

# Steele report lists scenarios

By Shannon Morgan

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Berkeley Schools Superintendent LaVoneia Steele's long anticipated report on district-wide reorganization presents myriad options rather than a recommendation for implementation.

The 75-page document does recommend a criteria for assigning middle school students under a controlled choice system, but it offers seven different proposals for school reconfiguration.

Plans tentatively adopted by the school board last December called for reorganizing the district into a three-zone system of schools with K-5, 6-8 grade configuration.

The idea was to minimize the number of transitions students face, improve racial and economic balance among students and gain greater enrollment by enticing area parents back into the public school system.

In attempting to address concerns and ideas on the plan's implementation put out by hundreds of parents, residents and board members since that time, the scenarios lay out different options for assigning the district's 3,600 K-5 students and 1,800 6th through 8th-grade students at various school sites.

## Scenario I

- King Jr. High School would officially become a middle school and house 1,150 to 1,200 6th- to 8th-grade students increasing its population from 815.

- Willard Jr. High School would also become a middle school, but due to size constraints would accommodate 550 to 600 6th- to 8th-grade students, rather than its current 537.

- The district would close one elementary school under this plan, leaving it with 11 K-5 schools. Whichever school is closed under this plan could be used for the continuation high school, adult school or administrative offices.

Cost: \$821,830 to \$1,007,565

Timeline: 14 to 20 months from board authorization.

## Scenario II

- King becomes a middle school of 1,000 students.

- Willard becomes a middle school of 550 to 600 students.

- Longfellow becomes a city-wide magnet school (i.e., special program focus like arts or technology) of 450 students, 150 of which at the 6th to 8th level, it is assumed in the report that students throughout the district could apply for the school, which is estimated to require more staff time.

- One elementary school would be closed, leaving the district with two K-5 schools of 450 students and eight K-5 schools of 300 students.

Cost: \$1,274,975 to \$1,538,150

Timeline: 20 to 24 months

## Scenario III

- King a middle school of 750 to 800 students. Willard a middle school

of 500 to 550 students, reducing the population at King.  
• Longfellow becomes a middle school of 450 students.  
• No schools would be closed under this scenario, leaving 11 K-5 elementary schools in operation.

**Cost:** \$1,092,025 to \$1,306,800 to create a new middle school at Longfellow, Malcolm X or Franklin without a gym.

\$1,092,025 to \$1,306,800 to create a middle school at West Campus with its existing gym.

\$8,662,500 to build a middle school without a gym at East Campus.

**Timeline:** 30 to 48 months

#### **Scenario IV**

• King and Willard same as above.

• Three K-8 schools, one in each zone at Longfellow, Malcolm X and Columbus or Thousand Oaks.

• Eight or fewer K-5 elementary schools and the closure of one or more schools depending on the size of K-8 schools.

**Cost:** \$1,663,650 to \$4,518,550

**Timeline:** 24 to 36 months

#### **Scenario V**

• King and Willard same as above.

• K-5 Arts Magnet combined with a new technology school at Longfellow.

• One school closed and 10 additional K-5 schools remaining in operation.

**Cost:** \$1,092,025 to \$1,306,800

**Timeline:** 30 to 36 months

#### **Scenario VI**

• King and Willard same as above.

• District facilities at 1720 Oregon St. becomes a new middle school of 450 students.

• Eleven K-5 schools remain in operation and one elementary school is closed.

**Cost:** \$9,619,500 to \$11,113,850

**Timeline:** 36 to 48 months

#### **Scenario VII**

• King a middle school of 850 to 900 students and Willard a middle school of 550 to 600 students, slightly increasing both schools populations.

• One K-8 school at Longfellow, several K-6 schools at larger sites like Malcolm X, Columbus or LeConte.

• Seven to eight remaining K-5 schools and one elementary school closed.

**Cost:** \$1,053,545 to \$2,579,610

**Timeline:** 24 to 30 months

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