

**Jefferson County School Redesign
Summary of Responses
Community Meeting #2
October 19, 2009**

Below is the summary of group responses to the various redesign options. Groups were asked to give strengths and challenges for each option. They were also asked what they wanted the Board of Education members to know if they chose a particular option.

Option 1: House all 7th and 8th graders in a new wing at the high school; 6th graders would remain at their elementary schools.

Strengths: The most widely mentioned strength was favorable costs. Responses included saving money and greater economic feasibility. Increasing access to extra-curricular activities was mentioned several times as well as the “vertical” alignment of the curriculum.

Challenges: Separation of younger students from older students and ensuring age-appropriate education were major concerns. Loss of extra-curricular options and the loss of jobs were concerns that also got multiple mentions.

Considerations for the Board members if they choose this Option: Following up on the desire for separation, participants suggested having separate administrations and separate space. One mention was made specifically about grades 7-12 sharing the band room. Reduced space for athletics with only one middle school was a concern.

Taking a closer look at the cost and taking particular care in choosing administrators with an eye on fairness also received multiple mentions.

Option 1A: House 6th - 8th grade in a new wing at the high school.

Strengths: Keeping the 6th graders in the middle school was identified along with ensuring access to extra-curricular activities.

Challenges: Nine mentions of separation were listed and again reflected concerns about physical separation and also age-appropriate instruction. Questions were raised about whether or not the true costs were being considered. Keeping the identity of the middle school arose as well as the multiple uses of the lunch and media rooms.

Considerations for the Board members if they choose this Option: Only a few considerations were listed that included fair selection of personnel and having a common discipline and dress code.

Option 2: Build a new middle school that would house 6th - 8th graders.

Strengths: The top of the list were maintaining the middle school identity and the separation and safety of students. More jobs could be spared.

Challenges: The option would be costly and require tax increases. The merging of faculties and economic losses would affect Wrens and Louisville. The 6th graders are too mature to be in the PK-5 environment.

Considerations for the Board members if they choose this Option: The main consideration, mentioned three times, is the cost and whether or not it could be built for less. The location of a new middle school is an issue.

Option 3: Build a new wing onto Louisville Middle to house all 6th - 8th graders.

Strengths: Maintaining the middle school concept was mentioned most and that it would be less expensive than options 1 or 2.

Challenges: At the top of the list was the cost and not having state funds. They also mentioned transportation cost. Cost was followed by travel time from Wrens. This option had the sharpest language. “This will be hard to sell.”

Considerations for the Board members if they choose this Option: The Board would need to consider the economic impact. The school should create a new identity with a new name and a new mascot. It should also be treated as a new entity. Participants predicted the most resistance for this option.

Option 4: Stay as we are with six schools.

Strengths: We could have smaller class sizes and maintain more community schools with community identity. We would have a minimum of vacant buildings and less travel for students.

Challenges: By far the most significant challenges were financial. More cost, more need for cuts and more operational cost. They predicted a greater loss of jobs because of declining enrollment.

Considerations for the Board members if they choose Option: The Board would need to look hard for other funds to make this feasible. A tax increase would be likely. Look at the likelihood of staff cuts.