

February 21, 2020

Information concerning the discussion of possible closure of Mountain View and Foothill Elementary Schools and the possible construction of a new school located at 641 East 200 North.

Answers to questions asked during public comment period of the Box Elder School Board Meetings held on January 15, 2020 and February 12, 2020. These questions are being answered by Superintendent Steve Carlsen. Many of these answers will likely be premature but based on the best information I have at this time I will answer the questions.

1—Will there be an adjustment to starting times because of extra difference in bus travel? [That will be taken into account once the decision has been made to build a new school.](#)

2—There are no sidewalks around that property location. Are you going to drop kids off the bus on the street? [I am 100% confident that students, both from cars and from busses, will be dropped off in designated bussing and car lanes that will be on the school property. Even with parking, car and bus drop off areas we are confident that there will plenty of green and play space.](#)

3—The Title I status is a concern. Will this new school be a Title I school? [Mountain View has the highest rate of free and reduced lunch students. Foothill was fifth on the list of free and reduced lunch students. We cannot guarantee that this new school will be a Title I but we feel like there is a high probability of it being one. Title I status is determined annually.](#)

4—There was a question asked about possibly splitting the school and having Kindergarten through second grade going to one of the two schools and third through fifth going to the new school or vice versa. [At this time, with this proposal there has been no discussion of splitting schools \(see answer #5\). Somewhat of the same concern was with having such a wide range of student ages. Kindergarten through fifth grade: would we be able to keep the students of varying ages separated? Having a two story building will help take care of some of the issues but the architects design will deal with issues like this.](#)

5—A patron asked why the district won't build two new smaller schools at the current locations and use the Bunderson School to house the students while those two schools are being built. [First of all the Bunderson building is in such poor shape and the heating system is need of an entire replacement before it could be used that it would not economically be very wise to do that. Plus we truly feel like both Foothill and mostly Mountain View are too small to have good collaboration and run good dual language programs. Plus building two buildings, even though smaller, would be far out of the budget that we are attempting to be within. One building that would house 1,000 students is less expensive than two buildings that would house 500 students to build and operate.](#)

6—One patron asked about the size of the school. Her research showed that larger schools have lower academic achievement. It was also stated that there was less student connection and community involvement. There was a concern of students being shoved through like cattle. [School size is very relative. There are elementary schools of 1,500 to 2,000. So yes if we were going that big I would agree with the size concerns. However, we have a test case right here in our own school district. Garland Elementary has been over 800 students in population. It currently is in the low 700s. It is currently Box Elder School District's highest scoring school on the RISE and doing very well with the Acadience Reading scores. Since we completed elementary boundary changes in the north of our school district last school](#)

year, many people are still requesting their children go to Garland which is the biggest school in our school district. At this point in the year the combined population of both Mountain View and Foothill is 805 students and 710 Garland students. I truly believe our best source of information for this issue is in our own school district.

6--Safety: As a Superintendent student safety is always number one on the list. Both physical and social emotional safety. I can guarantee you that with the new information and design that architects have in today's world this will be by far the safest school in our school district.

7—Will any of the staff lose jobs: As we look at this issue we feel like all of the administrators, counselors, coaches, and teachers will all be needed to staff this building. Para-professionals will be needed. Every year all of our elementary schools have to hire new para-professionals. We are certain with natural turnover there will be no issue here. Custodial, secretarial, food service we will have to deal with, if and when this takes place. We have a big enough school district that no one will lose a job. There may be a need to re-locate some of our folks but we will take all of that into account when the time arrives.

8—Parent Concerns and Comments: The question was asked is the Board listening to concerns and will they take the concerns seriously? Is the decision already made? A resounding yes to the question of parent concerns being taken seriously. You are the people who have the confidence to send your children to our care. We take that responsibility very seriously. We want your input and it will be weighed heavily. I will tell you that Box Elder School District has a serious problem with our Elementary Schools in Brigham City. Three of the four elementary schools in Brigham City are 60+ years old. Our School Board is doing the right thing by addressing this issue before it becomes a disaster. I mentioned in Board Meeting that our School Board has a subcommittee that is called the Long Term Capital Outlay Committee. We meet at least quarterly and sometimes more often. This committee has discussed this issue for over a year and it has been on the long term plan for several years now on how to address the concerns of these old buildings that have come to end of their economic and functional use. The plan to replace one or more buildings in Brigham City has been on this long term plan for some time now. It is in the **five year** cycle to replace these buildings. The next cycle is the **ten year** cycle. In that ten year cycle it states that the current bond that was passed to build two new high schools will be paid off. At that time the plan is to go to the voters and see if they will support a new middle school in the north and one in the south and at that time also approve a new elementary in the north and one in the south. Both middle schools would be replaced and built on the same sites where they currently sit. With the elementary school in the north, a school would be built in West Tremonton on the site the school district has already started to upgrade, that school would replace North Park. In the south a new elementary school would be built on school district owned land west of Young Intermediate School and it would replace Lake View. The decision to go forward with this new school has been discussed and vetted for well over a year. If you take into account the ten year plan I hope you will see if something is not done now we will have a bad situation in that ten year range.

9—How big is Bunderson site: 8.54 acres

10-How will SPED rooms be structured: Bryce Day, Special Education Director, will be involved in the design of these rooms

11- Will taxes be raised: No

12-Are you selling both properties: This has not yet been decided.

13-How will the DLI program be impacted: The program should run much better

14-Title I status: There is a high probability of this. It is a year to year decision.

15-Will there be free breakfast offered: Yes

16-Will there be cross walk and crossing guards: That is determined by the city. We will do all we can to encourage this.

17-Why are we spending 25 million to build a new school instead of spending 13 million and do a remodel on each site: Then we would have remodeled 60+ year old buildings.

18-What about the growth that will happen: We have plans for this. As we look at current trends we see the school age population of this area has been decreasing for the last five years. With the trend nationwide and in Utah that has shown that families used to have larger families than they do now is telling. Now Box Elder County has an average of 3.04 family members per household. See: www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/utah/average-household-size#map. According to Dr. Pam Perlich (a demographer that works out of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute in the University of Utah) Box Elder County school age children population is projected to decrease starting in 2023 and keep decreasing until 2029. (See attachment – State of Utah: School Age Population) During that time we are projected to lose roughly 400 students. It will start rising again after that. By 2050 Box Elder County is projected to have 1700 more school age children than we have now. That 1700 is spread out between our eleven elementary schools and seven secondary schools. Plus if you add in the local charter school, home school students, and online students that is far less than 100 students per building. Plus the projections for school age children in Box Elder County is only 600 more school age children in 2065 than in 2050. Once again if you divide that into BESD elementary and secondary schools plus the local charter school, home school, and online students in total that is 2300 projected new school age children. Roughly 100 more students per school and other avenues by 2065.

19-Are we going to do the minimum ADA access: We will have minimum plus what we need to have the most functional building possible.

Personal Comments from Superintendent Carlsen: Most of you do not know me so it is hard to relay my true intentions here. I am confident that as we go forward, if this school is approved, that in three to four years when your children are attending this school you will be beyond happy. I have seen several designs for two story elementary schools on 8.5 acre lots. The bus and car unloading (on campus) the parking, the playground, the separate Kindergarten wing and play area (outside) will absolutely astound you. The new building will be a source of tremendous pride. I feel bad that these two current schools have not been kept up to a high standard the last few years but there is a certain point that we just feel like we are dumping money into money pits. Will there still be problems? YES. Will there still be bullying? YES. Will everything be perfect with a new building? Absolutely not. But when you have a new building the kids, the staff, the parents and the community take on a new pride that will last for decades. When I was the Superintendent in North Summit School District a new school was constructed in about 2005, there was a 38% decrease in disciplinary issues in the first year of occupancy and it continued on after that. This new school will be the jewel of the east side of Brigham City.

What is the TIMELINE OF EVENTS?

- January 8, Board Meeting discussion and public comment
- February 12, Board Meeting discussion and public comment
- March 11, Board Meeting discussion and public comment
- April 8, Public Hearing within Board Meeting

- May 13, Board Meeting “Action Item” on the school closures and boundary changes and approval or disapproval to go forward with the building of a new school.