

G-5: Administrative Procedures

District Reconfigurations & Long-Term School Closures



REFERENCE

[Board Policy G-5](#)

DEFINITIONS:

Final Recommendation: Adjustments to the configuration of district schools and/or long-term school closures that are being recommended to the board for adoption.

Official Study List: A list of schools that are being studied in a given year by the district. This list is culled from suggestions collected from patrons, employees, board members, and community sources throughout the year and approved by the board.

Options Committee: An ad hoc committee, convened by the superintendent, whose charge is to suggest viable options for the board and community to consider.

Recommended Option(s): Proposed options that have received preliminary approval from the board to move forward in the process, which requires the superintendent to give notice of the proposed options and receive community comment in accordance with state law.

Viable Option(s): The option(s) recommended to the board by the options committee, after receiving input from the local school community council.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

I. Procedures to be Followed During Each Year for Which an Official Boundary Study is Being Contemplated and/or Conducted

A. Public input on school boundaries

1. Concerns, suggestions, and questions may be raised by the public at any time during this process. See the steps below to determine to whom to direct such input, i.e. principal, school community council (SCC), and/or superintendent.
2. Members of the public wishing to make a formal public comment to the board must sign up to speak during the public comment period of a scheduled board meeting. See, B-2: Administrative Procedures, School Board Meetings, Section II, Public Participation at Board Meetings.

B. The official study list

1. Prior to the end of February, the superintendent will gather information to present to the board regarding possible school boundaries adjustments.
 - a. In presenting this information to the board, the superintendent will have considered:
 - i. School enrollment data, which may include, but is not limited to, declining or increasing enrollment data, future enrollment predictions, and the number of school choice applications.
 - ii. Facility capacity and design, which may include if applicable consideration of the physical condition of buildings, maintenance/repair needs, utility costs, school utilization (enrollment vs. school capacity), and location.
 - iii. School feeder patterns, which includes studying the impacts on the network(s) rather than just a particular school site.
 - iv. Federal, state, or court mandates, which may dictate certain action to be taken by the school board and provide a time frame for taking such action.
 - v. Demographics, which would include consideration of the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic status of the current school population. Consideration will be given as to whether an adjustment will increase, decrease or maintain the demographic ratios at any affected school.
 - vi. Community input, which will include gathering, to the extent possible, stakeholder feedback from parents, students, teachers, staff, employee organizations, local business leaders, district partners, school community councils, parent/teacher/student organizations, and other community members.
 - vii. Student safety, including but not limited to the availability of safe walking/biking routes, cross-walks, pedestrian overpasses/underpasses, crossing guards, speed bumps, hawk lights, etc.

- viii. Transportation, which includes but is not limited to looking at the costs/savings related to transportation, and the capacity of the district to transport all affected students and arrive at school on time.
 - ix. Geographic features of the district, including consideration of whether there are any natural boundaries, or major thoroughfares which cannot be crossed safely by pedestrians; as well as consideration for contiguity of the school zone, and alignment of the feeder patterns.
 - x. Special programs, which may include, but is not limited to, consideration of the presence or absence of special education programs, English language learners, dual language immersion programs, and accelerated and gifted programs.
 - xi. Financial implications, which may include consideration of operational costs, staffing, utilities, freed up subsidies, facility re-utilization, and central office reduction.
 - xii. Student educational opportunities and academic performance, which may include data related to student proficiency and student growth.
2. No later than the end of February, an official study list will be approved by the board containing the school boundaries to be studied.
 3. From March to May, assigned staff will meet with each principal and SCC chair that is directly affected by the official study list, to generate a core set of options to be considered by the options committee.
 4. From May to June, the options committee will study the viability of core options focusing on the "safe, reasonable, simple, and cost effective" criteria in order to establish a list of viable options.
 5. Prior to presenting the list to the board in July, the options committee will report its recommendation of viable options to each affected principal and SCC chair for their comment.
- C. Establishing recommended option(s)
1. In July, information from the options committee and comment from each affected school is reported to the board.
 2. No later than the first board meeting in August, the board must approve any recommended options for boundary changes for further study.
 - a. If the board approves recommended options for further study, the following actions must be taken:
 - i. at least 120 days before approving a school boundary change, the district will notify the following individuals that the board is considering a boundary change:
 - (a) parents of students enrolled in the schools directly affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
 - (b) parents of students enrolled in other schools within the district that may be affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
 - (c) Salt Lake City Council members; and
 - (d) Mayor of Salt Lake City.
 - ii. provide an opportunity for public comment on the proposed boundary change during at least two public board meetings; and
 - iii. hold a public hearing and provide public notice of the hearing in accordance with state law.
 - b. The notice of the public hearing shall indicate the school(s) which will be impacted by the proposed boundary change, and the date, time, and location of the public hearing.
 - i. At least 90 days before the public hearing, the district will provide notice of the public hearing to:
 - (a) parents of students enrolled in the schools directly affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
 - (b) parents of students enrolled in other schools within the district that may be affected by the proposed boundary change, using email or the parent's preferred method of communication;
 - (c) Salt Lake City Council members; and
 - (d) Mayor of Salt Lake City.
 - ii. The notice listed immediately above in Section I.C.2.b.i., shall also be provided 60 days prior to the public hearing, and again 30 days prior to the public hearing.
 - iii. At least 10 days before the public hearing, the required notice must be:
 - (a) published:
 - (1) in a newspaper of general circulation in the area; and
 - (2) on the Utah Public Notice Website; and
 - (b) posted in at least three public locations within Salt Lake City, on the school district's official website, and prominently at the school; and

- c. The board recommended options may also be presented at information sessions scheduled throughout September and October.
 - i. The number and location of the information sessions will be determined by the board.
 - ii. Notice of any open information sessions will be provided to parents of students enrolled in the schools affected by the proposed boundary changes.

D. Adopting boundary changes

- 1. During the first board meeting in November, one of the required public comment opportunities will be placed on the board's agenda, and the superintendent will provide feedback from any information sessions for the board's consideration.
- 2. During the second board meeting in November, the second required public comment opportunity will be placed on the board's agenda, and the recommended options for boundary changes will be placed as a discussion item on the board agenda.
- 3. During the first board meeting in December, the required public hearing will be held as part of the board's agenda, and the recommended options for boundary changes will be placed as a discussion item on the board agenda.
- 4. If after discussing the recommended options the board determines to take action on a proposed boundary change, the final recommended options for boundary changes will be placed on the action agenda for the next public board meeting.

II. Procedures to be Followed During Each Year for Which an Official Long-Term School Closure Study is being Conducted

- A. The same process outlined in Section I shall be followed whenever a long-term school closure is being considered.
- B. In addition to the factors outlined in Section I.B.1., if a long-term school closure is being contemplated, the superintendent will also consider:
 - 1. Community and neighborhood identity, recognizing that having a neighborhood school can be an integral part of a neighborhood's identity and improve a family's sense of community. Consideration will be given to the availability of nearby schools to the ones being considered for closure, as having a nearby school can lessen the impact of displacement and increase the connection to a new school.
 - 2. Special program facilities, for example, special programs, such as providing services for special education students, may require special facilities. Consideration will be given regarding the extent to which a large capital investment has been made in creating such special facilities and the costs associated with rebuilding those facilities elsewhere.
 - 3. Environmental factors, for example a school's surroundings may have changed since it was first opened. Zoning may have been relaxed to allow more businesses with increased traffic, or there might be new environmental hazards that now compromise the safety of the students at a school.
 - 4. School designations, including whether the school has been identified for "comprehensive support and improvement," "targeted support and improvement," or "turnaround."
- C. Because a long-term school closure will necessitate boundary adjustments, if a long-term school closure is being contemplated, one comprehensive process will be run to address the school closure and boundary adjustment proposals. The process will follow the timelines and procedures outlined in Section I.

III. Abbreviated Procedures to be Followed in Special Circumstances

- A. In certain circumstances, including but not limited to when school buildings have been made unsafe or unsanitary due to a natural or man-made disaster, the board may vote to utilize an abbreviated process in order to change school boundaries or close a school.
 - 1. In the event that a shortened process is necessary, the minimum requirements provided for in state law will be followed.
 - a. The shortened process will include the 120-day notification process, opportunity for public comment at two board meetings, and public hearing requirements.

IV. Decisions Related to District Facilities no Longer in Use as School Buildings

- A. Once a decision has been made to permanently close a school building, the board will examine various options for ensuring that the land and/or building remain an asset to the community and do not become a blighting incident or safety hazard.
 - 1. In accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, the board will consider options for selling, leasing, re-purposing, or demolishing the school building.
 - a. Typically, the board will prefer an option that allows the building/space to be used in a manner that directly benefits the district and/or its students.

2. To the extent practicable, the board will solicit input from community members on options that will benefit or appeal to the community.

No district employee or student shall be subjected to discrimination in employment or any district program or activity on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. The district is committed to providing equal access and equal opportunity in its programs, services and employment including its policies, complaint processes, program accessibility, district facility use, accommodations and other Equal Employment Opportunity matters. The district also provides equal access to district facilities for all youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United State Codes, including scouting groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: Tina Hatch, Compliance and Investigations, 440 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111, (801) 578-8388. You may also contact the Office for Civil Rights, Denver, CO, (303) 844-5695.