

February 17, 2006

TO: Salt Lake City School District Board of Education  
FROM: McKell Withers, Superintendent  
SUBJECT: Recommendations for Designing and Rebuilding Clayton and Hillside Middle Schools, Supporting the Development of K-8 Models, and Continuing the K-8 Exploration Process

Neighborhood teams from 11 elementary schools have worked hard to investigate the K-8 option, understand the possibilities, consider the complexities, and voice preferences for their own communities. The following recommendations are consistent with the Salt Lake School District Student Achievement Plan, the neighborhood school team conclusions, and the Board of Education's request to consider actions that can improve our services and enhance our options for students and their families.

**Designing and Rebuilding Clayton and Hillside Middle Schools:**

Most of the neighborhood school teams decided not to pursue conversion to a K-8 configuration. Many articulated clear support for rebuilding their neighborhood middle schools. Unless the Board directs a change in the current facility replacement/retrofit plan, we recommend organizing design teams and selecting architects to move forward with the replacement of both Clayton and Hillside Middle Schools. If the Board accepts this recommendation, design teams will be in place before June 2006, with new construction starting as early as June 2007. If a new design requires relocating students during construction, we would recommend using the Rosslyn Heights campus as a temporary middle school site.

**Supporting the Development of K-8 Models:**

As requested by their school teams, we recommend that Nibley Park Elementary School and Whittier Elementary School be given the support necessary to further study and develop K-8 models in sufficient detail for the Board of Education to consider implementation no sooner than the beginning of the 2007-08 school year. We further recommend that the Open Classroom Optional Program, currently seeking charter school status within the District, be given analogous support. The Board has already granted the OC's request to begin serving seventh graders during 2006-07. Each K-8 model needs to include instructional priorities for a K-8 approach and anticipated costs for staff, facilities, and professional development. The District's K-8 Exploration Team will coordinate this effort and develop a time line for the Board's future consideration, discussion, and action.

**Continuing the K-8 Exploration Process:**

If the Board of Education approves the implementation of one or more K-8 schools, we recommend that the District K-8 Exploration Team coordinate K-8 investigations by neighborhood school teams from the other 16 elementary schools, plus optional programs, in the Salt Lake City School District.

