

STRATEGIC PLANNING 20 QUESTIONS

LAPEER
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
District of Choices

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<p>What is the purpose of the strategic planning process?</p>	<p>We want to secure the long-term viability of the District by identifying the best structure to meet the educational needs of the community now and into the future.</p>
<p>Is this plan subject to change?</p>	<p>Yes. Based on staff/student/community feedback, we will continue to develop this plan as we receive input throughout the process. This includes focus groups, surveys, community forums, etc. Stay tuned for these opportunities. This is by no means an exhaustive list of questions that will arise during this process.</p>
<p>What is the timeline for implementation of the strategic plan, once it is finalized?</p>	<p>The proposed renovation of the CFI-West site would begin in 2020. The new high school would open for the 2022-23 school year and the new configurations at the elementary and middle levels would begin that same year.</p>
<p>How does this five-year strategic plan compare to the last?</p>	<p>The District's last five-year strategic plan culminated in the merger of our two traditional high schools and continued the trend of right-sizing the District operationally. In 2004, the District operated 16 schools. After our last strategic plan was implemented, which included three school closures, we lowered our number of schools to nine — the same number we operate today.</p>
<p>Why is the current plan necessary?</p>	<p>In the midst of our last strategic planning process, we assured the community that we would re-evaluate our plan over time and continue the process in another five years. During this time, the enrollment trends we witnessed back then have continued. As a result, our current structure is not feasible for the long-term financial viability of the District.</p>

<p>Why is enrollment declining and what impact does that have on the District's budget?</p>	<p>Enrollment has been on a steady decline for many years, due in large part to the declining birth rate in Lapeer County. This is not a phenomenon limited to Lapeer, however, as birth rates across the state have declined since the Great Recession. For example, at the conclusion of the 2017-18 school year we had 476 students in our senior class. The following fall, we had 322 incoming students in Kindergarten. The difference of 154 students represents nearly \$1.2 million in lost revenue.</p>
<p>How can the District save on operational costs by streamlining the structure/configurations?</p>	<p>Operational savings from this plan, or some iteration of it, would be gained in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer buildings/students require fewer staff • The overall cost of day-to-day maintenance, utilities and major capital expenditures would be lowered significantly • Properties that are no longer in use would be marketed and sold (as we have done in the past with Elba, Hadley, Seaton, Attica, etc.)
<p>What are the advantages of upper and lower elementary campuses?</p>	<p>The advantages of having the majority of individual elementary grades together in one building are not limited to the operational savings it provides.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of our learning coach model, teacher collaboration and professional development. • Elimination of many, if not all, of the split classrooms and class size outliers that we have under our current structure. • The structure allows us to focus more of our resources, including those earmarked for student safety, into fewer buildings. • It would also streamline our delivery of specials programs – music, art, PE, etc.
<p>What about the year-round program?</p>	<p>The plan calls for the maintenance of the year-round program at both the elementary and middle levels, as it currently exists.</p>
<p>What about the “neighborhood schools” concept?</p>	<p>As you read above, we have not had anything close to true “neighborhood schools” in the District in more than a decade. We have one of the largest school districts in the lower peninsula. In 2004, we operated 12 elementary schools. Today, because of the continuing enrollment decline, we have five. This decline is not projected to level off for another several years.</p>

<p>What about the unique programming options that exist at individual elementary schools like STEM at Lynch?</p>	<p>Under this structure, these opportunities will be made available to even more elementary students.</p>
<p>The District has the two highest-performing elementary schools in the county on the M-STEP. Why close those buildings?</p>	<p>We have a fundamental belief that student achievement is not about brick and mortar facilities, but about the learning community that resides inside — students, teachers, support staff and parents. They make all the difference.</p>
<p>What would happen to the elementary buildings once they are closed?</p>	<p>The facilities would be marketed for sale and the funds from those sales would be used for capital improvements at the remaining buildings. Anything of value in those buildings will be retained and utilized at the remaining buildings — security hardware, playground equipment, furniture, portable technology, etc.</p>
<p>How would this structure impact class sizes?</p>	<p>Even though it seems logical that fewer buildings would mean larger class sizes, this is actually not the case. First, having the vast majority of all third graders, for instance, in the District in one building would eliminate the large class size outliers that we sometimes see under our current structure.</p>
<p>Would this structure require fewer teachers?</p>	<p>The number of teachers we require is tied directly to the number of students we have. This structure would require the District to examine/assess the current deployment/assignment/configuration of staff (support staff, deans, teachers, and administrators) in order to best meet the academic needs of students.</p>
<p>Why would the District renovate West instead of building a brand new high school?</p>	<p>There are still several parts of the CFI campus that are relatively new, including science labs and an auxiliary gymnasium. Renovation is the most cost-effective strategy in this case, and we have fairly recent examples of how major renovations can transform facilities (RW and Zemmer).</p>
<p>What would happen to the programs now housed at CFI if large parts of the building are under construction?</p>	<p>As enrollment continues to decline, we will have space in our existing facilities to house the programs that are now at CFI including PLTW (STEM), Senior Capstone, Community High School and Lapeer Virtual.</p>

<p>What role would the community spaces play in the day-to-day operation of the high school?</p>	<p>We have a fundamental belief that community partnerships enhance the classroom experience for our students and staff. Our vision for the future is one that reflects this belief. We want community organizations and businesses to take an active role in the education of our students, offering them experiences that they wouldn't ordinarily have in the classroom. We have limited resources, so we must begin to work together for the betterment of our entire community.</p>
<p>How would this structure impact travel times on buses?</p>	<p>This structure would allow us to streamline our transportation department as well, allowing for more flexibility with our runs. As it stands today, we still transport students from all four corners of the District to LHS, RW, Zemmer, CFI and Turrill Elementary.</p>
<p>Is the Superintendent and/or members of the Central Office Leadership Team willing to meet with any community member to discuss the strategic planning process?</p>	<p>Yes. Our team is seeking as much input as possible from the community.</p> <p>Contacts:</p> <p>Matt Wandrie, Superintendent: mwandrie@lapeerschools.org Jared Field, Dir. of Communications: jfield@lapeerschools.org</p>

