

December 6, 2005

TO: Salt Lake Board of Education
Superintendent Withers

FROM: Indian Hills K-8 Committee

REGARDING: K-8 narrative, survey results and recommendations

At the request of the Board of Education, Indian Hills as well as other elementary schools that have their students attend Hillside Intermediate were requested to review the option of becoming a K-8 program in light of District building plans.

The committee would like to express their appreciation for the opportunity of exploring what a K-8 configuration would look like at Indian Hills as well as express our thanks for allowing patrons to engage in this discussion of possibilities for better meeting the needs of their 7th and 8th grade students. The majority of patrons expressed, to our local school K-8 group in their survey responses, sincere appreciation for the Board of Education allowing families and students to have a variety of school and/or program choices in the District.

Thank you again for giving Salt Lake District patrons the chance for a discussion of an approach that provides for parental involvement as well as an examination of the strategies for increased student achievement surrounding the K-8 option.

The Indian Hills K-8 school team engaged in the following activities:

- Formation of a K- 8 committee of Indian Hills patrons, parents, staff and administration
- The majority of committee members were in attendance at a joint meeting held at Hillside to receive a common foundation of information, data, and research on the K-8 opportunity.
- The local school committee held weekly meetings for several months to gather information, read research, discuss, as well as ponder the K-8 option and how that opportunity could be implemented at our school.
- Data included articles from educational publications, District materials, private studies (Rand Report), newspaper articles and other “main-stream” media
- Various members of our K-8 committee were in attendance at a number of evening presentations held for patrons at other building locations to gather information and listen to differing “points of view”.
- The architect of our new school shared his ideas about “additional space/room” with the committee.

- The committee communicated with the whole school community frequently using: newsletters, public meetings, informational flyers, PTA and SCC public meetings, posters, articles copied from various websites, email, surveys, etc.
- Options were discussed among faculty, parents and the community at large
- Patrons received printed information, website locations and articles, as well as surveys mailed to their homes.
- Patrons were encouraged to participate in all meetings, discussion groups, surveys, email correspondence, etc.
- After meetings, patrons were encouraged to write any unanswered questions, comments, etc. – a reply from the District team and/or K-8 committee would be sent home in the next communication.
- To sample public opinion, a survey was drafted and mailed to each family.
- After several activities, patrons were questioned “Would another evening parent meeting be beneficial?”
 - 33% responded favorably with the majority favoring to explore the K-8 option based on their personal investigation and discussion of research articles previously sent home
- A final response survey questionnaire was mailed to each family requesting their participation in answering this survey inquiry “Would you prefer Indian Hills Elementary to become a K-8 school?”
 - 62% responded “no”
 - 23% declared “yes”
 - 13% were undecided
 - 2% did not return the survey
- It was the consensus of the committee that we needed to share this information with the patrons of the school and the Salt Lake Board of Education as well as central office administration.
- A complete copy of all unedited patrons’ responses was filed with the coordinator of this process.

We support the Board of Education as they deliberate the retrofit/rebuild program for the two east side middle schools while offering additional choices for students, families, and staff.

The patrons and staff at Indian Hills will continue working on our local school improvement plan to provide all students with the highest quality of instruction in every curriculum area focused on increasing student achievement and individual success.