

**Portage Public Schools
Monitoring Report**

Policy Type: Executive Limitation
Policy Title: (2.11) Long-term Asset Planning

Global Board Policy

Long Term Asset decisions in terms of grounds, facilities, and infrastructure shall not deviate materially from the Board's Ends priorities or the long term wishes and needs of the community, risk long term fiscal jeopardy, unduly limit the flexibility of future decisions, be made independent of other long term asset decisions, or be made without appropriate levels of planning.

Certification

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitation, 2.11, "Long-term Asset Planning" in accordance with the monitoring schedule established by the Board. I certify that the information provided in this report is true as of May 2, 2016.



Signature

4.25.16

Date

Interpretation

I submit that the Board's Global Policy is comprehensively interpreted in the succeeding six sections. My interpretations of those sections, the report, and conclusion statements are presented below.

Note: This is the first Monitoring Report presented relative to this Policy.

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2.11.1 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not make such decisions without ensuring that the key stakeholders' long term wishes and needs are known.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the District establishes a process whereby key District stakeholders are provided an opportunity to express their wishes and needs relative to facility improvements across the District.

I further interpret key stakeholders as being a subset of District residents, employees of the District and other individuals who can affect or be affected by Portage Public Schools.

Report

In Spring of 2014 the District embarked on a several month long process of establishing the future direction for the school facilities in our School District. This planning process involved the participation of key stakeholders in the District. A Steering Committee comprised of key District stakeholders, under the guidance of Bill DeJong, was charged with reviewing demographic and facility data, examining future trends that will impact education, engaging the community in dialogue regarding future direction, formulating options for addressing program and facility needs, and presenting recommendations to the School Board regarding the future direction of the District.

This Facility Master Planning process, known as "*Designing for the Future*," concluded in December 2014, with a presentation of recommendations to the Portage Public Schools Board of Education. The recommendations helped establish the future direction for the next 10-15 years regarding the renewal of these capital resources. Implementing the plan will impact school facilities for more than 50 years.

The planning process involved the use of extensive hard data and the involvement of over 1,000 community and staff members.

Two community dialogues were held during the fall of 2014. These two dialogues were complemented with an on-line survey after each face-to-face dialogue session. The results of the two dialogues and the on-line surveys became the framework for the final recommendations which came to the Board.

To further understand stakeholder wishes and needs the District engaged the services of Perspectives Consulting Group to conduct a Community Survey in March and April of 2015. Survey results helped the Board formulate the ballot questions that would go before voters in November 2015.

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Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.11.2 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not make such decisions without assessing how they fit within a larger plan for all long term asset decisions.

Interpretation

This limitation does not require further interpretation except to say that it is difficult to project and identify all long term asset decisions which may surface or exist in the future. I interpret all to mean those grounds, facilities and infrastructure currently existing or projected to exist as a result of the passing of the 2015 Bond as well as the resources required to provide such assets.

Report

The *Designing for the Future* process, informed in part by the preceding District facility assessment, identified the condition of existing facilities and formulated recommendations for building improvements and replacements. The assessment indicated that in 2007, plans were put in place to address facility needs at Central and Northern High Schools, the construction of two new elementary schools, a new transportation/maintenance facility and the relocation of the central office.

It was recognized that facility needs went beyond the projects identified at that time and that phased renovation and construction would be necessary to address the remaining facility needs of the District. The assessment identified that there were major needs especially to the older elementary and middle schools as well as the District swimming pools and stadium.

The Facilities Master Plan recognizes that the timing and phasing of identified projects will require further study and analysis to determine the actual timeline of implementation. Additionally, there will need to be more detailed financial planning to determine the most appropriate way to structure the financing of these projects.

The plan has identified that the next phase will most likely include addressing needs at five (5) of the eight (8) elementary schools.

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Relative to resources, we looked at: existing outstanding debt (approximately \$116 million), tax rate history, estimated tax rates based on different levels of borrowing, estimated costs to homeowners and debt millage rates in the area. After careful review and in consultation with our financial advisors we determined that the total amount identified in the two ballot proposals fit into our long-term asset planning assumptions and could be supported by District residents.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.11.3 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not make such decisions without assessing their long term impact on academics and curriculum.

Interpretation

No further interpretation is made.

Report

The District relied on three separate but interconnected activities to identify the long-term impact on academics and curriculum.

The first was during Community Dialogue #1. Participants addressed issues such as appropriate size of school buildings, what will education look like in the future, what types of spaces should be included in a school, etc. The results were tallied and used as a basis for generating the options which were presented at Community Dialogue #2.

The second activity occurred in the fall of 2015 and resulted in the development of education specifications which will lead to the design and construction of dynamic educational facilities that will provide exceptional learning environments for adolescents. The educational specifications will create middle school facilities that are organized by classroom “pods” and “neighborhoods” which will create a sense of belonging for students, facilitate positive relationships between students and teachers, and support staff collaboration. The new facilities will accommodate a variety of instructional concepts and program delivery options. A key planning parameter in the creation of the educational specification is creating flexibility to be able to rearrange spaces to accommodate educational changes during the next 50 years.

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The third activity is actually a series of meetings of the Advisory Committees for each of the major program areas. Advisory Committees were established in January 2016 to help inform the Bond Implementation Steering Committee. Six advisory groups were identified: Campus Planning, Middle Schools, Curious Kids/Community High School, Pools, and Outdoor Event Facilities.

These groups will continue to meet throughout the design process to further refine the educational specifications and assess the long term impact on academics and curriculum.

Beyond these activities the Bond Implementation Steering Committee established Guiding Principles to provide a compass for thinking and decision-making as facilities are being designed and developed. Two of those principles directly speak to “long-term” thinking:

- Create long-term solutions that honor prior stakeholder investment.
- Minimize disruption while maintaining a long-term perspective.

A third principle speaks to “long-term” indirectly by referencing the long-term perspective generated through the two community dialogues:

- Stay true to the foundational premises of *Designing for the Future*.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.11.4 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not make such decisions without considering the impact of future demographic trends in the District and how they will impact future needs.

Interpretation

No further interpretation is made.

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Report

The *Designing for the Future* process was very much data-based including a close look at District demographics. The data reviewed included:

- Historical and Projected Enrollment by Grade Levels
- Building Capacity Versus Enrollment
- Appropriate Building Size (student capacity)
- Schools of Choice Enrollment/Trends
- Housing and Population Shifts
- Birth Rate
- Populations Trends
- Mapping of Student Enrollment
- Spatial Analysis of Student Population
- Overlay of Multiple Data to Determine Trends and Relationships
- Attendance Zone Analysis

This data and much more was shared with the *Designing for the Future* Steering Committee.

It was also made available on the District's website and was used to help guide the decision-making process.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.11.5 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not allow or cause material deviations from the original plan as portrayed to the community.

Interpretation

I interpret "material deviation" to mean any changes to Board approved plans or budgets which diminish the overall real or perceived value of Portage Public Schools, or those which undermine the integrity of the District's educational programming and services provided to its students.

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Report

The original plan was identified by the Board through the language placed on the 2015 ballot proposal. All of our decisions have been in line with that voter approved plan. Voters approved:

- Replacing Central and North Middle Schools
- Remodeling West Middle School and other District Buildings
- Improving and Developing Sites
- Relocating Athletic Fields and Structures at the two campuses
- Constructing a Pool at each High School Campus
- Constructing a Multi-purpose Outdoor Athletic and Performance Facility at each High School Campus

Furthermore, the Board approved the Campus Site Master Plans at a Special Meeting on February 29, 2016. Campus Site Master Plans for the two campuses indicated the preferred location of outdoor event facilities and pools and a development area for the location of the two new middle schools. Community High School and Curious Kids were shown as remaining at the Northern Campus in either the existing facility or in a portion of the current North Middle School.

There have been no material deviations from what was approved by voters or the Board or presented to the community.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.11.6 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not authorize schedules and change orders which significantly change costs, reduce quality, or result in significant shifts in scope or focus.

Interpretation

I make the following interpretations relative to this sub-policy:

- “Significantly change costs” Any changes to the schedule or individual contracts (through change orders) that exceed \$100,000 will require Board approval. (This is consistent with the Boards Governance Policies, specifically Executive Limitations 2.5.7.)

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- “Significantly reduce quality” The desired level of quality will be conveyed through our requests for bids and the specifications within those documents. Any changes, substitutions or modifications will be vetted by District staff, Owners Representative and Construction Manager. Approvals will only be granted when there is no significant reduction in quality.
- “Significant shifts in scope or focus” The scope and focus of this project have been clearly defined by the language contained in the two ballot questions and subsequent Board approval of the Campus Site Master Plans. Legally we are not allowed to deviate from the language that was approved by voters. Any material deviation from approvals made by the Board relative to scope or focus will require Board approval.

Report

No schedule changes or change orders have been made which will change costs, reduce quality, or result in shifts in scope or focus.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.