

REPORT OF THE SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS TASK FORCE ON MAINTAINING SCHOOL QUALITY WITH COST CONTROLS

January – March 2015

TASK FORCE GOAL: Maximize use of school facilities while maintaining instructional quality & reducing operating costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FINANCES

- Finance long term assets with long term sources of funding – Refinance 2003 Bond Issue; Plan new bond issue to reduce capital expenses from General Fund. However, new bond issue should replace retiring/refinanced bonds and NOT increase the current school debt millage rate.
- Close/sell building(s) only when it makes good financial sense. Demolish Schoenhals School and sell property for new housing. New housing will improve the city tax base. Transfer Schoenhals tenant to other district facility. Use funds from sale for capital projects. (Because bond funds were used at Schoenhals, state law requires proceeds may only be used for capital projects.)
- Create combined hybrid classrooms, live monitoring and on-line instruction. Use National Honor Society students and qualified volunteers to provide support for students taking on-line classes.
- Finance vocational studies through outside resources – i.e. partnerships and alliances with trade and technical schools.

PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- Investigate the creation of new programs with the intent to grow enrollment and use surplus (existing) space. Such programming would be “value added” and include:
 - The addition of grades 13 and 14 (community college). SPS to become at K-14 District.
 - Add skilled trades programs – welding, electrical, plumbing, HVAC and technical. Not every student wants or needs to go to college.
 - Develop apprenticeships/internships
 - Partner with OCC, Henry Ford Community College, Schoolcraft College, Specs Howard, Lawrence Tech, Providence Hospital, Beaumont Hospital, businesses – particularly for skilled trades, healthcare, engineering.
- Use MAP tool to fullest extent
- Beef up math and science curriculum
- Evaluate district magnet programs to see if they are meeting original goals/purposes to determine if they are worth keeping. (Perform a cost/benefit analysis)
- Develop a major marketing program for the magnet programs that are worth keeping. Promote the advantages of an SPS education. Market to families in the district that are not sending their children to SPS.
- Create a common culture of good behavior including administrator accountability and parental support programs (Bring back Parenting University or parenting workshops.)
- Investigate retaining extracurricular activities and programs by combining and/or consolidating programs/schools.

BUILDING CONFIGURATIONS

- Do not close any of the current facilities as the cost savings is minimal and results in decreased enrollment which further erodes state school aid to SPS.
- Create K-12 University Prep program (to expand UHSA)
- Create a Pre-K program at Eisenhower School
- Sell Schoenhals School with proviso that it be demolished for new housing. Perhaps consider selling another vacant school for new housing.
- Re-Purpose Leonhard School and partner with city or other entities for programming (perhaps for senior citizens)
- Level out the enrollments at Levey and Brace-Lederle by moving grades 6-8 from Brace-Lederle School to Levey. Make Brace-Lederle a K-5 school.
- Locate K-12 (or K-14) University Prep program (which includes UHSA) to Southfield-Lathrup High School.
- Consolidate Southfield and Southfield-Lathrup high schools at the Southfield High School facility.