of how closed elementary school students will be merged into other elementary schools? What are the demographics of each zone?
- How has the physical space needed for the renovated/new buildings been determined? Have the teachers for the various subjects had input for the needed space to teach effectively for their subject. Or is each classroom defined by some state standard?
- Will you have a detailed plan with dates listing which school (s) will have renovation and when schools are projected to close?
- I do not have a strong preference for any plans as I am new to RPS as of this year. I have concerns regarding the deferred maintenance that has gone on for many years. Ex: opening an outside door that not only causes difficulty in temperature regulation but may also pose as a security issue. Children must be safe and such maintenance requests prioritized.
- Have studies been done to determine why the schools are under-utilized? Is there a lack of students or are parents taking their children to private schools or choosing to homeschool because of deeper educational concerns. Again, I do not know the answers as I am new to RPS, but am curious if studies have been done before changes with large financial implications and commitments are made.
- Dr. Jarrett met with teachers and said the amount to be spent on elementary education buildings will total \$150 million minus what's been spent on Johnson and Spring Creek, leaving about \$13 million. The newspaper stated the total to be spent on EL Ed buildings will total \$100 million. Where is the missing/unmentioned \$37 million?
- Middle school zones should also be looked at – especially Eisenhower vs. Lincoln.
- I'm concerned about the zone change for Bloom. Will adding a couple of streets expand the school population enough to make us a 3 strand school? Why can't the zone be expanded to Rural St.?
- Will the additions be air conditioned but not the current building?
- My concern is for the complete loss of a neighborhood school (Walker Elementary) that the children of 3 strong neighborhoods attend (Edgewater, Churchhills Grove, Signal Hill). Your words "schools should be neighborhood anchors & neighbor centers" (p.8 in booklet) Really?!!
- Air conditioning – all plans?
- How does this affect para staff?
- Looking at the proposed zones it still will not give us (Bloom) enough students to support 3 strands at each grade level. How are the zones figured out? We are only gaining a few streets and right now we only have 327 students.
- Not enough info?
- For all plans: with 3 strands and a cross-category room at Bloom, there would need to be more than 3 full time specialists (i.e. music or art would need an additional 2). Where would this other person teach? An extra room? On a cart?
- For all plans: How will specials look? Will you add another art room & music room? We are not a full 3 strand school and I see each class twice a week – If more classes are added would other

specialists be on a cart or would other rooms be added? Or would I only see each class once a week?

- After a final plan is decided will class sizes be at max or is there a percentage of max that is an ideal goal (90%)?

Plan B

- I think that Nelson & Kishwaukee students and teachers need a new building. If this happens, where will the new building be? If it is at the Nelson (or Kishwaukee) current site, where will the children go during building?
- Air conditioning?
- Nelson has to go. Don't care that much about other schools and their needs. Hillman will be the same regardless.
- Will Nashold bilingual go to Beyer and White Swan depending on their location?
- On page 4 (pie charts) shows 21% empty seats at Hillman. Where did the # come from? We are full, full, full!
- Are whole student populations from individual schools being moved together or split?
- Looking for details on individual schools renovations
- Nelson and Kishwaukee are in need of a new school. This I feel is the best plan.
- 2nd best
- This is the best of the three, but I think all the deferred maintenance should be done.
- I will access info on website.
- Nelson needs to be closed. Need specifics on building scores, will look online.
- It sounds like this plan balances new schools & deferred maintenance.
- Not sure – not enough information
- What will be done to White Swan in order to accommodate the new students? I really feel that all of the plans for the addition need to be released before we can make an educated decision. Do the property owners that have homes abutting to the school been approached about selling their homes? Do we want a school across the street from a strip mall and Wal-Mart?
- Plan B, where would Cherry Valley students go to schools? White Swan?
- White Swan renovations will be too expensive.
- White Swan is not a good building to support renovations.
- My kids and I really like White Swan, the location, the smaller size, the staff, etc. However, I don't think the building can withstand the amount and types of changes necessary to bring it up to par for technology and all.
- Location of new Kishwaukee/Nelson? Flood zone? The Nelson/Kishwaukee plan for new building is needed. This is a large school zone area. The current buildings do not meet needs. A new zone school should have adequate space for student learning, storage for staff. Concern about closure of Cherry Valley and White Swan merger. White Swan has roof storage and climate issues. Will enough renovations be made to provide a quality school?

- Early Childhood Centers are bad.
- Keep Cherry Valley open. The community of Cherry Valley is growing and should have a neighborhood school.
- We need to keep kids in their neighborhood schools. Parents/students are not going to want to drive halfway across town for their school. Attendance records are going to go down if students are not in their zone school.
- Early Childhood students benefit from going to elementary sites centers. I feel will not be a good choice for EC students!
- How can we consolidate 200 (+) students in a location that already has limited parking? The existing White Swan building is too old and outdated. It will cost more to bring it up to date than just building a new White Swan/Cherry Valley school. Also, I don't want neighbors of WS to be forced to leave their homes to make room for the addition.
- Renovating White Swan does not make sense. I agree with closing Nelson and Kishwaukee and building a new building for them. I do not recall having a meeting and/or forum to give input regarding closing Cherry Valley. It is sad that a community/neighborhood school is closing.
- This will not support our children's needs.
- You need to come to Cherry Valley (not downtown) and communicate with this community for buy-in. Please. Thank you.
- What is the plan for traffic control around White Swan School?
- West side closing 4 vs east side closing 4 but one new school on east side – not fair! Careful!
- Good, but plan 3 furthers the district better.
- I would like to see Bloom's student population become more economically diverse. So I would like to see our zone tweaked to reflect this so that we have a more balanced student population.
- Where will the kids go during the renovation/construction phase? Will they still be in the same building, or will all construction be completed over the summer?
- What happens if bonds cannot be paid? Does this fall on taxpayers (increased property taxes?)
- Is air conditioning being included?
- Please factor in support staff/resource/Sp Ed/ tutoring spaces when determining additions/renovations.
- What will happen with PE, art, music teachers? Will there be more than one school?
- Rolling Green (main building) needs windows replaced. They leak and the caulking is moldy.
- Will the room sizes be able to accommodate future dictated class sizes – i.e. if the state says the standard is 30 students/teacher today, will the room size accommodate 35 per teacher in 10 years if that is mandated?
- Will deferred maintenance issues be taken care of before additions or will buildings have great additions and still suffer from lack of upkeep? I.e.-doors that have 1 ½ in. gaps and waste heat/money should be repaired before anything new is added.
- Air conditioning?
- I would love some desks (new) that aren't completely broken.

- Bloom – currently needs to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Will we get air conditioning in the schools? Presenter was not well informed.
- What will the overall savings be, will there be any, and will it cost more?
- How will art, music, P.E. be affected? We need more P.E. especially, not less! (As this would apply to Bloom).
- For all plans: We are all still wondering if air conditioning/temperature control is being addressed. It affects the learning environment and we missed teaching/learning time with the school days getting released early.
- For all plans: Will air conditioning be added to each building? Or at least ceiling fans? Will specialists be split between buildings to make a full time equivalent? What happens to specialists/teachers in buildings that are closing?
- Can I have all the data about changes etc. in a spread sheet format instead of maps? A spread sheet comparing each building how it is used now to how it would be used under each plan.

Plan C

- What is the state of White Swan? Is it nice/new enough to stay open? I don't think we should abandon the building if it's still in good shape.
- The Cherry Valley area will be best served with a new school. That's the side of town that is growing.
- I would vote for this plan except I think funds need to be set aside for deferred maintenance.
- What happens with ELL programs (non Spanish)? What happens when Hillman keeps growing? ELL? (language other than Spanish) Where?
- Not at all
- Love this plan, more new schools the better. My only concern is busing. I don't love the idea of my first grader on the bus with 8th graders. I would prefer separate elementary & middle school buses.
- Remodeling very poor buildings doesn't make sense to me. I hope the school board is taking into account student safety and not just finances! Putting first graders and eighth graders on the same bus raises some concerns as a parent.
- Can't do a plan without doing deferred maintenance.
- We can't totally give up on deferred maintenance.
- Not sure – not enough information
- Where exactly would this school be built? It is my understanding that there are two possibilities. It is difficult to decide when the exact location is not known. However, a new building would make more sense instead of adding on to a 150 year old building in a high traffic area.
- Keep saying if White Swan & Cherry Valley close if there is enough money to put up a new school! If there is no money for the new school, where would my children go?
- I am concerned because according to the map on-line the new school is in my backyard (literally) off of Knegel Drive. The neighborhood was told during home construction that there would be a

park and the school was zoned nearer to Perryville. We were promised a "natural" background. Please consider what was promised to us....building a new school close to the neighborhood already established is not fair. Shift it closer to open and on Perryville.

- Move school closer to Perryville.
- We have a perfect parcel of land to build a quality elementary school instead of trying to fix a poor quality building like White Swan. I do agree that Early Childhood needs their own building.
- It would be nice to have all of my children in one new building, although it likely will not be as easily accessible to my home location as White Swan & Cherry Valley are. However, I think this is the best choice at this time.
- If a new school is built for Cherry Valley/White Swan, will all staff members be guaranteed their current position? How will staffing be considered with four strands and Thompson being split between two buildings?
- We need new schools on the east side too.
- Cherry Valley and White Swan need a new building. I have concerns about financing. Many of our district schools need much renovations/repair. Plan C is much more costly.
- With great property available for a new school, it's time! Cherry Valley & White Swan have a high percentage of zone kids attending. Building a new school in the area makes sense. Old buildings that are land-locked should not have additions. A school is needed in the southeast. Plan A puts aside \$12M for furniture but board vice president Jude Makulec said \$4M will work with repurposing furniture from closed buildings, so \$4M is enough. Build new!
- Donated land.
- New school on land donated by Dr. Swanson.
- Best scenario and most cost effective/efficient area for a new school in southeast Rockford is the donated land from Dr. Swanson at the southwest corner of Perryville and Harrison.
- The existing White Swan facility has been added to multiple times and is in disrepair. Adding on yet again would require property to be purchased, displacing neighborhood families. The population in this zone is growing and we have free land that was given to build a new school. We have the funds, so now is the time to build a new school for this attendance zone. It will be balanced with new construction for Kishwaukee & Nelson on west side.
- We want neighborhood schools! This would be the best of three evils. Invest in remodeling Cherry Valley and White Swan. Stop busing kids all over town. Keep neighborhood schools. Please keep Cherry Valley open.
- A new school for this area is necessary, not a band aid!
- Not an addition to White Swan.
- There needs to be discussion with this community on the future of this building here in the valley: not downtown Rockford.
- Plan C of closing White Swan/Cherry Valley schools is not necessary because what schools will be over there? None. Like I said parents (car rides) are not going to drive their EC kids on the other side of town.

- I strongly feel a school is needed for the Cherry Valley area. We do not want our children bussed to distant schools.
- I believe this is the only feasible option that gives students an up to date, adequate and modern facility with adequate parking.
- The southeast area is in great need and deserves a new building. Putting money into an old building makes no sense.
- There is no way Cherry Valley will be better unless C is adopted! We need to realize how many students we lose to private schools due to the past poor leadership. Now is the opportunity to increase RPS student population with a new school on the east side. Be smart – build!
- If all the plans cost the same, why would you not want to build a new school? A new school would be a win/win for everyone. White Swan has narrow hallways with pipes all along the ceiling, cracked walls, mold, probably some asbestos, no parking.
- We need a new school building to accommodate today's technology as it is used in the classroom. The idea of building an addition to White Swan is short sighted and not cost effective in the long term. In short: the idea of to either renovate or add to White Swan, to create a K-5 program is completely ridiculous.
- Cherry Valley and White Swan should have a new building. It does not make sense to add on to an old building. I am concerned about the promise for more support staff for larger buildings. I do not know that I believe that it will really happen. We can't keep making promises that we don't keep. We need to build trust to attract families to Rockford.
- Seems like it would make more sense in the long run even though it is more money now.
- This is the best choice for the Cherry Valley community! The White Swan building is too old and additions can't change what is already in place!
- I do not want to see Cherry Valley school demolished!
- New school must be in Swanson Park area or a war will probably take place!
- Don't forget that Cherry Valley is its own, actual community!
- I feel that this plan is the best to fulfill the needs of the future of our students in the Rockford School District. I hope and wish that these community input meetings continue to this process. As well as for the academic programs of this district.
- A new school makes more sense instead of adding on. For schools with renovations and additions, will there be upgrades made? You need to think of the staff in buildings that you are combining.
- I believe we need to show and prove that we are moving in the strongest and newest school district to bring family and house pricing to move in the right direction. We are losing students to private schools. If we bring more people to Rockford because of new and improved buildings, I feel those targeted areas will prosper.
- This school area district provides significant EAV (tax \$) to the entire school district. A new school would regenerate the Cherry Valley area and create new EAV, far more than a White Swan addition. This solution would create new Cherry Valley/White Swan supportive community. (Still, there is economic downward effect to the village center. Thank you.

- New Cherry Valley School on grounds already set aside for past many years. To work actively, openly with direct involvement of village of Cherry Valley as representative allow Cherry Valley residents a voting voice in the decision-making committees.
- Can the money saved from not demolition of Cherry Valley School be ear-marked for new Cherry Valley School?
- How would deferred maintenance be handled where there's less or no money?
- How will budgets for ongoing maintenance be funded to avoid another deferred list in 5-10 years?
- Based on the Facility Plan issued in 2012, the location of the new White Swan/Cherry Valley School is located on Harrison/Perryville – the southern edge of the property is located adjacent to a train track which will carry a high speed train – what will the safety precautions be?
- Would like to see conditions of schools listed.
- For schools to move up in technology development, I don't feel it makes sense to add on to a 150-year-old building. My neighborhood school has become Rockford Christian and I think a new school may prevent as many people from leaving the district which would mean more money for the district. More students = more money and you may help keep students in Rockford downtown as well. Also, why do you keep moving the gifted program to the outskirts of town when it is a program that serves the entire city?
- West side school 4 vs east side school 4, 2 new schools on east side! Not fair – lawsuit!!
- It is about time we build schools where people are rather than being P.C. Tearing down the schools is critical! Thank you for creating separate Montessori & gifted campuses!
- I totally agree to this plan since it's going to accomplish all of the community & school needs in the next 10 years. I'm a Spanish-speaking parent and I will strongly recommend to have bilingual staff at all levels to better understand & provide for parents and students that speak the two languages.
- Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Where will teachers at closed schools be placed? Will they have priority over other staff? Will this be addressed in the next contract negotiation?
- Will the renovations include air conditioning for all schools? Will the previous conditions that need repairs be taken care of before the new renovations & additions happen?
- Montessori (K-8) is very happy at their buildings. You will uproot them and the gifted children in all plans. Leave Montessori alone and move gifted program. That way only one group has to change locations. Montessori has very specific specifications that must be met; all would be quite costly.
- For all plans: Will this plan include proper auditorium areas/performance areas? Will proper sound systems be installed to maximize the students' performance experience?
- Currently students at Haskell only have music once each week for a 1-2 trimesters. Potentially a student there could have music 10-12 times a year instead of 72 times a year if they are seen twice a week.
- Air conditioning is needed in all buildings. Please do not grandfather students in these changes.

Other

- How will Hillman house more students while waiting for construction/addition?
- Haskell School high value allocations: full time nurse, full time academic support specialist, lit. coach, part time tutor, math coach
- Additions that would assist future success: full time school social worker, full time tutor monies, additional resource and intervention teacher
- Haskell School Resources: math coach, full time nurse, full time social worker, 2 academic support specialists, reading coach, reading tutor, math tutor
- Resources – Haskell: math coach, nurse (full time), reading coach behavior specialist, academic support specialist, social worker (full time), math tutor, reading tutor
- Why larger schools are better. Very cursory, what would it look like sound like, what kind of community can a large school build?
- More teachers, specialists & interventionist because of more kids – it does not change the ratio.
- If we have funding, I would like to see more personnel in the RTI format where they work with kids regularly, instead of just coaching teachers. All personnel should be on front line.
- An afterschool program would be great, we scored so much better when we had one.
- I would love to see the gifted program located in a central location. However, it makes sense for the elementary and middle school gifted programs located close to one another.
- I would be concerned to have my young elementary student ride the bus with a middle schooler.
- Overall, I'm very excited that RPS schools are being renovated!
- Please include the village, schools, and community in future meetings regarding additions and rebuilding.
- Why are we pushing the gifted program farther away, farther northwest? If children in our community will have to be bus for long periods of time, isn't there a better location?
- Comment: This meeting was valuable for distributing information to the public. Many questions were raised but not completely answered. We will be looking at the website for additional answers/information. We appreciate the effort to inform the public and obtain feedback.

A plan for Montessori/Gifted

- I like that Montessori pre-k through 8th grade would be in the same building. Thank you for that consideration. Here's how this could be even better for the long term of the Montessori and Gifted programs.
- Keep both programs at the N. Rockton Campus
- Haight is already a Montessori school. The rooms are in the Montessori design from previous monies spent.
- Marsh has no air conditioning and we were told that it would not have it in the future.
- Classrooms at Marsh are entirely too small making for costly renovations plus the added expense of building an addition to create enough classroom space and other needed rooms.

- Build an addition onto Haight to house Montessori pre-k through 8th grade. No refurbishment needed for the current classrooms as would be needed at Marsh.
- If an addition is needed at Marsh, why not build this at the current Montessori school which is filled with Montessori student generated projects: tile work throughout the building, rain forest, etc.?
- Possibly, Marsh is a school to close due to the small student population in that zone?
- Build an addition onto Marshall School to house gifted 1st-8th grade.
- Montessori 7/8 grade students could continue sharing electives with the gifted students in the Marshall building. It's just a quick walk. (At Boylan, we did this for years). This has been working beautifully the last two years. It is good for these students to be able to interact with peers from the other programs. It won't be feasible at Marsh within the confines of a shorter school day and a smaller middle school population to have elective choices as those students have in this building.
- Again, Montessori 7/8 graders can continue having many elective choices which will be a benefit for families making the choice to stay in the program at the 7/8 grade level. It is such a pleasure to see the Montessori students performing in band and orchestra, acting in the plays, and taking part in various other electives and sports. I think we will lose students at the 7/8 grade level who want more elective choices to prepare them for high school.
- Montessori middle school students could continue to be on the sports teams that they are currently enjoying with the gifted students.
- They can all participate in other after school activities that are age appropriate such as dances and other 7/8 grade club experiences.
- Special Education Resource services could be provided by the resource teachers at Montessori for the few gifted students that receive services as they are now being served by these teachers. No need for a teacher to drive across town wasting more time with travel.
- Wouldn't this lower transportation costs even more by eliminating busing students over to Marsh? If all of the Montessori and Gifted students were coming out to the same campus, they can share the same bus routes.
- Current plans A, B, and C appear to be many steps backwards for the Montessori program as far as a proper facility and in programming for the Montessori middle school.
- Having Montessori and Gifted at the N. Rockton campus is a win for both programs and for the Rockford community. Everyone will benefit from this, but mostly the children attending these programs will have more choices and better facilities. These two programs are Rockford's crown jewels when it comes to public education and both deserve to have the best as they continually have done their best for Rockford.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 9, 2014

Plan A

- I don't like this plan.
- Concerned about the northeast sector. There are a lot of young families in that area and still only one school. This is also an area high in private school enrollment.

- I totally understand the logic and the sense this makes from a business side. However, the northwest side seems to be underserved in all models – from a demographic standpoint there are as many kids in this sector as other – but in all models more children will be bused around town.
- Concerned about Renaissance moving further away from the economically disadvantaged southwest.

Plan B

- I think this is the best plan and a new school in the central city will be a huge improvement. This sends a message that we are investing in the city.
- Same comment as above

Plan C

- New schools will be a better investment for the future.
- Plan C may present an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to better schools by the new construction.
- We need new schools, is the best choice!
- This would be my 2nd choice, but it is also positive.
- My focus is mostly on the educational culture within the schools. Please keep a pulse on whether or not the approach is accomplishing the task of building a deep understanding of economical service. My observation is that there are a vast amount of students who can't display an understanding of how jobs are created/sustained.
- Let's raise student and teacher morale! If we're going to do it, let's get the most new facilities possible.
- Need to build new & consolidate old schools as much as you can. All three plans are solid but I prefer Plan C the best. Only suggestion is identify site of new Cherry Valley School before you approve final plan. Cherry Valley parents will want to know that!
- Make use of the "Voice" it goes to some 6,000/month – businesses could share with these employees. Need to communicate this over and over. Need to talk about how & where & what regarding the various programs – the folks need to be comfortable with the changes.
- Well thought out – going forward having more details on condition/property footprint for Kishwaukee, Nelson, White Swan and Cherry Valley would help with dialogue
- Same comment as above
- Having been through school annexation in a rural district, closing schools can be a painful and emotional issue. What really matters is meeting 21st Century needs of education, especially for needy students. Building two new schools seems to be the most progressive and advantageous approach.
- Would not like to see addition at White Swan with old building and small lot.
- Strongly agree with replacement of Kishwaukee and Nelson. Only misgiving is no additional money for deferred maintenance.

- I favor new construction over renovation.
- This plan is the most exciting and positive plan for our school district. It is also the best plan from a taxpayer's standpoint.
- Cherry Valley is too large for one school.
- I believe Plan C is better for the long term.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 12, 2014

Plan A

- No answers about how to avoid segregation of bilingual community. Will more of the district really go to more of a dual-language model with bilingualism as enrichment rather than a hindrance to be overcome? Need better climate control in all schools. Students are melting! Continuity of K-8 at Barbour. If not, then how can we truly show full progress?
- With any of the plans how will you avoid isolating/segregating minorities in one particular area?
- A big concern is closing of special education programs for students with ED, BD, autism and so on. The students were moved from URE to a more restricted environment because of decisions based on behaviors, IEP's and BIP's. I am concerned about the level of support that will be given to these students and staff if their programs or buildings close.
- New schools need to be built to replace some buildings.
- Schools need to close so other school can be added onto and renovated.
- Where is data used to create plans? Disagree with closing West View, use as a new school location? Lots of land and solid community!
- What was the criteria for West View being closed over Welsh? Welsh is an older, 2-story building.
- When closing schools, you also must take into consideration school performance, parent involvement, what about open seats? We are constantly full. West View could easily be turned into a three tier school. Just to ask – what happens to all of the support staff? Secretaries, janitors, cafeteria crew, etc. Where are these jobs going to go?
- From what school year do figures in pie graphs come from? How can you obtain decision, such as teacher retention or teacher proficiency?
- I don't really think any of the schools need to be closed. Why not take all the money they would use to destroy all the schools and use it for renovation of the current schools. Why can't you build on to the side of west on the concrete?
- The closing of West View is a great loss. This school is the best school I have ever taught in. I have taught at two private schools, Harlem and other RPS schools. There are so many families that purchased their homes in this area especially for West View. This is the most cohesive site-based school I have ever been in. Other schools have come to observe us. What will happen to site-based? Also, West View is handicapped accessible. There is even a handicapped accessible playground. This school has plenty of space to add on. Conklin is not in a safe area.
- Too much information to digest in a short time.

- I think West View has more ground space and area for additions/renovations than some other schools in the area, so I don't understand why it is being closed in all three plans. I feel as a parent here that no plan applies to my children.
- Why is West View closing when it can easily be handicapped accessible? Welsh would need elevators to allow access for all students.
- The school is well-maintained, the staff is amazing. I will not send my child to a school in a war zone, Conklin neighborhood is unsafe!
- Why was West View chosen to close over an older two-story school, Welsh?
- A few years ago the district went to neighborhood schools to save on busing cost – are the children going to be able to walk to their new school?
- In all three plans Haskell stays: Why? They have two strands per grade. They do not follow a year-round-school philosophy. "No intersessions". It is only an adjusted calendar. If our district is requiring all schools to be 3-4 strands – why are they excluded?
- I would like a spreadsheet that measured how much is spent per student at each school & where the population growth is. Why is our school district spending so much on sports and not academics? The schools need upgrading not our sports teams.
- I don't agree with any of the plans. Plan D – close Welsh and renovate and add to West View.
- You're not thinking about the children, I feel there is no reason to do this at this time. No reason.
- How can the district continue to expect community support when the buildings renovated by volunteers (Sharefest) continue to be closed?
- The presentation was very poor.
- I think combining West View and Welsh would be more cost effective than adding on to Conklin again. Use West View: it's a newer building and handicap accessible. There is room to add two more strands.

Plan B

- Barbour – need bigger gym.
- Why isn't there a school on the upper northeast side? Will that be considered? There are a lot of families in this area and are traveling miles to get to their school.
- Schools need to be rebuilt, but I don't feel like I can make an informed choice between Plan B and Plan C.
- Schools need to be rebuilt – not sure of the shape of White Swan/Cherry Valley, but definitely Kishwaukee/Nelson need to be taken down.
- We should be considered for a remodel. Adding a third tier onto the east side of the building would be very beneficial. This school has a high parent involvement as well as teacher involvement. Expanding that would be a positive to our community. The front of this building has more than enough space to expand for parking.
- Why take children out of the school they have gone to all their school years and have to go somewhere new and learn the halls? Why would I want to send my child to a school where the

statics make people put their children into private schools and you won't have any schools in your district?

- Do the renovations include elevators at multi-story schools?
- Will the libraries be expanded and enlarged at these new locations?
- Why are the new schools on the east side?
- Nelson and Kishwaukee are in need of a nice facility. I do agree with that portion of the plan.
- What about busing and fuel prices?
- There is a terrible lack of info and transparency on which schools were chosen and why. It should be the schools with the most empty spots that should be closed. This is the second time in five years this school has been chosen without any transparency as to why each school is chosen. The ages are not even listed in our brochure.
- I agree the schools should be renovated, but I'm confused as to the reasons behind their choices.
- Has building climate, not just physical, but staff/community climate been considered in determining building closures?
- The east side benefited more from the plan.

Plan C

- I know some east-side schools don't like having bilingual students because they may not do as well on standard tests, but the affluent PTO's on the east side offer our bilingual students better opportunities. Do not segregate and move bilingual to their neighborhood area schools.
- Thank you.
- My only concern is, are schools clustered K-2 and 3-5 more educationally sound than K-5? Maturation level, educational commonality?
- There is a big concern about class size as well. Students do best when a teacher is able to provide them with individualized attention in addition to the whole class. I am concerned about the impact of pushed to capacity or over capacity will have on student learning.
- I think the more new facilities we can build the better. Security and technology needs will always be changing, and that will put us in a place to keep up with the trends.
- New schools are needed as long as schools are built before schools shut down. Renovations are up to date – finished. Still need a little more information to really feel confident.
- No west side schools?
- Unless a person has visited each school and had a chance to view the condition of each school, I don't know how you can possibly ask if we have enough information. A dot on a map doesn't inform me which schools should be closed.
- Why are there no new schools on the west side? Closing them doesn't seem to bother you. Both sides have the same number of schools being closed. If we are the "run down" side, why are we not getting new buildings to encourage growth?
- Why try and put 500 students in one school? It is so stupid. You think there are some problems in high school, now you are going to have all these young children in one school, it's stupid. I believe

that you put more kids in one classroom the teachers will have a harder time keeping the kids' attention.

- I believe new schools are a positive asset to the students and community. It would really allow for 21st century learning environment. Thanks for working toward that for our district.
- Why are the new schools being built on the east side?
- New schools are assets to the district. As schools close and merge, please consider moving staff and students together.
- I feel no new schools should be built when we have so many schools that can be fixed up in the area. I think it is a waste.
- Why spend over \$3 million to demolish West View when it could be made into a rec center with a city partnership?
- Kishwaukee and Nelson do need to close. Those two are dirty and run down!
- This plan may work best but with four closings on the west side, we need a new elementary school as well. It may be necessary to close some schools, but as usual the Board is handing down ultimatums without looking at factors such as school cohesiveness (how faculty, staff, students and parents work together) or parent choice. If this plan goes through, there are two elementary schools close to my house, but I will not be able to pick – but it is about neighborhood schools and choice?!
- Montessori has one of the biggest vacancies on the list but is not even on the list for possible closings, nor will it be in my neighborhood range even though it is not much farther than the schools on the west side. And there are an abundance of elementary schools in that area.
- Again, please place spreadsheets with the determining factors for closing schools on the rps205 website as well as census data about the number of students/area so that we can better see the school Board's reasoning. Come to embrace the necessary changes with a better understanding of our elected officials. I like my school but it is tiresome to constantly worry whether it will be open for my children or whether they will have to switch schools every couple of years.
- What is the criteria for closing West View over Welsh? Welsh, older building, smaller classroom, three floors, currently two strands. West View plenty of land to renovate; only 12% gross seats available. We can fill this school with an addition, one floor.
- West View has lots of land. Why not add on to our building, rather than close it? It would be nice to work in a renovated school with air conditioning and no steps.
- New construction will take time – how much will the plans change as this happens?
- To tear down existing building and build new is ridiculous.

Other

- Although your efforts and initiative to make our schools the best is appreciated, I feel it will always be hard to accept your proposals because the administration of RPS 205 was not honest with their plans when pushing for the tax vote of "yes." You hung signs in our building showing what our school would look like knowing that there was a great chance the school would be flattened!

- Can we have numbers on the costs to fix up all schools, since you said criteria was condition, size and utilization?
- Speaking of size and utilization, what are the sizes of Conklin, Walker, Welsh and West View in relation to each other and what school year are the pie charts in the booklet that was presented from?
- Why are most of the meetings (all but 4) at 2:30 pm or 3:45 pm when parents work?
- Why was a referendum pushed to close schools?? That was never an option that was presented when voting for the referendum was pushed!
- I would like exact reasons for closure of West View vs. Welsh?
- Why is Carlson zone extending west of the river? And conveniently including part of the more affluent Rockford Edgewater neighborhood? Are you concerned about Walker's students being split between Ellis, Carlson and Welsh?
- Will more art and music rooms also be added to accommodate twice the students in most new plans?
- What were the guiding principles for new zone maps?
- If this happens, when will our kids be forced to move schools?
- Can entire staff of West View move to Conklin? If we close, so the kids that move are most comfortable?
- Class-sizes: How will class sizes be impacted? 28 kindergarteners are too much? Those 28 are now moving to first...
- Early Childhood: We like having our Early Childhood kids in our schools so the transition to Kindergarten is easier for them. They know the staff, the building, expectations, etc.
- Site-based: How could site-based continue to a new building – seems like it would inevitably be phased-out.
- Staff-Principal: We love our staff and our principal, and we want to stay together. I don't think I could work for anyone else!
- I enjoy having my children in a very safe school. Everyone knows who is supposed to be here and not. There are no armed officers for my children to see when they walk in. Every teacher here has been here for years, they all give so much more than necessary to these children. What happened to the whole "neighborhood" school issues we had a while back? We have three buses here for our neighborhood. We will have even more busing to schools with all of these plans. Unfortunately, even if this school is closed, we are not given any options for our children. We must put them in a lower-functioning school with less-qualified teachers, less parent involvement, in a worse part of town where there has to be an armed officer (or two) to greet the children every morning. I understand that teachers will all have their jobs. Are they all moving to the same school with the students for continuity or are they going to be spread as well? How many will be forced into early retirement? Before closing any schools, you need to make sure that it will be a positive change for those involved. I am hoping that that is your goal, anyway. I can't speak much for too many other

schools, but you have 350+ students that you will be creating a very negative learning environment for.

- Before I purchased my house on this side of town I looked at all the schools on where to put my child. I purchased a house right across the street so my child could go to this school, because they were the better of the schools. Now I'm going to sell my house if this happens, also I will be putting my child in a private school. This is just stupid trying to put so many students in one school. There are a lot of kids that live in the area, and now you want the kids to walk farther with creeps out there that could take someone's child without them knowing. I think the idea is very bad. Why West View? Why not take the other schools that you never hear of. Now you say the school will not be empty? I don't like the idea, and I think the others are even worse. What happened to rebuild Rockford? This is not helping the city at all. My daughter has learned so much from this school, she was not of age yet to come to school and she wanted to come so bad. Why can't you build onto the side of West View where the concrete is? I can walk into the school and everybody knows you and knows that you belong there.
- Please make sure that all district classrooms (old and additions) are equal in educational quality (ie. supplies, environment, technology etc.)
- It was hard to comment on each plan; they are identical in the eyes of West View. We need new schools and renovations, so with that I agree. I just am not sure that the Conklin, West View, Welsh, Walker area look to make sense.
- Please help keep staff with the kids/families they work with. I have been with some of my families for 7+ years. I would hate to lose those personal connections because older kids go to a new school with unfamiliar staff. Keeping us together would be best for kids and community relations.
- I don't like any!
- It appears more schools on the west side are being closed than east side schools. How about a new school replacing West View and Walker? Walker has a high percentage of children from the neighborhood attending it. Some of the other schools may be serving their neighborhoods. However, please consider how many neighborhood children start and finish in their neighborhood school. Some of our schools have a very mobile population.
- Why was Welsh chosen over West View? West View is a one floor newer school with room to add on another wing off of room 1. Welsh needs an elevator and a whole separate addition, as well as being much older?
- What data was used to determine 500+ students in a building is optimal for the academic and emotional well-being of the children?
- Early Childhood as a part of the elementary building allows multiple members of a family to go to school together.
- How was West View, as a site-based school, factored into which schools are being closed? Site-based allows for a cohesive staff which in turn positively impacts student learning.
- Why is it an option to renovate Conklin and not West View? Why aren't schools in the core neighborhoods not being considered for a clustered impact to preserve schools in established

neighborhoods? Example, keep West View open. If West View cannot be preserved as a neighborhood school, who will address preserving (assets) and monitor community park plan?

- Examine the inner core schools for expansion – including west of river Conklin, Welsh, Walker and West View.
- Not sure putting all our efforts into outlying schools in “detached” areas of community is the best use of our resources and could be concern for property owners in West View School area.
- Personally, I feel that before coming up with the plans, we should have had meetings in all the schools and gotten feedback so that we the parents and staff would have had more of an influence and impact on the creation of the plans. I have not been to any of the other schools and would have liked to have more visuals on why certain schools were targeted. I feel like the plans are too similar to have it really make a difference which one I choose.
- Why was Welsh, an older three-story building, chosen over a younger single story, West View, to be renovated and added on to?
- Transportation costs going through the roof? Yes or no?
- How will class size be impacted with mega-schools?
- Site-based schools – West View needs to be kept intact no matter where we go.
- Why is Welsh, an older school, being kept open and West View is the one chosen to be closed? Why can't we add on and update West View and close Welsh? Does Welsh have big enough classrooms to accommodate 26-30 third, fourth and fifth graders? It's multi-level not handicapped accessible.
- Class size needs to be kept in mind. If our ultimate goal is educating students and student achievement, then showing the maximum number of students in classrooms is not the best learning environment.
- Kindergarten numbers need to be looked at too! 28 kinders are not getting the most out of their learning!
- I love West View School. It's convenient. Not in real bad repair. The best plan for me is to keep West View open. They can walk to school and save on insurance and busing. Be familiar with school, teaches and class mates.
- There is research out there that supports small schools too!

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 13, 2014

Plan A

- How will Riverdahl be able to accommodate all the students of Riverdahl and Nashold?
- I like them all equally; they all seem like good, solid plans.
- If Nelson remains open, will air-conditioning be put in every classroom? Would we get a new gym or cafeteria?
- Out with old and in with the new. Nelson is in horrible shape, and if you are ever here on a hot day the building is not a good learning environment.
- Don't really like any of the three choices!

- I hate to see schools close. Montessori seems better served to be located at a school like Carlson that is a pod design rather than going to Marsh that would have to be completely redesigned. Please think about the fact that Carlson could be added to just as Marsh, and it already has a Montessori type of layout.
- Can students go to their future zone if their building is closing?
- If the Montessori program moves to Marsh and the Montessori programs is K-8, does the building plan to include two music rooms – one for elementary and one for middle school choral and instrumental? What happens to all of the materials/instruments from the Marsh and Montessori music rooms?
- As bilingual programs are moved, materials must be supplied to support our program. I'm also referring to library books and book room materials.
- Would like to see the Montessori program consider moving to Carlson – pod rooms. Also I see segregation again – making Gifted and Montessori grow and lower income stay in their “neighborhoods.”
- In each plan there are some stranded bilingual buildings. 1. What about those PLC's. 2. What about special education. 3. RTI 4. What about their library, guided reading books (resources).
- If moving Montessori to Marsh would require an addition, why not just make an addition to Montessori where they are at.
- Students benefit from being exposed to students from different backgrounds including bilingual students, i.e. English/monolingual interacting with each other.
- Was Carlson considered as a possible facility for the Montessori program? It is my understanding that Montessori requires the open pod learning model which Carlson has. Why not move Montessori to Carlson and make Marsh the neighborhood zone school?
- Need more data.
- Plan A's two flaws are: 1. No new schools! We have too many old buildings that need more than new windows. Long term, other 50+ year-old buildings are being used longer than they were built to last. 12 million in furniture which depreciates the minute it is purchased. This 8 million should be spent building a new state of the art property.
- I strongly disagree with all three plans. As a para and someone with a Master's in Education, I think that large schools are a large mistake for the whole welfare and development of the child. I understand the financial problem, but the wellness of a student is more important. I disagree with moving the autism program from Thompson, and that needs to be acknowledged. Thompson is a successful school and should not be closed. As a member of this community I wish we were given more options (5-8) instead of having Thompson close. In all three options I think the community needs more options and time to make such a huge decision.
- Thank you for your time and effort.
- Will any of these plans reduce home owners 51% tax burden? That tax burden keeps business and new citizens from choosing Rockford to live work and play.

Plan B

- Start with one new school. Another new building can always be built after 10 years, if needed. Please be considerate of closing buildings, the student adjustment and staff adjustment. Change is needed, but change is hard. Please provide extra staff and smaller class sizes for high-poverty schools. Kindergarten should have smaller class sizes, not 28.
- What will happen with the Nelson building? Could it be considered a historical landmark? Would facilities be updated (air-conditioning) during the transition? Some classrooms are easily +95 degrees when it's hot out, very unsafe, window units would be great. Why does Ellis need renovations?
- My concern with this plan is location of this new building, when we are looking at Nelson currently being in a flood zone.
- Will students be grandfathered in with zone changes?
- Our students at Marsh are a community. Please consider if you make us leave Marsh that our students and teachers should be kept together. Have you considered moving the mono-lingual, half of Marsh, to Spring Creek where half of its population is also being moved (bilingual). Also consider keeping fifth graders together for 2015-2016.
- Why considering buildings first rather than programs?
- In each plan could the staff at Marsh move together?
- Carlson is a pod school to accommodate Montessori.
- Making a plan based on money is not best for students.
- Why build it here? Need more data, need more information. You are closing schools that have a lot of students in their zone.
- In Plan B you would compromise between Plan A and Plan C. Deferred maintenance of 11 million. We have too many buildings 50 years old or older.

Plan C

- Will teachers be involved with classroom design? I feel they should have more input since they are in the classes daily and are the experts.
- It's too early to pick a plan – too many unknowns. As you go forward, please involve community people from the schools affected.
- I do not like this program because it leaves \$0 for maintenance or new furniture for the new 21st century learning.
- My main concerns are as follows: We attend Marsh and live less than half block away. If we have to attend Carlson, this defeats the purpose of neighborhood schools...why wouldn't we attend Spring Creek, Brookview, etc.? Also, the larger elementary schools put those youngsters in a junior high setting.
- I think new buildings are needed. What about air conditioning?

- Marsh is a fully integrated school. A shame to close up such a successful school and program. Also should be mindful of the opinion in the community that the "Gifted" program always gets first choice and is at the top of the heap.
- RPS 205 needs new buildings and updates. Chipping paint, moldy carpet, hot classrooms is embarrassing to the community.
- How are programs like bilingual going to be supported in each building?
- Making sure Marsh monolingual classes stay together at each grade level. Kids have been together since Kindergarten.
- We need new buildings!
- How could RPS 205 expand Montessori without having a building big enough for the program?
- I do not agree with building new schools (two) on this side of town. You're opening yourself to another lawsuit. Revisit this decision.
- Plan C would build two new schools! Close more functionally obsolescent schools, saving long term expenses for heating and cooling roofs and outdated electric. Closing more obsolescent schools will save costs long term if done properly. In closing, of the three plans, C is the best. The district will not make everyone happy. Long term what we should be looking at is what is best for the future, not just our own special interests.
- Would like to see a new Cherry Valley/White Swan School. Would not like White Swan built on to. It's an old school that has been added on to five times and it is land locked.

Other

- Thanks for the meeting. Very informative.
- You should renovate a beautiful school like Kishwaukee!

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 14, 2014

Plan A

- Why is Nashold chosen for early childhood when Riverdahl is currently equipped (using government early childhood funds/my tax dollar) for early childhood classes? Not only would a tremendous amount of renovation be needed to the bathrooms, playgrounds and gym, the cafeteria is down a flight of stairs. It would be very difficult to get breakfast and lunch to the classrooms, unless you 1. Move the cafeteria, 2. Put in an elevator, 3. Make classroom paras walk outside with the food. This plan needs to be revised. Did anyone actually check out Nashold before making these plans? Plus the data in your booklet is misleading.
- I think the meetings should have all been in the evenings so that more people were available to attend, and I think the taskforce should all be in attendance to answer questions. People want answers quickly – not everyone can get online!
- Although the pamphlet was helpful, there are too many unknowns with each plan to make a well-informed decision.

- I do not think bigger schools are best for our students. I prefer smaller, neighborhood schools. I am concerned that empty schools will be sold to charters and we will lose more students to them.
- The structure of this form makes it difficult to respond. My concern is you will not gather the information you were seeking. The handout booklet or informational materials are very useful and the format makes it easy to review the rationale, data and principles that the plans reflect. The data makes it clear that schools need to be closed. I would ask that the Board members honor their promise to listen to the neighborhood residents of the schools being closed – try to follow through on what school their children will attend – Walker neighborhood has made it clear they prefer Bloom over Carlson and West View wants Welsh instead of Conklin. I believe this accommodation in student assignment will give credibility to your statement that you need community input.
- There needs to be a plan D, having gone to two sessions, here is my input: West View should not go to Conklin – Welsh is a better socio-economic match – the portion of Walker going to Carlson makes no sense – send those students to Bloom – I live in Walker and am opposed to busing my children thru Harlem to get to my neighborhood school. Please consider why is the Board targeting the northwest part of Rockford more than the other three areas? The economy is bad but will only get worse in the northwest with these plans.

Plan B

- First of all I don't think you were able to get parent feedback due to meetings at 2:30 – most of our parents work until 5:00. Secondly, all three plans affect Nashold the same, so I choose B for the fact of building one new school versus two. Lastly, my big concern is why would you make Nashold early childhood when Riverdahl already had an entire wing constructed about 20 years ago that was built for Pre-K. Also since that time many modifications have been made to make it Pre-K accessible and up to state code/standards. Nashold would need a lot of modifications in order to house Pre-K. Has anyone walked through and compared the two buildings?
- A new school in midtown might help revitalize the neighborhood; of the three plans this seems the most reasonable; I have concerns that there will be many jobs lost with school closings.
- You can build/improve any building, but you must meet the needs – all needs of the children – by providing them with quality teachers, social workers and mental health professionals. Not by the number of students only, but by the socioeconomic areas, incarcerated parents, foster care, addicts in the home – the need not just the numbers.
- I have concerns about closing Walker because it is a school that anchors a changing neighborhood. In all cases, children should be assigned to closest school to their address. How about Walker merging with Bloom if building needs to close. I am against adding two new schools because the pot of money would not be great enough to really do appropriate renovations in the targeted schools. If schools/programs are moving, money must be available to do what needs to be done in each building.

Plan C

- \$0 in the budget for deferred maintenance is not acceptable; if growth occurs in this area, I think a new school should be built then.
- We need to be able to improve by providing deferred maintenance.
- Build new schools but focus needs to be on the education of students.
- Additions to older buildings will not prolong the eventual closing of the school due to its age. Therefore, I like this plan. My concern is that there hasn't (apparently) been consideration for increased classrooms, either through community growth or reduced class sizes.
- If the Board is closing and demolishing schools, why are they adding to buildings and proposing to build new schools?

Other

- I worry a little about money following kids for those of us that are still going to be a smaller school. Support staff (such as behavior specialist, math coach, literacy leader and academic achievement specialist) is vital to the growth of our students. We were very fortunate this year with our level of support, and our school is shifting because of it – not only in academics but in terms of a positive atmosphere, too. Thank you for your support.
- Large elementary schools should have full time specialist in: reading, music, art, library, school nurse, counselor, (assistant principal based on student numbers). I am concerned that an elementary school can be too big – when dealing with so many children they become a number rather than an individualized loved student. I feel like I don't have enough information to choose A, B, C plan. As a former high school English teacher, I believe that every school (elementary level) needs reading tutors for one-on-one work to give needed time to bring students up (not expectations of grade level but continued improvement). By the time students reach high school, it is too late. I understand special needs students may always need extra reading help. I am really concerned about numbers, concerned that numbers are being treated as more important than individual students. Class sizes may be too large, pay attention to lowering class size.
- Why was a disproportionate amount of money given to high schools rather than elementary?
- I do think the students in Kishwaukee/Nelson area deserve a 21st century learning environment that would result with a new school. This would be a great addition to the neighborhood.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 15, 2014

Plan A

- I think it's an excellent idea to bring the gifted students in grades 1-8 back to the same campus. It makes more sense because of the resources that can be utilized by all grades and for transportation purposes.
- Don't close Thompson.

- None of these plans seem viable because all of these propose closing Thompson School.
- Putting Thompson with Gregory is going to be like a high school for small children, and my “neighborhood” will have no “neighborhood school.” That is unhealthy for children. Leave Thompson alone.
- Decisions were made without enough input from the community.
- When you come out to site meetings it would be very wise to take notes. Parents/staff/community members input is important and should be noteworthy. We all should be involved in the decision making process – I’m not so sure that is truly happening. Within the past few years, the district came out to our building and left a large foam board laying out plans to make improvements to our school. Now there are even newer plans taking away everything. Makes me wonder if 2-3 years from now a newer plan will arise. Quit spending our dollars on outside consulting firms and do what’s really in the best interest of our children! As a taxpayer and teacher, I’m saddened by the fact that our voices haven’t been heard. Instead an outside source is deciding what’s not in the best interest of our children.
- Please review – start conservatively with plan A or B! Don’t close Cherry Valley or Walker schools.
- Where is the growing 3-11 year-old student population in their city? Why does Haskell School need to be year-round? Could it be better used for regular year students? Too many closings on west side – save Walker and use Haskell.
- Prefer having some new buildings.
- This one is simply a patch job.
- I like that this plan allows more money toward deferred fixes in existing schools.
- Did not like that there was no plan for new schools.
- Looks like we’d get more upgrades and renovations with this plan.

Plan B

- We were invited to Focus Groups held at the district offices in October and November, 2013. There was no mention of any context of schools closings or consolidations in these visioning meetings. I feel tricked and uninformed.
- You cannot move the autism kids. How sad.
- Would like to see Nelson and Kishwaukee consolidated! New building. Still does not address needs on west side! Conklin School is too close to low income apartments and their traffic!
- I am a cafeteria manager. I am concerned about Conklin taking on that many more students for breakfast and lunch. New cafeterias are beautiful, but too small. No restrooms, no storage areas for dry product. Putting four strands of kinders together would slow the line too much. The last class would not even have time to eat! The air conditioning in the new café/kitchen rarely puts cool air in. We actually have warm air pumped in on extremely hot days. I love the big picture, more resources are wonderful! Support staff – great! Just concerned how we would accommodate this many students at lunch and breakfast. I think ceiling fans would help with moving some of

this air. We also need the cafeteria doors (both) accessible by our badges, and we have a ramp for deliveries, but the curb is not handicap accessible.

- I liked this plan because it seemed that the money was best distributed.
- Good presentation – seems like a well thought-out plan. I hope West Middle School gets a good renovation! Electric and temperature control.
- Concern about child care. When things changed last time, community centers lost kids. People lost babysitters and people had to hunt for them at the last minute. I would hope that if the sitters are transporting the children to and from, the parent needs would also be considered. Also, start and stop times if you're making any (4) Early Education Centers. Can't be at two schools on time. Transportation is not perfect – especially with younger children.
- Walker should be repurposed as a useful help to the neighbors.
- I believe that this plan will be best because it still leaves a significant amount of funds available for deferred maintenance and no residential property be purchased and demolished for new buildings.
- Who will decide how the \$12 million for furniture/equipment is spent? How much will go toward technology and air conditioning? What will be done with current furniture/equipment? This seems helpful because it allows for the maximum amount of improvements for the maximum number schools.
- Gym time, music and art and lunch need to be considered and not decreased. Additional school hours should be considered – i.e. one additional hour.

Plan C

- This plan stinks as well!
- How can I continue to defend RPS?
- District 205 needs to be more transparent. I feel these plans are based on money, not the best interest for our children.
- Several issues were brought to light that may not have been addressed prior to, in all three plans. I feel that if a new school is built in Cherry Valley and Thompson must close, they should be consolidated with Cherry Valley/White Swan. That is the neighborhood most of these kids are in. That would be the best way to ensure the zones remain "neighborhood schools." I was a student during the initial school closings in the 1980's. I understand why it has to be done; I just feel that the goal is to force people to move further into Rockford proper. I don't feel comfortable with that. Gradually it feels like this radius of Rockford will lose all schools.
- I would love to see two new schools – I would hope the budget will bear it out in loss of property values and jobs over next 10 years! I think Rockford city proper needs the two schools, not Cherry Valley.
- Build Early Education building at/near Nashold. Delete additions at three or four following schools: Hillman, Beyer, Riverdahl and Whitehead. Summary: Less additions/more new construction
- If you're going to do it, just go all in. A majority of meetings in the middle of the day?! I had to take off time from work to be an informed parent.

- New schools – yes!
- Did not like no money put aside for maintenance.
- New schools in place of those four would be great for accessibility needs for our special education students. Cost of three/four of those buildings being closed and updates would be too great.
- I do not want Cherry Valley and White Swan closed!
- I would like to see more new schools built instead of adding on to old schools even if it means not all schools being updated at this time. Smaller schools, smaller class size should be given to schools that have lower scores and/or higher discipline issues.
- This would be the nicest, but what about all the kids who are being bused in to schools. The last lawsuit was awful. Please be considerate of all the grandparents who are stepping up to get children to and from school.
- I know this is a hard decision/venue to decide for you. I am glad this school district is planning on being a good steward for those areas that are going to green space; make parks and garden sharing. I hope you think of how long of a bus ride some of these children may have.
- If Kishwaukee and Nelson close, where is the new school going to be built? If near Nelson, is there room for school?
- Why isn't Marsh the school for Walker; it is more central than Carlson. Put Montessori at Carlson.

Other

- Back in 1989 West High School was closed. The District had four meetings for parents to give their input and we did not want the school closed, but the District closed it anyway. You should have never closed it. What good does it do to give your input when you have already made the decision?
- Would like to see new schools, but those that expand need to be cohesive and not just a band-aide construction. The whole school needs to be renovated.
- How will before and after-school child care and transportation to/from school be affected?
- Please put effort to temperature control. Air conditioning/heat improves learning environment.
- Thank you all for your efforts toward fiscal responsibility and taking the time to create a 10-year plan. I've been very impressed by your efforts. It is a positive (huge) asset for our community and can be a key part to helping Rockford "come back." Our city has a lot to offer and has struggled for too long. Improving our schools (especially in a fiscally responsible way) is huge!
Thank you!

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 19, 2014

Plan A

- I like this plan the best because I teach in the self-contained ED program at Welsh. In the other plans, the ED program is split between Welsh and Hillman. The problem with this is that we would not be able to support each other as well. We are always helping each other in a crisis. It also helps for our kids to know the other teachers as they move up.

- The group you sent to Thompson had no interest in our ideas. They took no notes and danced around all questions.
- Thompson staff – will they move together? We feel we were lied to about schools/improvements. Why weren't we told closings were an option?
- Why are there no schools on the upper east side? Why are no Early Childhood Centers planned for the upper east side?
- When will the timeline be decided? Is there a priority as to which schools will close/move first?
- Based on the graphics for Rolling Green, we are not using our square footage appropriately. Special Education mandates the maximum class sizes for low incidents classrooms such as real and hard of hearing classrooms. This must be considered when allocations and usage is determined.
- Where would Early Childhood students go? Would that make Rolling Green candidate to close later? Chart is not correct for how many square feet per student because of certain programs.
- I am not a parent in this district but I'm not sure if closing schools and moving kids all over is the answer. I see the underutilized schools, but then my concern shifts to overcrowding at schools.
- Hoping students will not be crowded and crammed in classrooms when closing schools and not building any new buildings. I would like to see all Early Childhood students placed into zone buildings. I have a student being bussed from Rock Cut area to Summerdale.
- Fairview Early Childhood is the EC Center for the north east quadrant. This is concerning for families up around Illinois Route 173. We don't transport most students now because of cost; you just reduced the amount the district is paying in transportation, so now you think at-risk families will drive 25 minutes to get their kids to school? No, put the money you save on your 24 bus routes into Early Childhood transportation.
- Love the idea of EC centers. Hope this will be consistent – no more movement. Will EC still have classes at Circles of Learning and Trinity?
- Why is gifted not put where they can save transportation costs? No "neighborhood" gifted school? Did the district look at where the gifted students live?
- How will the deferred maintenance plans be communicated?
- Concerns regarding "zoning" or placement of EC students to be fairly distributed.
- Utilize as many schools as we can. Question: I would like to see deferred maintenance amounts and how it changes depending on schools closing. How much would be saved as far as deferred maintenance with the different schools closing?
- How do you determine if you will demolish closed buildings? Could have put school grading list in booklet. Should have sent booklet homes to better educate parents.
- When a school says "x" strands LI, is that "x" strands plus an LI strand?

Plan B

- Closing nine schools is not an option! Consider the special needs students. Change is very difficult.
- Will the amount of staff needed decrease with all of the movement and closures?

- Why no new school on far northeast side? Cheaper to bus? What about gifted being more centrally located?
- A new school would be nice where buildings do not have enough electricity/outlets for technology. Buildings falling apart, moldy, etc.
- A new school would be nice for that area. With Dennis closing, are we continuing our collaboration with Head Start? At Lathrop?
- Utilizing the current schools as much as we can while removing the few high maintenance schools.
- Where will the new building be built? Will all closed buildings be demolished? If not, how will they be chosen?

Plan C

- I feel the district needs the new schools!
- Go ahead and build some better, cost-efficient schools.
- We support plan C over plans A and B because it calls for a new updated and combined school in our area. However, we were very unhappy to see the gifted program moved to the far northwest corner of the city. As parents of a child in the gifted program coming from Cherry Valley, we feel that it would be much more beneficial to move families if it could be more centrally located.
- What good do these meetings do when you don't care what we think anyway? School closings are painful. Big mistakes were made in the past. Be sure to be careful. After the "People Who Care" lawsuit, we don't need a repeat and we will be heard eventually.
- Put addition at Thompson. Smaller class sizes work better.
- I am interested in a timeline for movement of students and programs.
- I feel that we are doing a disservice to the students on the north east side of town by not adding a school there.
- Why are they closing Dennis again? What will happen to the Head Start program classrooms?
- Build gifted school central Rockford. Work on upgrading schools.
- It is critical to get a new elementary building for the White Swan/Cherry Valley population. If this option is not addressed now, it will surely haunt the district for years to come!
- You touched on bilingual, gifted, Montessori, briefly on Special Education, what about the special needs programs? Will all schools be special needs accessible? Handicap assessable is not always handicap usable! Will current programs stay where they are?
- Building two new schools is expensive.
- Where will the new buildings be built? Will all closed buildings be demolished? If not, how will they be chosen?

Other

- Kindergarten – How will RPS approach parents with school changes?
- Outside Source, DLR – Hired to develop three plans; committee agreed to three plans; how was this committee selected?

- Autism – Plan to move autism program? Change is difficult for them.
- Busing – How many more buses will be needed? Cost?
- Discipline – Larger class sizes does not equal effective learning. What research did the district use to determine that larger schools/classes would be better?
- We need an Early Childhood center on the far east/northeast/southeast. Fairview is centrally located not really east.
- Where are the schools in zones northeast of Riverside Blvd.? There are lots of children there. This needs to be addressed.
- Currently Early Childhood students are placed by building capacity not where they live. Does this mean that some kids that don't live close to a center will most likely not come due to lack of transportation? Early Childhood already doesn't get enough money for transportation.
- A parent's confidence in an education system starts at the elementary level. If we want people to move into Rockford we have to have a strong elementary program otherwise people will move elsewhere, get established, and stay there for middle and high school. I have never heard a parent say when given a choice, "Oh yes let me pick the elementary school with 433-600 students over the school with only 350." Where is the proof that bigger schools are better? In the community booklet that was distributed it claims that larger schools provide "More days of art, music and other special classes". How is that going to happen? Right now my kids are getting art, music, and gym 1 or 2 days a week depending on what class they are in. There are 12 classrooms in a 2 tier school. Even with a fulltime gym, art, and music teacher that would be 24 classes to service in a 4 tier school. So even if you broke that up into days there are not enough hours in the day for all those classrooms to get more days of art, music, and gym unless you hire more teachers or have 1 fulltime and 1 part time for each "special" as my kids refer to those classes. And also are you planning on 2 classrooms for art and music? Will there be a bigger gym built so the kids do not have to share gym space with 2 classes in gym at the same time so kids can get more gym days?
- Have you looked at the number of kids with IEP services in each school and determined what is needed as far as support because I can assume that the needs of students in every school zone will be different. Why should 1 combined school, which only had 75 kids with IEPs, have 1 each of fulltime support staff and another school who has 200 kids with IEPs have only the same 1 of each fulltime support staff? Will schools with more need have more than 1 of each support staff? OR SHARE- like they do now?? Have you considered the statistic that kids in a lower income bracket (many on the west side of Rockford) often need more special services because of various other socio economic situations with family, income, parental education and ability to help them? Will test score continue to drop because we pack kids into schools?
- I also am concerned with the demolition costs. Why not use that money to fix what is needed on these schools and then use the excess in reserve for future needs of the schools. Certainly that money and the money saved by not adding extensive additions to 7-9 schools to accommodate combining schools could help pay for this.

- Why close West View? The property is plenty big enough to expand out, or up. Instead of demo (which costs money), build on what you have. It would definitely cost less to remodel a school, than it would to tear it down and build a new one somewhere else. There are so many parents who moved to that neighborhood, just so their children could go to West View. There are other families who have taken their children out of RPS because of your zoning policy and not being allowed to have their children at West View.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 20, 2014

Plan A

- Recently found out we are renting space at St. Pats for school programming. Why is this when we are entertaining thoughts of demolishing sound buildings for decreased occupancy?
- There was not enough information based on this booklet and the questions that were asked to make an educated decision in my mind. The only question fully answered at our discussion was the fact that the buildings slated to close will be demolished and a green space will be created. This is already in the budget. Every question that was asked we were told to ask a Facilities Task Force Steering Committee member so my question is where were they to answer our questions?
- I don't agree with the closing of Thompson. Thompson is a terrific school that has a family relationship. Staff, parents and students all have a great rapport with the principal.
- This would be my second choice.
- Concern with no new schools built.
- I believe this plan would work the best for all students and staff.
- It makes more sense to me to put the money toward existing schools, rather than creating more buildings in Rockford. Demolish the old buildings and use their space creatively such as neighborhood playgrounds or community gardens.
- A better investment is to put money into existing buildings than to invest in creating new buildings. Empty buildings are not a benefit to the community. Empty buildings also worry me that RPS205 would be leaving the door open for profit schools to come in. These schools would be more interested in making money than in actually educating young people.
- I don't like the idea of BIGGER schools, anywhere, but I feel we have no choice. We have to do what's best for the district – people are hurt and some are just relieved.

Plan B

- New buildings are not the answer. The system is broken. No one will come rushing to the newly built schools that are poorly managed. Tearing down buildings that have stood the test of time is a poor use of funds. I don't think any schools constructed with today's methods will ever stand the test of time they have. Using the quality materials they did would be prohibited by budget now.
- I don't agree with the closing of Thompson.

- I think a new school in the Nelson/Kishwaukee area would be good. Still allows for deferred maintenance for many schools. Ok with less money spent on new furniture.
- Just getting to know the school district. We will be at Bloom next year. Like the idea of a new school in the area where they will be closing.
- Good mix of plan one and three – somewhat extreme plans.
- This looks like a good balance between plan A and C; I'm not comfortable with \$0 for deferred maintenance as in plan C. Here's something that I and a lot of parents would like to see in the 10-year plan = a gifted high school! Why not create one campus for ALL? I know that a lot of families, mine included, are not happy about sending our kids from Marshall to Auburn due to the perceived dangers in the area. The program would grow in numbers and success if our kids could all remain on one gifted campus thru high school! We are losing many students to private schools in 9th grade. Any studies being done on this?
- Four-strand Johnson? Possible addition? Right now 5th grade classroom 2014-15 new – where? One art teacher on a cart plus two days a week. No room for additional room unless you build on.
- If buildings are sold, will the contract stipulate that the building will be in use within one year? What is the time frame for demolition of the schools? What will the following ratios be in the elementary, administration/students; counselors/students; special education and support staff/student; secretaries/students?
- Kishwaukee and Nelson closed to make new school – I am extremely concerned about funding for furniture, etc., specifically anything past \$4 million. Art and music need two rooms a piece and contract times returned to accommodate extra strands.
- Not sure about the "unknown" related to board decisions.
- Kishwaukee and Nelson need to be replaced. Staff needs input in the building design.
- How do you justify closing Cherry Valley when the school represents the community? Can you build a new school in that community?

Plan C

- Now we are talking about building new schools by bike paths in Cherry Valley. So the developers can build subdivisions around them and the Chicago commuters will have a new school. Meanwhile, the west side will be losing how many schools? "Green space" was brought up a lot regarding school choice. Why does this matter? The kids have limited gym classes/week and limited recess. So many of our kids are overweight and are medicated for ADD, because kids need to play. When I was in elementary school, we played on the playground. The schools had playground balls, chalk, hopscotch and four square courts painted on the blacktop. Let's buy equipment for the schools not build new buildings. Let's buy musical instruments and recruit teachers with imagination. Let's encourage those teachers who have lost their spark to get it back or find something they'd rather be doing. This is not a brick and mortar issue! The green space issue is, as I said, overrated. The children who don't wear boots to school in the winter are not allowed to leave the blacktop anyway. The green space at Conklin School has a soccer stand that

was dangerously teetering, then broken completely down for over a year. Plenty of green space. Never see kids play there during school.

- I think all plans have validity, but I am not convinced that any one plan has more worth. I would like to see the research on how larger schools are good for small children. I understand the specialized staff but in larger buildings more students fall through the cracks!
- I don't agree with the closing of Thompson.
- Look at Marsh zone – would it be more feasible for the current Marsh neighborhood to attend Bloom or Brookview or Spring Creek versus Carlson? Also, don't cheapen the buildings when they are built.
- This plan does not benefit schools – too much deferred maintenance.
- Not sure where to write this – the Brookview boundary should go east to I-90 and south to State.
- I voted to pass the referendum to take care of deferred maintenance. I would not like to see all of it out.
- I'm just not convinced that the cost of the second school is worth the cost that the rest of the district would have to pay – it seems that everyone has to sacrifice for one school to benefit.
- I would like to know how all these plans implement school safety issues, such as entrance into school and access to office. As well "open" classrooms turned into a classroom that is considered "closed" with the ability to lock individual classrooms.
- Concerned with lack (\$0) of funding for deferred maintenance.
- Two new schools would help to bring Rockford into the 21st century and make it a more desirable city in which to move to and raise a family.
- We are currently zoned for and attend Gregory. If we move south of Newburg, where would we technically be zoned for Thompson while it's still open? Do we have to leave Gregory, enroll in Thompson, and then come back to Gregory upon Thompson's closing? We want to stay at Gregory but might need to move south of Newburg due to finances.
- Kishwaukee and Nelson – new school. Cherry Valley and White Swan – new school.
- I am worried this may stretch our budget too far.

Other

- Some schools are slated for demolition because they are "outdated." There are no plans for air conditioning those that are left. This was a huge issue with high heat indexes this past fall. This would not change with the new plan. The bilingual programs will be moved to the areas where the bilingual students live. This is totally against the idea of teaching diversity. This encourages pockets of ethnicity and therefore thwarts cultural understanding. It seems that the School Board should have learned from the past mistakes. We were told that only ¼ of those who apply are able to get into the Montessori Program. Couldn't we offer this at more than one site? It sounds like the interest is there. Could this possibly draw some students back from the private school system?
- I attended elementary school at Hallstrom School many years ago. That building was closed years ago by the School Board with the same thought pattern. Fortunately it was rescued and is still a

viable building in the community under private ownership, as is Wight Center, the Freeman building etc. There was a lot of discussion about how quickly the schools could be demolished. Might just pause to consider that once the 100+ years old buildings are gone, they are gone forever. I guess the architectural elements will make the salvage companies a lucrative income.

- This school district has a history of jumping into ideas/plans blindfolded and with both feet. The administrations and board members sell new ideas/plans to the public. Spend money to get the ideas implemented. But do not give sufficient time for the programs to evolve into what they are meant to be.
- My children are products of the controlled choice era. When my oldest daughter was starting kindergarten, I went to all the meetings about all the different magnet schools. I was excited by the opportunities that my children would have. But I was apprehensive also. It sounded too good to be true. And it was. Many things promised for the programs were not implanted right away because of cost. Then we get new administrators and board members with new ideas and programs get replaced with new ones. By the time my younger daughter got to middle school, controlled choice was changing to zoned schools. The magnet schools were gone. The district then pushed for neighborhood/zone schools.
- The referendum in 2012 originally was worded with plans to close schools. The public wasn't in favor of closing schools so the wording was changed. ALL schools were to get updates/improvements. The board and the administration (at the time) took out the wording about closing schools.
- My concerns specific to Thompson School: Thompson is a three-strand school. It houses the autism program. They have K-5 grade autism classes. The number of unused seats at Thompson is misleading. By law, the regular education classes have to leave seats open for the autism/special ed students to be mainstreamed. Children on the autism spectrum have problems with change. I do not believe that a larger school would be a good/productive learning environment for them. They have trouble with noise, large open spaces, and crowds. Thompson was chosen as one of the schools to close because the gym floods. This is also an exaggeration. Did the gym flood? Yes, it did. Does it flood all the time? No. To my knowledge it has flooded once in the 10 years that I have worked there. It was during summer break. It was due to a drain filling up with leaves not to a building problem. About 50% of Thompson students do not ride the bus. If they have to go to Gregory, I believe that most if not all would become bus riders. I don't see how this could save money on busing.
- When it is indicated a percent of empty seats, how is that figured? Based on square footage or the type of classrooms and that total possible? Self-contained special education classrooms are a full-sized class, but students max out at 13, not the 25-30 of a regular education classroom. So does the dark green reflect percentages of empty seats based solely on square footage or are the special classrooms factored in appropriately?
- Sent someone who can't answer most of the questions.
- Closing newer one level West View and adding on to older Welsh?

- Closing Walker – (I’ve been inside – I think it’s a mess!)
- West View School is more than a place to send your child for an education. It is one happy family that cares about all children that attend on a daily basis. I believe there could be Plan D, do what you said you were going to do when you wanted the \$139 million dollar referendum passed. It seems, besides a few additions being added on and some modifications being done to a few elementary schools, that all the money is going into the secondary schools. That is not what the referendum was passed for. Don't make the elementary level suffer because of this. Contrary to popular belief, bigger is not always better, especially when it comes to the education of a child. Now, I have heard that some parents have threatened to pull their children from rps205 and send them to private schools, home school, or even move. We have also considered these options. I do not believe in all cases, these are threats. People are upset and they have the right to be.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 21, 2014

Plan A

- Our buildings desperately need more furniture, and we need money for maintenance! No more pinched fingers in broken desks and chairs!
- I’m worried about parents without transportation. How will this affect them?
- I think the district needs to build new buildings, as renovations don’t always fix the problems.
- The presentation was very helpful in understanding the proposal for each, but I don’t feel you understand the benefits vs. disadvantages for each. It seems a new school is always beneficial, so if plan C includes converting closing schools into green space, I don’t see any downside. What are the benefits of choosing Plan A or B over Plan C? It would be beneficial to see a side by side comparison of benefits/disadvantages for each like:

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Plan A	New furniture	
Plan B		
Plan C	New up to date facilities	Used Furniture

- To serve 21st century style teaching, McIntosh will need more updates in electrical outlets and air conditioning. We also need more bathroom stalls. If you add .2 of music, you will need to add some money for music supplies.
- Bathroom space, breakfast feeding different.
- The plans were not presented well at the presentation. Are you taking students and staff into consideration?
- It seems an inefficient use of money to renovate old buildings.

Plan B

- No need to build brand new schools, we have enough schools to already choose from, no need to make more buildings.

- The Dennis families at the housing project – how are we going to accommodate them for transportation? A lot of parents walk to meetings and to school. Shouldn't we try to keep a center on the west side to accommodate these families? Or we need to provide transportation. If some of these families don't have transportation they will keep their children at home.
- Still believe new construction is the way to go.
- Bathroom space; breakfast – feeding different. Please do not move Walker to Carlson. I love the neighborhood schools, and that isn't.
- Questions were not answered. Are you thinking of preparing students and staff?
- 2nd choice of options

Plan C

- With the rezoning, I seriously hope grandfathering will be in play, because my daughter goes to Carlson and the rezoning would put her at Spring Creek. I have no interest in her moving; we are extremely happy at Carlson.
- I feel like new buildings are effective at attracting potential employees (teachers) or prospective students as opposed to a renovated, old building.
- I am concerned with overloading of small classrooms. That needs to be considered.
- We can only repair old schools to a certain level. Eventually, you must build new schools to be cost-effective, up-to-date and allow for technology and the best learning environment.
- Concern: Lathrop turning into an early childhood site – the cafeteria was just built and the stools/tables are not fit for preschool students. The staff is very cohesive, and the principal has made great strides to make sure that the teachers have a large number of opportunities for professional development. This area has the highest population of students served in the bilingual program. Beyer or Washington could possibly house the early childhood center.
- As long as there are no abandoned buildings left, I am all for new schools.
- If cost is similar for Carlson, build a new gym instead of cafeteria. Carlson's gym has no walk or doors. Safety issues – special education students run out of gym and crawl between lunch tables. Lunch tables are the gym walls. Music in gym bothers other classrooms. Kids love music, but other classrooms don't. Too much noise because no walls on doors. Current gym is small. In future if physical education combines classes, it would not be ideal to have 60 students in the current small gym. The ceiling also leaks in the current gym.
- Hell, if you're going to close schools we might as well get two new buildings out of it.
- Why is Dennis moving to Lathrop – when it could be moved to Lewis Lemon where our parent population currently resides? To move Dennis staff to Lathrop leaves the Dennis area unserved. Dennis parents will not drive to Summerdale. I'm afraid they will choose to go nowhere at all.
- Worried transportation to schools will be too far.
- Thanks so much for keeping the community informed/involved! Would love to see this same process for other areas, like program development or what is planned over the next X years to improve schools.

- Builders and architects need to pay attention to the needs of teachers and students. **Listen and follow through with thoughts and ideas of teachers and staff members who actually use the facilities. Teachers and staff members should be a part of design committee.
- I have concerns with the amount of space for specials as classes will be combined and teachers will have to share space, i.e. P.E. class. I know building additional gymnasiums is not realistic, but possibly smaller rooms build as fitness centers may help with this scenario.
- The design is very important. People who have worked in schools need to be part of the design of these new buildings.
- We have beautiful property at Thompson. Build on to Thompson School. More busing will be needed.
- If this money is to be spent, I would prefer the bulk of it to be spent on new construction rather than additions. It would seem that especially technology will be installed much more efficiently.

Other

- Do you feel that by increasing the number of students in buildings you will see an increase in behavior? (For example, Froberg is a good example of this. As a parent, I feel their behavior has increased. It would be interesting to see data disputing that or proving that.)
- We currently have a large number of parents who do not have transportation. These plans would make it hard for parents who currently walk to school functions, such as parent/teacher conferences, special programs, etc.
- You have buildings now that are understaffed. How can you guarantee that these new plans will provide sufficient quality staff?
- Will there be a gifted high school attached to the gifted campus? That would be amazing for the culture of those students. We have the space. We could add Montessori to the high school, if needed.
- What is the actual timeline of moving Washington to the Montessori building? My daughter and I are so excited to be neighbors.
- No offense to the other schools in the district, but I need to focus on our school: with additional students means additional traffic. What's the plan for this to be organized? While the new cafeteria is nice, it is too small to have a potential four-strand school. What's the plan to help these? I hope the changes are made before the new students are coming to Conklin. Please excuse my cynicism that I have concerns it won't. Also, why weren't any task force and/or board members present?
- Restrooms would need to be added and updated.
- I attended the community session on Monday, May 12 at Thompson School. At that meeting, no one from the district recorded any of the concerns that were raised. We were told to fill out the feedback form and return it. This is my feedback.

I have lived in Rockford for the past 18 years. I am married and my husband and I have been homeowners and taxpayers to District 205 for 15 years. When we moved into our house in 1999,

controlled choice was in effect. Our neighborhood schools are now Whitehead, Flinn and East. We have two children, boy-girl twins who are 10 years old. They attended Dennis Early Childhood Center from 2007-2009. We were under controlled choice for kindergarten, and we did not choose our neighborhood school. Our children were placed into Rolling Green, our first choice school, in 2009-10. However, these were both incubation seats. They were assigned to Thompson, our second choice school, for first grade, and they have attended Thompson from 2010 to the present time. They are currently in fourth grade.

I wish to address the closing of Thompson School and the consolidation of Thompson and Gregory Schools. On page 3 of the Achieving Better Schools handout, you present "Current Issues." One issue is that "choice" is still grandfathered in for three levels – currently 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. This represents 12% of the students currently at Thompson, and by my calculations, less than 10% across all schools. By the time a plan is implemented in 2015, only one level will still be in elementary school. This will be, at most, 4% of Thompson's population, or 3-4% district wide. It will likely be less than that with reverse transferring back to neighborhood schools allowed and encouraged, and sibling preference to choice schools no longer allowed. It is likely that today's third graders make up less than 1/3 of the grandfathered seats. When neighborhood school zones were first introduced and grandfathered in at the middle and high school levels in 2007, there was discussion regarding changing elementary schools to zones. At that time, the plan was to have no grandfathering and make children go back to their neighborhood school no matter what a very disruptive situation. Happily, the current plan implemented in 2011 allowed for the grandfathering. I know the district still incurs transportation costs for those students, but the passage of time makes this less of an issue every year. In two years, everyone will attend schools in their zone, and those half-empty buses will only be a memory.

Another issue mentioned is that is smaller schools; there are fewer full time teachers and fewer days of art and music classes (p. 7), while larger schools have more teachers and classes. This implies that in larger schools, there are more teachers per student (and fewer students per teacher), and that students have more days of art, music, and other special classes. This is just not true. On p. 17, it states "Even if schools close, the number of students will remain the same so the number of teachers and staff needed will also remain constant." Under the new plan, the number of students per class does not change, and the number of "specials" (art and music) classes per week per student does not change.

A third point is that schools are underutilized. Thompson has 37% of its seats empty. Again, by my calculations, this underutilization is approximately 26% district wide. This may imply that buildings are standing with ¼ of their classrooms empty. In actuality, this underutilization means that classes are smaller than the contract mandated maximums. A teacher that could have a see this as a waste of resources – paying for more electricity and heat and busing than what is being used. However, this so-called "waste" actually results in the smaller class sizes, with more teacher time per student. Smaller class sizes are consistently correlated with higher student achievement. Moving the two strands at Thompson and making Gregory a four-strand school does not change

this underutilization, per se. However, there is nothing to say that the district couldn't choose to reduce the number of strands in a school. They have done so in the past. Four classes of 22-23 could become three classes of 30. Thompson also has the unique issue of our autistic student population. While some of these students remain in their self-contained classrooms for their entire elementary school career, others can be mainstreamed into the regular classroom at some point. A part of Thompson's 37% open seats are the seats held for the autistic students to transition to the regular classroom.

To summarize, the Board wants to close Thompson and consolidate it with Gregory to address several "Current Issues." The issue of grandfathered choice students is mainly one of transportation costs. If the board waits until the 2016-2017 school year, this will no longer be an issue. A second issue is that there are fewer full time teachers in smaller schools. However, the teacher-to-student ratio does not change with making larger schools, so this isn't an issue either. A teacher to student ratio and this ratio will not change for good or ill by shifting Thompson's student to Gregory. In addition, their autistic students may artificially inflate Thompson's number of empty seats.

While I hope this impassioned plea does not fall on deaf ears, I am also realistic. While I think we should have a "Plan D" that doesn't involve closing Thompson, the odds are against this happening. The school board meeting minutes from 2011 are filled with positive statements from parents whose schools were threatened with closure. The parents spoke eloquently about the appreciation for their schools and staff, and the schools were closed anyway. If I accept the real possibility, no matter how wrong I think it is, that Thompson will be closed sometime after June, 2015, I have many questions as to how this will occur. At the community session I attended no clear timeline was given for how the school closing plans would be implemented, only that it would occur over a 10 year span of time from 2015 to 2025. The impression I got from Todd Schmidt was that the board would first vote to close the schools and afterward figure out how that was going to happen. First of all, when will the addition to Gregory be built? Past practice shows that it could be completed during the 2014-2015 school year. In your timeline on pages 5-6, the time period from construction bid approval to completion and community open house was 8 months. Once completed, Thompson would be closed and all students and staff moved to Gregory for the following school year. If this were to happen in the fall of 2015, there will still be a few students (that 3-4%) who fall under the choice system. What will happen to them? Do they remain with their classmates and teachers at Gregory? Are they allowed to choose again for 5th grade? Would they be forced back to their neighborhood school in order to save those transportation costs? Once the timeline for Gregory's addition and Thompson's closing is determined, how will students transition? Will everyone remain at Thompson until it closes and then move the following year? Or will parents whose children will be attending Gregory eventually be given an opportunity to enroll their child in Gregory earlier, provided there is space available? Gregory currently has 22% open seats – would parents be allowed to choose or put names in a lottery for available sets? Would busing be available?

Speaking of busing, Mr. Schmidt said at the meeting that 12 bus routes would be eliminated across the district. Since Gregory is located north of Newburg Road, and Thompson's zone is south of Newburg Road, will the Thompson students be eligible for busing due to the hazardous route? Newburg is a 4-lane road at that point with stoplights at Arnold and the east edge of Colonial Village. Does this busing partially negate the transportation cost savings?

Like most elementary schools, Thompson has a PTO that raises funds and has a treasury. We have Market Day at our school, and we have earned over \$2,000 this year alone. When Thompson closes, where does that money go? Gregory or turned over to the district? In addition, we have the tradition of two higher-cost field trips that students raise money for. The third grade does to Cave of the Mounds in Wisconsin, and the fourth grade visits the historical sites in Springfield. Will those traditions end when Thompson closes?

Finally, what is the district planning to do to smooth this transition? I grew up in District 300 that includes Algonquin, Carpentersville, and Dundee. One of their school closings changed Dundee High School into a middle school and moved the high school students to what had been Irving Crown High School. The school was rechristened Dundee Crown High School and given new school colors and a new school mascot. Would there be any plans to do this with Thompson and Gregory or at least solicit input from parents and students both schools about it?

Unfortunately, I am not confident that will even happen. Both my husband and I voted in favor of the 2012 bond referendum. Now we are told that money will finance the demolition of our school. My entire family participated in the November 2013 focus groups to help shape the future of RPS, a future that now does not include Thompson. The district is holding 39 community sessions but apparently not bothering to record any of the concerns raised. RPS 205 has not shown that it actually cares about the input from the real stakeholders in this plan, the students and parents. I hope that my words will not go unread and unheard, but if living in the Rockford school district has taught me one thing, it is not to get my hopes up.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 22, 2014

Plan A

- What is the number of students where there are the least number of shared staff – I think smaller classes for students are best for student learning – research based information supports this idea – how to be good stewards of the tax dollars but still make sure that our students have the best educational opportunity. We will pay for our decision one way or the other.
- Has the public library at Lewis Lemon been taken into consideration for the underutilized capacity? Two classrooms are used for the library. This could handle up to 60 students.
- We have 69% of our population in need of additional support due to being below grade level. Does this plan address the need for additional intervention rooms?
- Has the facilities committee considered the "livable" space available within schools to prevent overcrowding in classrooms? Parking? Restrooms? Cafeteria space? The goal should not be to crowd the schools.

- These concerns are the same for all three plans: sidewalks for closed schools; are there going to be capacity classroom sizes and what about teacher/student relationships?
- I do not agree with closing Kishwaukee. Kishwaukee is a very diverse school with wonderful students and staff. I love that cultural diversity is celebrated among all students and staff. It would be a travesty to lose this by combining students into a larger school where this diversity would be diminished.
- I strongly disagree with this plan because I want all students (such as Asian kids) together and don't want to separate them. In addition, they would probably cause more trouble or have issues in school or with others students that don't get along. I think this is best school for our community.
- Close seven schools. The presentation and materials do not address the quality of education for the children.
- Nelson is in worse condition than Kishwaukee. The concern is that you are taking the only safe thing out of our neighborhood!
- Don't like.
- Don't like.
- Leave Kishwaukee as-is with the diversity of students and family.
- I do not want anyone to close our school. It is a very good school, and if you cannot see it, that is your loss. And if you close this school, that is a very bad thing. This is a good school and all of our kids are very smart and we get along.
- I don't think you should take away this school. This school is very important to many children, therefore, I do not agree that you take away or close this school.
- Your data is not current. Are there studies to support population movement in Rockford? Why are you concentrating EC except to make it look good on a map? Have you considered hardship of location for younger parents to and from ECC? Why not utilize buildings already housing ECC instead of completely remodeling – spending money when it is not necessary?
- In all cases (A-C) there is no information in any metric that convinces me that considerations about class size vs. physical size of class rooms has been made. Also, congesting students into what become west side centers as opposed to more stable residential zones.
- This is old data on pg. 4 – King has bilingual for last two years. Has there been a city wide population density data – for young families done? To support closings and restructuring of school zones.
- Why do we have to move? Don't separate brothers/sisters – It is too much for an adult or child 1 ½ (miles) – We want to stay in the neighborhood for the good of the children - so they don't come home tired from the time spent on the bus.
- If you moved them from this school, will it be double the children in the same group? Will they have the same attention and enough resources?

- I think this idea is not considering the welfare of the children and parent. I know I'm wasting my time writing this, because if the presenter at the presentation couldn't bother to answer any questions I can certainly conclude he won't read any either.
- I want the school to stay as is and, if you need more space, the building is big enough to make more rooms.
- What benefits will we and our children have if they move us to another school?
- First, we didn't get books in Spanish. Also, my children walk and where you are sending us – with the snow - five blocks is not easy. For example, what if a principal had to walk five blocks? Not right. Take care of this.
- Why would we have to move if we are good? You should leave it and put in air conditioning. This you should do. Did you think about parking? If we move one child, will they all move together?
- All the information is in English; we need more information in Spanish. Also, if another brother is at another school they should all be together to save on gas and buses.
- Why do we have to move? What renovations are you doing in the school? What are you doing with the parking lot?
- What if I move one of my children, will they all go to the same school?
- Data not current to make correct analysis of which schools to close. If Haskell is staying fill it with EC, fill Fairview, and fill West View with 1/2 EC. How can you close Dennis and all EC is covered? Beyer has EC and would need major remodeling to become a four strand school – it's a POD school. Which is not good for regular/bilingual classes – not sound proof – walls are not full.
- Thanks for the meeting. My family is happy at Lathrop. The teachers and the principal are very good and my child has done well. Please try to keep them all at Lathrop School where they are together. Thanks for listening. It is important to remember that the school is very well run. Don't spoil that.
- It is the school community that makes up a school; therefore, I request that Lathrop staff, administration, and students be kept together if it is decided to move them to Washington. They have developed a 21st plan that is in the works, and it would be a tragedy to break up this community.
- Just commenting. Hispanic families historically are moved for the school district's convenience, not the parents. Separating the children from each family makes it difficult for parent involvement. Thank you.
- I don't want you to move the children and if you move them, make sure there are enough parking spaces.
- Not enough info/data to support any plan. Zones for elementary have been going on for two years. Look at zones grandfathered in and see what the real zone numbers are. Haskell, Barbour, Gifted, ECC, Montessori will bus from everywhere – no savings. Need to look at buildings – which you have done to some extent. Where is the data, and why you are making ECC out of Lathrop?

- I don't agree. I like this school because it's a good school and I don't know if my daughter will have transportation from her daycare to that school. I can't leave work to take my daughter to school.
- Please keep the school together. The principal and teachers do such a great job. I feel my kid is safe at school and is learning. It doesn't matter, Washington or Lathrop, just keep everyone together.
- I agree.
- I agree with the one that is better for my children's education – I always want the best.
- There are more empty schools and it's not right that our children have to go to other schools when you can fix the empty ones for Pre-K.
- I believe you can make renovations instead of closing schools or moving our children to other schools.
- I don't want you to change this school; you can invest in renovations. I also like the quality of teachers that teach our children. I don't think you should move the staff that works with our children. This is an excellent school.
- Lathrop staff has done a great job moving this school forward academically. It will be catastrophic if this school is turned into an ECC after everything the staff has done to improve. This year the newly renovated building was unveiled, and as a taxpayer, it would be a shame to see my money go to waste; like our past experience. I know the new lunchroom will not be used and would be a waste of space. It would cost the district more money to renovate the school than to keep it the way it is. This is a bilingual school with so many of the students living around the area. I hope our opinion really matters.
- I don't understand why you would not use this school after all the money that was spent to build a beautiful cafeteria; now it won't be used for this purpose. Preschoolers eat in their classrooms.
- I want the students that are in the bilingual program, if moved, to be moved to a bilingual school. Consider not moving Lathrop; instead, make Washington bigger, make Lathrop bigger, and make Washington an ECC.

Plan B

- I do not agree with consolidating Early Childhood into only four sites. These are our youngest students and they should not have to be on a bus for such a long commute. Children of all ages should be educated near their homes.
- Close eight schools.
- Keep all the TPI students together! They are already feeling oppressed for being from a different country. Community is very important for them to have a good future. Kishwaukee is the best school I have ever seen. Don't ruin it!
- When placing students and staff, please consider that our student enrollment (population) is TPI. Staff at Kishwaukee is highly qualified to teach TPI students.

- Makes no sense moving the children to another school and Kishwaukee has to close. Just put the money that's going to be wasted on everything else other than making a better school for Kishwaukee students, I think it makes no sense at all!!
- Will the teachers stay together? Will the students stay together? Concern: The TPI students and families safety.
- How do plan B and C affect specialists (music, art, P.E.) in buildings that close? A bigger school does not mean more days of specials but less and less positions. Also, what happens to teachers in schools that close, four plus two strands don't equal four strands, so how do all these teachers fit? Do teachers get placed by seniority?
- Don't like.
- How are you going to keep the TPI students and families together if there is a new school?
- I am a lion!!
- You want to max out classrooms. As a designer, what are the guidelines per space per student? If building a new school, what would it be? Older schools with smaller rooms need a ration per square foot; 30 are not possible in some school's classrooms. Remodeling wouldn't be a fix unless we provide all new for everyone and that is not financially fixable.
- Conversations with staff members lead me to believe that no serious thought has been given to how original footprint and design of building influences their specific use or future development.
- Amazing that all NE schools will stay three strands (180 more students). Does this mean fewer students on NE side? Please provide data to support. If Carlson is a pod school, like Montessori uses, make it Montessori and leave Marsh as a NE bilingual strand school as bilingual parents do live NE and Spring Creek is dropping the bilingual program.
- If they are moved from Lathrop, children, people, and adequate education material should be moved. If they move to Washington, what renovations are you going to do? I hope you think about the air conditioning.
- I worry about the transporting my daughters to school. We want you to promise air conditioning.
- What I have gathered from the information is that Washington Gifted School is all gifted and the rest are seats available. Why not close Washington instead of King.
- I hope that you truly take into consideration the comments from everybody. Please make the best decision for the children because they are the future, and it doesn't matter what race or color.
- Will you give them transportation even if they are close? There are mothers who don't drive.
- If you have so much money to waste, why don't you expand the parking lot? And, why do you have to separate us? We need air conditioning.
- Will the new school have air conditioning and parking for parents to pick up their children?
- If you are spending money, you should also spend it on air conditioning and new parking lots. I hope children won't have to walk far due to cold weather. Move all of them together.
- Are you separating the children? Are you putting in air conditioning?
- Make sure there is a parking lot for parents to wait for their children.

- Conklin, Johnson and Lathrop were remodeled 2013. Why plan to turn Lathrop into ECC, which doesn't need a cafeteria? What a waste! If an architect is needed to add a wing to Conklin why not use the same plan to add to Johnson and Lathrop and save money. To remodel Lathrop into an ECC will be more costly than Beyer or Riverdahl which already have ECC.
- Lathrop was remodeled along with Johnson and Conklin, and it will be a waste if it is not used as intended. Why aren't schools like Beyer or Riverdahl becoming an ECC as they are already set up. Major remodeling would have to be done to Lathrop for it to become an ECC, and a major remodel is needed for Beyer to become four strands.
- I agree.
- Keep the school as an elementary school.
- Lathrop School does not have the adequate space for preschool. For example, each classroom will need a restroom and a sink – they don't have that now.
- I want you to keep Lathrop School instead of Washington. If we move to Washington, make sure there is enough parking for parents and have enough security after school.

Plan C

- At Lemon, was the public library included in the 24% seat available?
- As a side note, I love the architecture of Kishwaukee School. It is a beautiful building. I hope that if Kishwaukee does close, saving the building from demolition would be considered. If it is demolished I hope that architectural salvage would be a priority.
- I don't want this school to close or be destroyed because this school is close to my house and my child gets along with kids and their teacher in school. In addition, my child loves this school and they enjoy learning in this school.
- Why move - all the student's like this school?
- Close nine schools.
- Will staff members have first pick/choice to move to the new school?
- Same as Plan B – concern: The TPI students' and families' safety.
- I think Kishwaukee School should stay where it is. Keep these students safe and happy. We are a big family at Kishwaukee, don't split us up.
- I think that Kishwaukee should stay open! Fix it and keep our students safe and keep them at a place they know and feel safe.
- I am fine with new buildings. However, the staff and students should stay together. I am not convinced bigger elementary schools are a good thing. Our parents are extremely concerned about everyone staying together.
- Parents are also concerned about their children waiting for buses in a high crime area. Our building is a safe haven for them. We have worked extremely hard to establish our community.
- Honestly I don't love any of the plans. I do not agree with the benefits of larger schools at all. I think it's too big for small children and it's easier for them to get "lost in the crowd". Our elementary school is very tight, close-knit and safe. You are going to take that away.

- Please keep our Kishwaukee family and community together.
- Please don't disrupt learning process of our students. How will our students and families get the thing they need if go to another school?
- It would be nice to have the schools rebuilt in the same location. It is good to stay in the community and not be bused miles away. A new school with better conditions is a plus.
- 1st step – Eliminate the ability to be grandfathered in and see what happens to schools! Have you considered stability of neighborhood schools? Changing zones again? Families will move to private or out altogether. Has a study been done on current schools with stability of enrollment? No, or they wouldn't be suggesting closing or moving of program.
- First thoughts go to the composition of our neighborhood (Lathrop). It is stable with very few students moving a lot to other schools. The concept of your local school is being further diminished.
- You have invested in Conklin, Johnson, and Lathrop but only Conklin will expand. Pay the architect once for a plan for all three schools. All three should be four strands. What a waste of money if you do not do this! Haskell is only ½ full but EC is there. Again, do you really need that? Additional population data is needed.
- We don't want you to move us to a different school, this school is best for my daughters.
- Will there be parking for parents to pick up their children if they move to another school?
- If you move us to Washington, what benefits would we have? And will the children be separated? How would we deal with the parking lot and when will you take care of it? We want to see things done because we are who we are, and we want to cooperate.
- Lathrop's student population is steady – not the constant adds and drops. We embody the true concept of a neighborhood school. Our setting is in a neighborhood and not on a major road, like Beyer or Riverdahl. It would be a shame to waste the money already invested into Lathrop on ECC. Where will the children go? Are they split up? ECC will create more traffic for a dead end street.
- We do need to think of students in the decades to come. Please try your best to make sure faculty stays with students and administration. The relationships are already built with strong communication. As a staff, we have come so far with our technology and planning development.
- Haskell is not changing and has ECC already, so fill Haskell with ECC. Beyer has ECC and has room for more EC. Fairview has room for more EC. West View has ECC and has room for more. Rolling Green has ECC and has room for more. Why close/remodel when existing schools have room? Use that first.
- I agree as long as it is the best for the children.
- I agree that Lathrop be moved as long as students and parents have all they need. Make the parking lot bigger and put in air conditioning.
- I do not feel Lathrop should be changed; consider adding on to this building to make it larger. We already started the renovations and we have a cohesive staff. Washington is a dangerous neighborhood with many shootings. The largest Hispanic neighborhood is here at Lathrop.

- I don't think Washington School would be a good school for Lathrop children. We have a smooth running school. If anything, add to our building, close Beyer, or turn Beyer into ECC. All schools should be one level for safety reasons. I would not want my child on the 2nd floor when bad weather breaks out or if there is a fire.
- Also, think of the distance that kids will have to walk to Washington.
- When looking at the number of empty seats, what criteria were used? Was size of classrooms a factor? What is the estimated timeline for changes at Lathrop? (timeline developed after a plan is chosen) Have you considered making Beyer an ECC due to its demographics, pods, and school achievement? Have you considered adding onto Lathrop in order to utilize the new additions; such as adding rooms for another strand on monolingual? Can architectural pieces of buildings that are being demolished be salvaged and put in a museum of sorts? I appreciate that parents/teachers will get input into renovations on our new building.
- Instead of spending the money on Washington, it should be researched if Lathrop could get another addition; especially with the new addition this year. Also, due to the demographics and test scores at Beyer School, Beyer would be better suited as the Early Childhood Center. The pods are not the best environment for K-5 classrooms.
- Suggestions: Why not keep the school as is? Better yet, improve it and add more classrooms, so that instead of having three strands we could have four.

Other

- Please clarify, are the deferred maintenance and furniture expenses that are budgeted for in each plan just for elementary and early childhood?
- After borrowing \$50 million from reserves, what does the budget look like?
- If a new superintendent is brought in within 10 years, can the plan change?
- Great presentation. King is a prime example of a school needing too much work.

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 27, 2014

Plan A

- Not enough information on any of the plans.
- Referendum did not mention closing schools! There is plenty of space to add on to West View handicap accessible, good solid building.
- Must build new schools; close old dilapidated schools and reduce costs with better, more efficient bussing and building maintenance.
- Small schools are better. I know Thompson needs work but I choose this school for the small class size and good test scores. I'm afraid scores will suffer in all schools. I also think these plans will affect property taxes. They are already low enough!!
- I don't agree.
- Rockford Public Schools are thinking about themselves and not the children or teachers and staff.

- I love Thompson School and I love neighborhood schools. I don't want my kids to travel out of the neighborhood to another school when our school is already great!
- I believe our neighborhood schools are extremely important; this entire plan is nonsense, they are creating a deficit in a district that cannot handle anymore; as well as a logistical nightmare as for as transportation and displacement of students are concern.
- We had to gather information on our own. The "presentation" was extremely poor. The representatives sent were not prepared and could not answer questions directly. For most questions they kept saying, "Put it down on the feedback form!"
- My son really likes this school; he has improved since he has been here.
- You keep saying "deferred maintenance" which in reality is no maintenance year to year. Maintenance only when it can no longer be ignored and is a major undertaking.
- If a plan is sincere about input, the community involvement should occur at the beginning of the plan not the conclusion.
- Plan A has an \$8,317,473 balance why isn't that being used for additional deferred maintenance or other improvements?
- I don't agree that Lathrop School should be changed.

Plan B

- Nelson needs to be closed. What will happen to empty schools? Lower property value with green space or empty.
- Put money into expanding West View, give us a new cafeteria and three trailers in back for 5th grade and this will make a three-tier school. I believe you know what you have in West View. Don't give that up; let's develop it and our kids.
- Small schools are better. My son gets what he needs as far as art and other activities. Please consider the students, not just the money.
- I don't agree.
- This plan is not in the best interest of the parents, children staff of RPS District.
- I like small schools!
- Gathered own information to make a well informed decision!
- If you told the voters of the true plan of demolishing schools the referendum would not have passed. I voted no back then because I had no faith in the integrity of the School Board.
- How much of the money from the bonds, reserves, etc. will be paid to the DLR Group? What is their fee? Is it as part with other consulting firms in the business? Who will do the work? Would it be possible to use local business rather than outside concerns? Shouldn't we use local businesses as good stewards of our tax revenues?
- When the referendum was passed the plans for the elementary additions were drawn up. There was a plan for the cafeteria and elevator addition at Walker. One of the arguments now is that there is no room for expansion at Walker.

Plan C

- Take money to demolish and put it back in the school. Redetermine zone larger to accommodate larger school.
- Small schools are better. Your speakers are like politicians; they dance around the questions and do not answer anything directly.
- And I will not agree.
- Keep things as they are neighborhood schools need to stay open!
- I don't want any good teachers to lose their jobs!
- We gathered our own information to make a well informed decision!!
- Don't know too much about the plan but close some schools, Thompson being on the list.
- The meetings are a front for the district to be able to say "we asked the community". However, the board has already made their decision. The agenda is not about kids and teachers and the community.
- In all three plans, four west side schools are closed. What is the economic impact to the west side? Its business, neighborhoods, crime and property values? Is not the city a whole community? What about students who must change schools and their achievement?
- Closing Walker (currently a three strand school) and West View that are within two miles of each other would create the need to bus part of the Walker community four miles to Carlson. Why not consider building a new school to keep the students in the neighborhood on the campus of West View.
- Rockford as a city is dying with closing (demolishing) seven or nine schools, you will make that process (the death) quicker and faster. Please think of another solution.
- I have been to many of the buildings including some of the schools which are set to be demolished or sold because I was a substitute teacher for six years. They need to go and the ones set to be improved should be improved. I believe plan C is best for the long term future of Rockford and Rockford School District 205. The two new schools and the renovated schools should be considered as an asset for Rockford.
- I think it is a bad idea to leave \$0 for deferred maintenance.

Other

- I'd would like to keep West View School open, it's in my area or current area of where I live and my daughter has been going here since Pre-K and she's is in first grade now. I don't currently have enough information regarding the other plan offered at this time.
- My preferred plan is to keep West View open. This is a good neighborhood school. I would like to see this school remain open in this community.
- My preferred plan is to keep West View opened. We just fought for neighborhood schools two years ago. Like being able to attend neighborhood schools, the students know each other; they grow together, play together. West View is a tight-knit school and everyone knows everyone: teachers, principals, students, and parents. We can save time and money by eliminating busing.

Love the communication system for homework and classwork which closes the loop between parents and teachers.

- Dear School Board: I have read your plan and though I understand some changes must come, I believe it is a great mistake to ignore the far-reaching ramifications of this action for our students, our children. These kids are the future of Rockford, and when they are not given the proper consideration, now we will see it in their development later. You listed benefits of a larger school, well here are some benefits to smaller school: they become a community center so there is a great deal of involvement, students have a higher morale and they have more pride in school and themselves which equal less discipline problems. Larger schools are impressive on the net side, but upon closer scrutiny, the smaller schools provide a better education. Coming from Georgia I have seen firsthand the difference and it would be a great mistake for you to not consider the impact this will have on the kids.
- I feel very frustrated! When we had to vote for this referendum the board never said anything about closing schools, now everything has changed. I believe closing West View School would be a big mistake. West View is a HUGE asset to the community we have a lot of land all around us which they could use to make us a larger school. The school board could keep West View open and close Welsh since we have more land, younger school. I feel the School Board is always making fast decisions and maybe not really sitting down and thinking about what is best for the kids and the community. I feel if my child has to go to Conklin, that his safety and his ability to grow academically will not benefit him at all. I feel that is a big problem! You move to a certain area in the city because you want your child to go to a certain school. And for our family, that was West View. If he can't go to West View, then I feel we should be able to choose where our child/children can go so they can grow to be a successful person. Let's not lose sight here that WE WANT WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR CHILDREN!
- I was not sure about sending my children to RPS205. I was very excited that I was able to choose Thompson (we are grandfathered into Thompson, my neighborhood school is Hillman, I will never send my children there). I love that my child's kindergarten teacher still remembers me and my 3rd graders. At a bigger school, you will have none of that. This plan will encourage more people to move out of Rockford, as I will be doing that ASAP.
- I don't agree that you should close schools because you say it is to make the other schools and education better, but I think it's money that you want to put in your pocket. In my opinion this will not work because the children from the schools that would be closing will have to go to the other schools. And can you imagine 30 students in a classroom? The teachers can hardly teach 20 and they still don't get all the attention they need, let alone 30. What we need is more professionals to help our children graduate. How many students start and how many do graduate? Very few. We need programs to help students go to college so that tomorrow the streets won't be full of gangs. Remodel all the schools so that the students can be proud to go. We need more bilingual personnel in the schools. We need help, we don't need to destroy. You say that we are the ones who pay, then use the money to better our schools but not by closing them, but by making them

better every day. You are the professionals; find a way to get the money for our schools. Talk to the city to raise the price of the cigarettes, alcohol and that part of those taxes goes to the schools and the people will benefit from it. We need another high school, we only have four and I believe that is where we need more professionals to help our students graduate and be ready for college. We need to work together, have the meetings later in the evening like 4:00 or 5:00; you have the meetings at 2:30 so that nobody can attend, we are still working. When you have meetings, please send information home, a lot of parents don't attend because they don't know about the meeting.

- Under each plan, how much money is expected to be saved due to operational efficiencies? Does one plan generate more long-term savings than the others? I would like to review the grades that were given to schools and additional data before I can determine if any of these plans are right for our community. However, I appreciate the information provided and agree that the district should move towards operational efficiencies as long as there are also positive implications for teaching and learning.
- Here are some bullet points about the plan and presentation, as well as ideas:
 - ❖ Community/public (including teachers/staff) was not informed about any of this before it was computed. Input should have been sought before plans were drawn up! Not after! This is how distrust is established with our school district!
 - ❖ Taxpayers were duped into voting for the referendum thinking that money would be used to help renovate each building! Not shut down and make larger!
 - ❖ What is the outlook on the population of Rockford in 10 years (2024+)? If it goes higher (which it probably will) we won't have the needed schools or land anymore if we close down and sell off the land! This kind of short minded decision would cost us huge amounts of money in the near future!
 - ❖ Most of the material in the "Achieving better schools" booklet is filled with skewed numbers and blazed/manipulated information! Misleading!
 - ❖ There are far more negatives of having larger schools than positives ... yet none of the negatives are listed!
 - ❖ How come the booklet did not show the positives of smaller buildings? I think we all know that if you did a side by side comparison about the positives and negatives of smaller vs. larger, it would be no contest smaller size has many more benefits! There are hundreds and hundreds of studies that detail benefits of smaller schools. Here are just a few of the key areas: Smaller schools provide: fewer discipline problems, greater safety for students and staff, much greater satisfaction for families, teachers and students, more positive environment, and higher achievement. This just touches on the many benefits of smaller schools.
 - ❖ The booklet had a section titled "Why larger elementary schools are better." This is totally filled with misleading information: more days of art, music and other specials = more days but not anything different for the students. They will have the same number of specials

they have now. Millions saved in operational efficiencies = millions would not be saved if the comparisons was fair. If the older schools have upgrades on equipment and renovations, that would also save a great deal of money.

- ❖ The section in the booklet titled "Many schools underutilized" is extremely misleading! Underutilized makes it sound like the rooms are not being used or are empty ... not true! Thompson School has several autism classrooms that have a smaller number of students per classroom, as well as needing extra rooms for resources. That is very wrong to mislead with graphs showing that almost 40% of our "seats" are not used! All of the other regular ed. rooms are filled to 80% to 90% of capacity! Misleading!
- ❖ The Rockford community has rallied around our schools many times. Many businesses have also poured a great deal into improving our schools (Heartland, UTC/Sundstrand, etc.) they did this to help keep us going, not shut us down!
- ❖ The Rockford community and especially the neighborhoods around the schools are disappointed in decisions being made for us (without our prior input). Plans like these are driving families out of District 205 (they are either moving or sending their kids to private schools). Fewer students equal less money for our district!
- ❖ The bottom line is ... smaller schools can provide higher student achievement in a safer and more disciplined environment and if improvements/renovations were done right could also be financially efficient!

Feedback: Achieving Better Schools Community Sessions May 28, 2014

Plan A

- If this plan is selected, will there also be a plan to continue to maintain the aging buildings?

Plan C

- I think that the construction of new schools will benefit the city of Rockford in terms of showcasing our school system for new families moving into the area. My concern is that the cost of the new buildings might take money away from the other building projects. My biggest concern is for Carlson to become a more secure building as soon as possible. Do we have to wait for renovations before our staff and students have the security necessary for a hard lock down?
- Schools should have enough resource rooms for support staff (i.e. Speech, Counseling, OT, PT, Special Ed resource, Tier II/Tier III tutoring for R & I, etc.). We should expect 10% of the population needing special education resource support and another 20% needing R & I interventions (15% Tier II/5% Tier III).

Other

- I agree that some schools should close. I am also supportive of building new schools even though I voted for the referendum with the understanding the money would be used to renovate existing

schools. I would prefer Plan C with a few reservations. I think it is important to meet some basic needs in all of our buildings. I want to address some of the remaining issues we have at McIntosh. First, most of the classrooms on the primary wing have only two useable electric outlets. Obviously, in today's world that is not enough to support technology. These two outlets are used for Smart Boards, classroom computers, listening centers, electric pencil sharpeners and fans. Our second major issue is the number of bathrooms available for student use. The girls' bathrooms in both wings of our building only have three stalls. A great deal of time is spent ushering classrooms through bathroom breaks. That problem will become even more pronounced as we move into a full three strand school. Finally, classroom climate (temperature) is a major issue. We have many classrooms with no windows. The classrooms that do have windows only have very small windows that tilt out a few inches. We need air conditioning. During the winter many classrooms are too hot, while others are too cold. If Plan B or C are adopted I do hope there is still money left to address the needs of existing schools.