



Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6

1025 NINTH AVENUE | GREELEY, COLORADO 80631
970-348-6000 | WWW.GREELEYSCHOOLS.ORG

2010 SCHOOL FACILITY CONSOLIDATION STUDY

WHY IS THIS SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION IDEA BEING CONSIDERED?

The consolidation discussion is being entirely driven by a budget crisis. School District 6 is facing a serious budget reduction for school year 2010-11, in the amount of \$9 million to \$16 million. This shortfall is caused by the State of Colorado's fiscal crisis. The governor and the legislature have said that school funding will have to be reduced, although the final amount won't be determined until May. Everyone's best estimates at this time are for the \$9 million to \$16 million range.

Because of this, District 6 must find ways now to reduce its spending by \$9 million to \$16 million for school year 2010-11. Waiting until May or June, right before the new school year starts, would be far too late to begin making any cuts, reductions or consolidations.

HOW WERE THESE SCHOOLS CHOSEN?

Cameron and Jefferson are the district's smallest elementary schools. Maplewood and Franklin are the smallest middle schools. All four of these schools have fewer students than their buildings' actual capacity.

District 6 has been studying student enrollment and building capacities for several months, with the intention of creating a long-term facilities plan. An independent consultant agency helped the district review its current school buildings, studying enrollment, capacity, and facility quality. In December, knowing the budget forecast that the state is projecting, the Board of Education asked district staff to use this facilities study to see if there were any areas where costs could be reduced by using our school buildings differently.

After studying the data, one potential scenario was identified by district staff that could save the district \$2 million:

- Combine the student populations of Cameron and Jefferson Elementary Schools and move them to the Maplewood Middle School building. Maplewood would then become an elementary school, for students in grade K-5. A few students might be moved to other nearby elementary schools, such as East Memorial, Romero or Martinez.
- Move the Maplewood Middle School students into the district's other middle schools. Most of the students would attend Franklin Middle School, while some students would possibly attend Heath, Brentwood or J. Evans middle schools.
- Move some or all of the district's alternative schools (Adelante, Colorado High, GAP, Trademark, Trademark West) to the Jefferson campus.
- Close the Cameron Elementary School building.

Other potential scenarios were also studied, but they did not save as much money as the proposal currently under consideration.

HOW WOULD THE \$2 MILLION BE SAVED?

- Fewer principals, assistant principals and support staff (few, if any, teaching positions would be eliminated as a result of the consolidation)
- Lower utility bills (Cameron utilities would be reduced to bare minimums)
- Reduced lease costs (we would no longer need to rent space for some of the alternative programs)

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO CONSOLIDATING THE SCHOOLS?

- A wider variety of classes would be available to students at a larger Franklin Middle School than are currently available at either Maplewood or Franklin middle schools.
- More after-school activities, and stronger activities, would be available students at a larger Franklin Middle School than are currently available at either Maplewood or Franklin middle schools.
- Jefferson and Cameron elementary schools would be able to combine their community partnerships and parent organizations at Maplewood, so students would have more opportunities and support.
- Alternative high school students would have a better school facility than they currently have. Jefferson has a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a wireless network, potential space for child care and health care services, and better access to public transportation.
- We would be able to enroll more alternative high school students, and reduce the existing waiting lists for these programs.

WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE?

In order to be able to make the move in time for school to begin in August, the Board of Education must make a decision soon on whether to do the consolidation or not. The Board is scheduled to make its decision at its regular meeting on Monday, February 22. Between now and then, district staff are collecting public feedback and questions, and Board members are speaking with staff, students, parents and community members. All of the input collected will be shared with all Board members prior to their decision.

WHAT OTHER CUTS CAN BE MADE TO BALANCE THE BUDGET?

Some people have asked if the district can find other places to cut the budget, rather than considering school consolidation. They have asked whether we can just cut back on supply purchases, or reduce administration, or have employees take a furlough day.

In order to reduce spending by \$9 million to \$16 million, the district will have to make many reductions in personnel, services and programs. Every school and department, in every corner of the district, will unfortunately feel the impact. Here are a few examples of ideas for where money could be saved:

- If every employee in District 6 took an unpaid furlough day (similar to what state employees are having to do this year), the district would save \$400,000.
- If the student-teacher ratios were increased by one student across the entire district, the district would save \$1.1 million.
- If central office personnel costs (administration and classified) were reduced by 10%, the district would save \$400,000.
- If school and department supply budgets were reduced by 10%, the district would save \$800,000.

Again, these are just examples of the dozens of items currently being studied and considered. Note that these examples do not add up to the total needed. Even more cuts would have to be made. The district is studying many potential areas of savings, looking at things that would save a few thousand dollars to a few million dollars.

While this school consolidation idea would not entirely eliminate the district's budget shortfall, it would address a significant portion of the required cuts. If the consolidation is not done, then \$2 million in other cuts and reductions would have to be made throughout the district.