

New and Improved!

In order to better inform our community, we have taken our FAQ's and organized them according to topic. The numbers of the questions from the previous posting have remained the same, so that the old version of the FAQ's may still be referenced.

- 1. General**
- 2. FST / TMP reports**
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- 7. Eagle, Flanders,
William Grace, Wooddale**
- 8. Highmeadow**
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General

13. *Is the District looking at ways to generate revenue? What are some specific measures the District is considering?*

Yes. For example, contracts with advertising companies for signage in our athletic facilities are being explored. Work is also being done to look into grants and other sources of funding.

39. *Why do we have a football field and track for each high school?*

Each high school has its own sports teams including varsity football, junior varsity football, track, girl's soccer, boy's soccer, girl's and boy's lacrosse. Each of these teams play a sports schedule that, if venues were combined, would lead to events occurring late into the evening because they each need a football-size playing field. Also, each of these teams requires daily practice times. There would be too many teams on shared fields with practices going into the evening hours. In addition, busing students to other schools for "home" games and practices has its own associated costs. Not all high school students have access to vehicles. The high school physical education classes also make use of the track facilities during the school year.

71. *Should we be making facility closure decisions before contract talks?*

The needed budget reductions amount to approximately \$16 million for the 2010/2011 school year and an additional \$11 million in 2011/2012 unless the legislature adds more revenue for schools. With these numbers, it will take a combination of significant budget reductions, school closures and employee concessions to get us through these devastating economic times.

73. *Is the District concerned that this will start a downward spiral for Farmington Public Schools: school closures, upset community, people leaving?*

The decision to close schools is difficult no matter what. The goal is to more efficiently provide the same quality education to our students, no matter the school. Closing schools will save money allowing resources to remain for programs.

75. *From an educational/teaching standpoint, what configuration does data support as far as quality and improved test scores?*

Staff are working to provide this data.

90. *What is the potential tuition loss if the preschool program is moved and there are fewer classrooms available?*

It is difficult to assess how much revenue would be lost if the preschool programs were consolidated or changed from the existing locations. We know families like the flexibility of having different options such as in-school options (Hillside, Eagle), as well as locations near their homes (Alameda, FCS). If fewer classes are available, that may mean lower revenue, yet the overall impact on operating expenses may decrease as well. For example, in a smaller site, there is less overhead so the impact of fewer classes may be negligible.

100. *Was a commercial realtor talked to about the sites?*

In 2008, a marketability study of all sites was completed.

106. *Does the term "absorb" mean "redistrict"?*

Yes. Redistrict is perhaps the best word to use.

General

109. Has the dollar impact in per-pupil dollars been looked at if a parochial or charter school buys one of the closed sites?

When a decision is made by the Board on which sites will close, a disposition plan for the closed sites will be developed.

111. Why can't the Maxfield Training Center be considered for a source of revenue instead of packaged as a sale item?

Past attempts at this have not proven successful. The site does not have a kitchen or dining facility which would be required. A food service company was contacted a few years ago to gauge interest without success.

112. Did anyone talk to the City Council/Planning Commission about the empty buildings and how this will affect the City?

Both the City of Farmington and Farmington Hills were aware of the Facilities Study. Both city managers were members of the former Learning Configuration and Facilities Study Team. When the marketability study was conducted in 2008, city planners were contacted for their insight into possible site uses if buildings were closed.

113. At a previous Board Meeting it was indicated that there would be overcrowding for 3-5 years. Why was it said at the February 2 Public Forum that it won't be overcrowded?

There was a clarification that schools may operate near capacity levels, which may feel like overcrowding.

115. Was it considered to create any buildings as "green buildings"?

Not at this time. To make a building certifiably green would require an infusion of money or a rebuild of the school. Overall, our schools need too many capital improvements to consider spending in this area at this time.

FST & TMP Reports

- 7. *Why wasn't Eagle Elementary School considered for closure before Wooddale and William Grace; given its low score on the TMP reports, location on the edge of the district, and potential resale value?***

Eagle houses a greater number of students more than Wooddale and William Grace. There was not room to relocate this number of students.

- 8. *How many buildings does the District operate in total? What are their uses? Why have we not considered closing more non-school buildings before closing schools?***

The answer to the first part of this question can be found in the table of contents of the TMP Architecture Facility Report posted on the District web site at: www.farmington.k12.mi.us/district/committees/facilities_study/tmp_facility_report.pdf All sites were examined during the process, including non-school sites. Many of these could not be moved or combined with other existing structures. For example, there were not enough parking spaces for our maintenance department to be housed with transportation.

- 43. *How can you calculate building capacity without considering class size?***

Class size is integral in determining building capacity and so is the number of available rooms for classroom purposes. That being said, a staffing ratio of one teacher for each 26 students does not necessarily mean that the class size in each classroom will be 26. Some classes may be smaller and some larger depending upon the age distribution of students in the school.

- 47. *Were formal walkthroughs conducted?***

Formal walkthroughs were not conducted by Committee members. Floor plans of schools and buildings identifying how each space in the school is used was prepared by principals and provided to each Committee member. In addition, Catherine Cost, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services; Cheryl Cannon, Executive Director for Operational Services; and Ron Aten, District Facilities Architect attended meetings to assist the Committee with questions. TMP Architects and McCarthy/Smith, construction managers, very familiar with all facilities, provided written information to the Committee in a Facilities Report (on our web site), as well as a presentation to the Committee summarizing the report.

- 52. *Was there any consideration put into closing buildings on more prime locales?***

Yes, location was a consideration, but only one of several considerations including age and condition of structure, geographic location and school size to name a few.

- 56. *Why weren't the smallest elementary schools considered?***

Small schools were definitely considered. However, school size was only one of several considerations. Other considerations included age and condition of structure and geographic location to name a few.

FST & TMP Reports

57. Did the Team consider rolling Farmington Community School & Alameda programs into the elementary schools instead of closing schools?

There was strong support to retain the early childhood center concept rather than spreading preschool classes around to every school in the District. It is instructionally more effective to house preschool staff together to allow for better collaboration and program delivery. Also, preschool special education students attend the early childhood centers and are more appropriately included in the preschool classes. Efficiency also is better by assuring that classes are optimized since tuition is a result of program costs.

The Committee did investigate an addition onto Alameda to accommodate all preschool programming, however the cost was \$4.1 million and this option did not make the recommendation stage.

58. How did the FST determine the number of buses necessary to purchase?

They looked at the number of walkers at each school recommended for closure, as well as existing routes for those schools and estimated the number that would be needed to accommodate the new students requiring a bus.

60. What was the make up of the FST team?

The members were picked based on demographic information (gender, race/cultural background, where they live, age), prior experience and educational background. A selection committee used a rubric to rank all the applications that were submitted. In the end, a cross-section of community members was asked to be a part of the team.

63. Are we looking at academic achievement as a factor for closing schools?

The rubric for closing schools looked at the building and site conditions, operating costs, space utilization and cohort progression (p. 14 – 15 of the report). While academic success for all children is our primary goal, we believe it is the teachers and families that make great learning environments – not just where they are housed.

74. Was the Facilities Study Committee asked to consider the 5/6, 7/8 configuration?

This was not part of the original charge, however, with the worsening economic forecast the Committee was asked to look into it.

81. The Report states a \$4.7 million one-time cost to close the schools. How can it cost several million dollars to close a couple of schools?

The \$4.7 million cost was for the Grand River Option. It includes \$1.9 million to add some rooms to the middle schools to accommodate the middle school program and additional lockers; costs to provide repurposing to O.E. Dunckel to accommodate Highmeadow K-8 such as a playground; costs to remodel 10 Mile to house the staff from Maxfield Training Center that is proposed for closure; additional buses for students that are walkers to O.E. Dunckel, William Grace and Wooddale; purchase of mobile computer labs for schools because computer rooms will become classrooms; and funds to modify some rooms at the elementary schools for special education student needs to name a few. Following implementation, savings is estimated at \$2.2 million per year. Costs for other options are for similar items.

FST & TMP Reports

85. Please disclose where the FST committee members live and what schools their children attend/attended?

1. 2 children at Highmeadow, resides in Kenbrook, East and North attendance areas
2. 1 child at East Middle School
3. 0 children in school; resides in Hillside, Power and Farmington High attendance area
4. 1 child at Beechview and 1 at East; resides in Harrison attendance area
5. 2 at Flanders
6. 1 at Warner and 1 at Harrison; Eagle attendance area
7. 2 children at Power; resides in Longacre, Power and Farmington High School attendance area
8. 0 children in schools; resides in William Grace attendance area
9. 1 at Forest, 1 at Warner Middle School; resides in North Farmington attendance area
10. 0 children in school; resides in Gill, Power and Farmington High attendance area
11. 0 children in schools; resides in Forest, Dunckel and North Farmington attendance area
12. 0 children in school; resides in Flanders, Power and Farmington attendance area
13. 2 at Beechview, 2 at East, 2 at Harrison
14. 0 children in school; resides in Hillside, Power and Farmington High attendance area
15. 0 children in school; resides in William Grace, East and Harrison High attendance area
16. 1 at Wood Creek and 1 at Warner; resides in Harrison attendance area
17. 1 child at Farmington High; resides in Gill and Power attendance area
18. 1 child at Power; resides in Longacre and Farmington High attendance area
19. 2 children at Highmeadow; resides in Wood Creek, Warner and Harrison High attendance area
20. 1 child at Power and 1 at Farmington High; resides in Gill attendance area
21. 1 child at Beechview and 1 at East; resides in Harrison attendance area

22. 2 children at Farmington High; resides in Lanigan, Power attendance area
23. 1 child at Wooddale; resides in East and North Farmington attendance area
24. 0 children in school; resides in Wooddale, Dunckel and North Farmington attendance area
25. 1 child at Longacre and 2 at Power; resides in Farmington High attendance area

86. How can you assure the community that the FST was not biased toward saving their own neighborhood school?

As you can see from the list, the Committee membership represented a good cross section of the community living in various geographic locations and with varied backgrounds. The objective data, including facility assessment, enrollment and existing capacity was reviewed and studied by the entire Committee. With all due respect, the Facilities Study Team members left their neighborhood school hat at the door and worked diligently to recommend what they feel is best for the District.

94. Are there detailed capacity calculations for the schools?

Each school's existing floor plan was evaluated for the number of rooms available. After subtracting specialty rooms for music, art, learning center and special education, the number of resulting rooms were used to determine capacity.

95. If there were 30 members on the FST Committee, how come there were only 13 members at the February 2 Public Forum?

Not all members were on the stage. Several were in the audience. Also, due to family reasons, illness, work schedules or being out of town, some members were not able to attend.

FST & TMP Reports

96. Why wasn't it looked at to consolidate Alameda, Ten Mile and Community School?

The consolidation of Alameda and Community School was studied. It was determined that the two programs could not be accommodated in one facility without losing classroom space. Ten Mile is not a school, but rather houses the District's science kit program and information technology network operations center. There is no building that can accommodate the programs offered within these three schools.

97. Why was Fairview even on the TMP Report?

It was part of the building assessment study so that the Facilities Study Team could determine if the school should be purposed or disposed.

98. How old are the update and repair numbers in the Report?

The Facility Assessment was completed during 2009.

101. Why did the Committee ask for input after the recommendations and not before?

The committee was charged with making recommendations. The Facility Study Committee held a meeting to answer questions. As is normally done, the Board receives the recommendations, then gathers input from the public. This is no different than any other decision.

102. Shouldn't the District be looking at an efficiency usage study to bring all sites up to efficient levels?

Yes. We feel the Facilities Study Team did just this with the exception of the high schools. High school enrollments do not warrant any consolidation at this time.

105. How can Flanders be listed in the TMP Report as having only 10 General Ed classrooms when there are currently 13 General Ed classrooms?

Although there are more than 10 classrooms, space was allocated for special education, literacy and bilingual needs, art and music. This is why the final number was 10.

110. Why were academic rankings NOT taken into account when choosing schools to close?

We know we have talented teachers, administrators and support staff. No matter where they are located, they will help students of all ability levels be successful.

116. Why wasn't a curriculum configuration team working alongside the FST?

We wanted the Facilities Study Team to be independent in their work without administrative influence.

121. How come the fourth option wasn't publicized or put on the Survey? Will there be an additional survey for this option?

There seems to be no support from the Facilities Study Team or interest by the administration and Board in this option. Not all preschool room needs are met in this option.

FST & TMP Reports

126. What are the bus costs for the Orchard Lake option and for Option D?

The bus costs for the Orchard Lake option are estimated at one time costs for four buses at \$100,000 each and \$260,000 annually for four additional bus drivers and mileage fuel, insurance, etc. Buses are used for 10-12 years.

The bus costs for Option D are estimated at one time costs for eight buses at \$100,000 each (\$800,000) and \$65,000 annually for eight additional bus drivers and mileage (\$520,000) which includes fuel, insurance, etc. Initially the cost was estimated at 16 additional buses (eight for elementary and eight for the 5/6; 7/8) with a one time cost of \$1.6 million and 16 new routes totaling \$1,400,000 annually. This was revised because of the District's tiered busing approach whereby secondary students are brought to school first and then the buses are reused for elementary transportation.

127. What is the cost to run a school bus for one year (bus driver, insurance, gas, etc...)?

The annual cost is approximately \$65,000 not including the cost of the bus which is approximately \$100,000. The life of a bus is about 10-12 years.

Board Process

- 10. Will the Board be bound by the FST recommendations or can the Board act on its own, adopting different choices than presented by the FST?**

The Board can select one of the FST options, parts of the different options or elect not to implement any changes at all.

- 11. Does the Board have a targeted amount of savings related to building closures and reconfigurations?**

The Board has no specific target but instead will examine how to efficiently provide opportunities to all of our students.

- 12. Will the Board be considering a “stepped” implementation plan over several years?**

In order to minimize redistricting and recoup funds, the goal is to make every effort to do this as quickly as possible.

- 14. How can the FST (or any reconfiguration) changes be implemented if the Board doesn't know the public will support a bond or sinking fund for capital improvements?**

The options presented can be implemented without a sinking or bond fund. However, long term maintenance of each site is something that will need to be addressed.

- 15. When the Board makes a decision, is it etched in stone or will they reconsider based on public reaction, changed funding or other factors?**

Efforts through Board of Education meetings, public forums, surveys and other meetings are being made to collect information and gather feedback. Once a decision is made, it will be implemented.

- 16. Isn't the time frame for Board consideration too short for such a big decision?**

In fact, an additional two weeks was allotted to the process so the Board could get feedback and ask questions.

- 46. Will the Board please first look at and take action on the District's budget reductions before looking at closing schools?**

The purpose of looking at facilities first is to consider how much can be saved by closing facilities so that more educational programming for students can be retained.

- 70. Is the Board of Education reviewing all of the Committee data and the TMP Report?**

Yes.

- 72. How many Board members had children attend Highmeadow Common Campus?**

None currently have children at Highmeadow. Three have had children in the past.

- 88. Does the Board of Education support the school of choice program?**

There are currently many levels of school of choice in the District. For example, there is the option for intra-district at the elementary and secondary schools, as well as Highmeadow. There is also out-of-district school of choice for kindergarten through second grade students. At the high school level, there is the option to attend the International Academy. So yes, the Board does support school of choice programs.

Board Process

103. What factors is the Board considering beyond the scope of the FST recommendations?

The Board is looking at both long term and short term implications. This includes educational, as well as financial considerations.

119. Was the direction from the Board to maintain a K-5 school of choice at High-meadow or another building?

The Facilities Study Team was not charged with changing current program of which school of choice is a District program.

Implementation

- 17. *What will the Board do with the closed buildings - will they wait to sell them until it is determined they are not needed as schools anymore?***

These types of decisions have yet to be made. Sites could be sold, "moth-balled" or leased.

- 18. *What impact will the FST results (building closures) have on class sizes?***

None. Staffing levels will remain as they have, unless a change is made due to budget reasons. The number of schools has nothing to do with class size.

- 23. *When will new attendance area boundaries be drawn and announced?***

This will be dependent on when each site would close. Every effort will be made to do this quickly so that transition teams can begin ASAP to help students, parents and staff with the changes.

- 24. *Given the potentially uncertain nature of renovation and construction processes, how will the District ensure that necessary facility changes (impacting many sites) are ready for fall of 2010?***

Depending on the option chosen by the Board of Education, this will be a big factor to determine when the implementation can happen (fall 2010 or fall 2011).

- 38. *Will there be a ceiling for class size based on grade level?***

There is presently not a ceiling for class size, although we certainly do everything we can do to balance these numbers.

- 40. *Would the Maxfield Training Center be available for some other organization to lease?***

If the Maxfield Training Center (MTC) is closed, a decision whether the building would be offered for sale or lease has not been made yet.

- 41. *Will there be any closings at the high school level?***

It was determined that the number of projected high school students over the next five years is expected to decline, but not enough to close a high school.

- 42. *What is the process that follows after the schools that are closing are finalized?***

A transition plan would be developed including time lines for redistricting students to new schools; school transition teams including parents, staff and students would be formed to plan, acquaint students to their new school; staffing assignments would be reviewed; buses would be ordered and other necessary plans put in place to ensure a successful transition.

- 45. *How many schools have capacity to house 450-600 students?***

Based upon the work of the Facilities Study Team, five schools have capacity for 450 students. They are Eagle, Gill, Hillside, Lanigan and Wood Creek with an average class size of 26. Kenbrook is close with a capacity of 442 students.

- 48. *What are the new middle school boundaries?***

No redraw of boundaries will occur until the Board takes action on a recommended option or other facility plan.

Implementation

49. After redistricting, where will the bus stops be?

The transportation department will need to review all stops and prepare new stops, as necessary, once decisions on school closings and new attendance areas are made.

51. Will we know about re-districting early for 504's & IEP's ?

Yes, 504 plans and IEP's will be reviewed to assure proper implementation.

53. Has anyone contacted city developers about purchasing the buildings set to close?

We feel that would be premature. Once decisions are made, a plan for sale of property will be developed.

54. Don't we expect buildings to run at capacity?

Buildings should run at or near capacity, yes. That is not always feasible depending of where the students reside, however the goal would be to have equal distribution.

55. What will be done with the empty buildings to ensure that they will not become eyesores & hazardous to the community?

Once decisions are made about which buildings should close, the administration will work with the Board of Education to develop a plan for sale or lease. In the meantime, the District's facilities management department will continue to maintain the facility so that it doesn't become an eyesore. Grass is cut, grounds are maintained and the building is checked continuously. The facility's alarm system remains in place.

59. What is the payback period for the investments to implement the facility changes recommended in the FST report?

The net present value for each option was calculated over a five-year period and includes five-year savings, one time costs and avoided capital project needs cited in the TMP report although these needs were estimated at 10 percent over five-years:

Orchard Lake Option	Net present value is \$6.5 million
Grand River Option	Net present value is \$7.6 million
Shiawassee Option	Net present value is \$7.4 million

65. If the configuration changes and the students are overcrowded into the other middle schools and the K-8 is set up for overflow, how can you guarantee that each school will decrease by 100 students?

One way of doing this is to have a lottery and opening only 100 slots for each of the three attendance areas.

77. If schools are closed, can the teachers follow the students to their new schools?

The bargaining agreement with the teachers sets forth how teachers are able to select or be re-assigned to new schools. Although we hope some may be able to follow their students, it is unlikely all will be able to do so.

79. Has the District been engaged in work "behind the scenes" to work out problems of redistricting?

Some preliminary work has been done to identify how many students by grade level live where. Until it is known which schools will close, this work cannot go further.

Implementation

80. If the Grand River or Shiawassee options are chosen, what will the District do about the population that may choose to leave the District?

As with all of the options, our hope is families continue to stay and experience the wealth of educational opportunities our schools provide. The District ultimately cannot control the decisions individual families make in the best interest of their children.

92. Is the District prepared to spend money on school closures during this financial crisis in our District?

Yes. Although there is an initial cost to close sites, over five years there is substantial savings. This means more funds are available to support instructional programs during this crisis. The goal is to effectively deliver a world-class education to each child in the District.

122. Is closing schools really worth all the trouble?

The District, and all schools in Michigan, face a financial crisis. It will take a combination of budget reductions, efficient use of schools and buildings and labor concessions to keep as much program for our students intact as possible.

125. Will the District provide early childhood in the North end area?

The District will be providing early childhood programs at Alameda Early Childhood Center and Farmington Community School.

5/6 & 7/8 Configuration

9. Won't the 5/6, 7/8 configuration cause more overcrowding in the middle schools?

This option would create schools of 800-1,000 students. Although very tight, the middle schools can accommodate this number of students.

87. Was staff certification looked at regarding the 5/6, 7/8 configuration option?

The present thought is to have elementary certification for teachers in the 5/6 and secondary for 7/8.

117. Would the capacity used in the 5/6, 7/8 option be the same as closing Dunckel?

Not necessarily. The educational program and subsequent student schedules for 6-8 are different and need more rooms than a 5/6 – 7/8 option.

99. What market value study was done for neighborhoods after the 5/6, 7/8 configuration was suggested?

None.

123. If the 5-8 configuration would close as many elementary schools as the 5/6, 7/8, why is this not being considered?

School leaders are not in favor of combining nine-year-olds and 13-year-olds.

124. Why was the 5/6, 7/8 configuration introduced to the Committee so late into the process?

It was not until school leaders prepared "mock" schedules for three middle schools that it was realized the three schools would be very full. School leaders then suggested a 5/6 – 7/8 configuration be considered.

Dunckel Middle School

19. If Dunckel Middle School is re-purposed, could the current middle school students be grandfathered into the “new” Dunckel school?

We know Dunckel could accommodate the current Highmeadow students (316) in addition to 100 sixth, 100 seventh and 100 eighth grade students for a total enrollment of 616 students.

Yet, questions have been raised whether current Dunckel students could remain until they reach the end of their eighth grade year. If this were to occur, then enrollment would be closer to 850 students (50 new kindergarten students, 316 students first through sixth grade, 50 additional sixth grade students to bring the class size to 100, 207 seventh grade students [current 6th grade students] and 231 eighth grade students [current 7th grade students]) attend Dunckel. It is uncertain whether or not the facility could programmatically meet the needs of 850 students, K-8.

20. If Dunckel Middle School is re-purposed, would the students at Dunckel be given preference to enroll in a Dunckel school of choice?

At if this point in time, yes.

21. If Dunckel Middle School is re-purposed to a school of choice program, would sibling preference still be in operation?

Yes, as this is Board policy.

22. If Dunckel Middle School is re-purposed, what will be the possible home schools for students who attend Dunckel now?

Warner, East and Power Middle Schools. No decisions regarding attendance area boundaries have been made.

37. How would the Dunckel students be split up?

Work to determine this will begin as soon as a decision from the Board of Education has been made.

50. Which high school will the displaced Dunckel students go to?

After decisions are made regarding school closures, elementary and middle school attendance boundaries will be determined. Only then will we know which adjustments to high school attendance areas will be needed.

108. Why was it proposed to repurpose Dunckel instead of Warner Middle School?

As the FST report states, Dunckel is centrally located.

Eagle, Flanders, William Grace, Wooddale

44. Is there any chance of repurposing Wooddale instead of closing it?

The Facilities Study Team came to the conclusion that the District has more schools and buildings than it needs and can financially support. Therefore, it is not likely the District would repurpose the school for its use. That is not to say the school couldn't be repurposed for another non-profit or private purpose that meets the zoning ordinance of Farmington Hills.

62. Why wasn't Eagle considered for closing?

Eagle is one of the elementary schools that has the largest capacity (can house the greatest number of students). Due to this fact, there was not room to house these children in other elementary schools if Eagle were to close.

78. If Wooddale closes, will other schools be redistricted?

The closing of any school(s) will mean redistricting for students. This is a great point that all families need to know.

Highmeadow

- 1. What does Highmeadow Common Campus offer that other schools in the District don't offer (asking for justification of the program and potential program expansion)?**

Highmeadow follows the same curriculum and utilizes the same common assessments as our other elementary schools. The instructional difference is that Highmeadow teachers compact the curriculum allowing for time within the instructional day to extend and enrich the curriculum. Highmeadow has also begun to explore international mindedness and uses school wide themes to enrich the curriculum.

- 2. If you closed the Highmeadow school of choice program, would the home schools have space to accept these students?**

This has not been examined, as it was not considered as one of the options or in the addendum of the Facilities Study Team (FST) report.

- 3. Why is Highmeadow given such a high priority to maintain and grow?**

The District supports this school of choice as it provides an option for parents and their students. It also attracts families to our District and data has shown Highmeadow attracts students who would have otherwise not attended Farmington Public Schools.

- 6. Was closing Highmeadow a consideration?**

Closing the school was considered, not the Highmeadow instructional program itself--meaning the school could close, but the program would need to be relocated to another site.

- 26. If Highmeadow offers so much more than neighborhood elementary schools, why has the model not been rolled out for all others to follow?**

Parts of what Highmeadow does has impacted the 12 other elementary schools. For example, the new Bridges (math, "number corner" is from Bridges) program was piloted at Highmeadow. It was recently adopted Districtwide and Highmeadow teachers helped to train other teachers. Highmeadow offers parents an alternative to their traditional elementary school.

- 27. If Highmeadow offers no more of a benefit to its students than their neighborhood schools would, why is it in existence?**

Highmeadow is in existence as it provides a choice for parents and students.

- 31. Why was the Highmeadow lottery held before the Facilities Study Team recommendations were voted on by the Board of Education?**

Traditionally the Highmeadow lottery has always been held at the end of January or in the beginning of February.

- 67. What is the cost of operating Highmeadow?**

The cost is not different than other elementary schools except that Highmeadow is allocated additional teacher time to provide enrichment classes twice per week in addition to the standard physical education, art and music classes provided to all elementary schools. The cost of these enrichments is about \$90,000 per year. However, Highmeadow students do not receive bus transportation to and from school which is estimated at \$93,000 annually.

Highmeadow

91. Will a Highmeadow/Dunckel lottery be held before or after the whole District is redistricted?

As of now, the Highmeadow lottery for 2010-2011 is scheduled for early March. Should the Board decide to expand the K-8 school of choice option, this may be revisited.

133. How many families do you think will be moving here in the future to participate in the Highmeadow lottery?

Although the answer to this question is unknown, we do know that 33 children came to Highmeadow that otherwise attended or would have attended schools outside of Farmington. This represents more than \$330,000 in revenue to the District.

134. Can the District re-open the Highmeadow lottery process once the final decision is made on the closing of schools?

This is being examined and no decision has been made to date.

IB / School of Choice / K-8

- 4. *Where did the K-8 expanded Highmeadow idea come from? If configurations were not part of the charge given to Facilities Study Team (FST), then how could they recommend a configuration that doesn't currently exist in the District?***

The FST recognized utilizing three middle schools created near-capacity schools. This was created to provide relief to the remaining three middle schools.

- 5. *Is the K-8 proposal a "set-up" to implement an International Baccalaureate (IB) program?***

Not at all. IB was never part of any recommendation.

- 25. *What would a K-8 configuration look like (instructionally)?***

In other districts, K-8 schools house older students in a different wing than younger students and we would attempt to do the same. The 6th-8th grade students would follow the FPS curriculum as other students in the District, as well as participate in the same common assessments. K-8 students would participate in school-wide assemblies and follow a school-wide theme.

- 28. *Would more dollars be spent per child in the new middle school of choice program than on the other middle school programs in the District?***

No. Projections are, in fact, less as there would be no transportation provided to these students.

- 29. *Would class sizes be smaller at the school of choice program than for the other middle school programs in the District?***

No. Our current average class size for the existing school of choice is, in fact, higher than most elementary averages.

- 30. *Would the K-8 option benefit 300 (12.7%) of the middle school children in the District, while the severe budget cuts reduce opportunities for the other 2,354 (87.3%) middle school students in the District?***

No. Budget reductions would apply the same to all middle school students whether in a K-8, 6-8 or other configuration.

- 32. *Was there ever a survey done on school of choice asking for parental interest?***

In the Board of Education report on September 22, 2009, this was discussed. It can be found on page 37, Attachment C, question 11 at www.farmington.k12.mi.us/district/committees/international_bacc/ib_report_092009.pdf

- 33. *What year was the school of choice survey conducted?***

The "IB Program Survey" was completed during an approximate two-week window in September 2009.

- 34. *What was the sample size of the survey?***

The Survey had 874 respondents.

- 35. *Were just Highmeadow parents surveyed, or was it open to all parents/families in the District?***

The survey was open to all parents/families.

- 36. *Are there any plans to repeat this survey considering the budget crisis that our District is facing?***

Not at this time.

- 61. *Has anybody considered moving Wooddale to Dunckel as a K-8?***

This option was not examined.

IB / School of Choice / K-8

64. Can the "data" show that there is support for a K-8 program in FPS?

In a survey administered to the Farmington community in 2007-2008, 50% of the respondents were Very Interested, Interested or Somewhat Interested in offering a K-8 option (635 respondents).

See attachment B (p.1) -
www.farmington.k12.mi.us/district/committees/international_bacc/ib_report_092009.pdf

66. What would athletics look like in a K-8 program?

One option would be for 7th and 8th grade students to return to their home school to practice and compete, much like our current International Academy (IA) students do at the high school level. Another option would be to look into other leagues that have schools of similar size.

68. What is the cost of operating a K-8 school?

An analysis of cost was not performed. There are many items that could result in additional costs including the lack of efficiency in operating a middle school program for a small number (200) of 7th and 8th graders, the need for an assistant principal, and the need for a counselor to name a few. In addition, extra-curricular activities would be provided for equity such as sports and clubs. For 7th and 8th grade athletes they would likely need to be part of their home middle school sports team with transportation to and from practice and its cost considered.

69. Why would a district close a neighborhood elementary school before a school of choice? Shouldn't the school of choice (Highmeadow) be the first school on the list to close?

The District supports a school of choice option for parents. For this reason, the school of choice option is not on the list to close.

76. Will the District be changing the Section 105 (external) school of choice policy?

Once the Board makes a decision on facilities, this program will be reviewed for its applicability.

82. Would the students currently enrolled in Highmeadow automatically get enrolled into Dunckel (if Dunckel is the new school of choice)?

Yes. See question 83 below.

83. If Dunckel becomes the new school of choice, would it have enrichment programs like Highmeadow?

This is not the recommendation. The recommendation from the Facility Study Team is to have the Highmeadow school of choice program relocate to O.E. Dunckel and expand to a K-8 program.

84. Why does the District feel a need to offer a school of choice program at all? How does the District benefit?

The District supports choices for parents. The District also offers a choice K-12 for all of its other schools. For instance, parents can choose another elementary, middle or high school if they desire based upon space availability.

89. If the District does not go with the IB program at Harrison High School, will money be allocated back to the International Academy?

This has not been determined as of yet.

IB / School of Choice / K-8

93. Have the traffic patterns been studied at Dunckel regarding the increase of foot and vehicle traffic if it were to be reconfigured as a K-8 school of choice?

We do not expect an increase in foot traffic. Consultants, as well as our own staff, have looked at this site several times in the past. The lot west of the drain provides a large drop-off area.

104. Would there be special education at the proposed K-8 school of choice?

Absolutely. Offices have been allocated for various support staff, as well as classrooms at all sites.

107. Has the District considered making Dunckel or Warner a second school of choice with a K-8 configuration with keeping Highmeadow as a school of choice as well?

This has not been considered.

114. How do you ensure that the people interested in school of choice will come proportionately from the other three middle schools?

One method, for example, would be to offer a certain number of seats dependent on the population of each area. For example, the three middle schools would have a number of "slots" dependent on their enrollment. The larger the school, the more slots that are available.

118. If the District were to close the K-5 school of choice program and use Highmeadow for FCS and Alameda, do the numbers still mean that two community schools would have to close?

None of the recommendations consider FCS and Alameda both relocating to Highmeadow. As there is insufficient space. One option considers FCS closing; the other Alameda closing.

120. If Highmeadow is the lowest ranked building, was the direction to move the school of choice program to a new building?

Highmeadow is not the lowest rank building on the facility assessment. There was no direction given to the committee to move the school of choice program

128. What is the status of bringing the International Baccalaureate (IB) program to the District?

At this time, the District is looking at initiating a high school IB program beginning in 2011-2012. At that time, ninth grade students will attend the Districts' program instead of attending the International Academy (IA).

129. Is the District aware that the West Bloomfield School District is moving forward with an IB program?

Yes, as well as other neighboring communities and the programs they have initiated. The approach Farmington is taking is to make sure we meet all the requirements of the International Baccalaureate Organization.

IB / School of Choice / K-8

130. Why would the District want a K-8 program without IB?

At this point, the Board has made the decision to not take this approach.

131. What is the cost benefit of an IB program?

Two things come to mind. First, we know an IB program will draw families to our community. Survey information, as well as the wait-list for the International Academy supports this claim. Secondly, we now spend more than \$500,000 each year to send 65 students to the International Academy.

132. I hear the IB program would have an academic focus to the exclusion of extra-curricular like band, is this true?

This is a misconception. In other schools that have implemented IB programs, this has not been the case as the IB curriculum requires students to be involved with extracurricular programs.