Date: **October 23, 2018,**

Regular Board of Education Meeting

To: Board of Education

From: Michael Lubelfeld Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools

Re: Long Range Plan Recommendation - Phase I 2019-2022 (10/22/2018 5pm)

This Long Range Plan **Phase I** Recommendation is focused on equitable access to educational opportunities for all students in modernized learning facilities designed to support academic and social-emotional learning and growth. This is the first set of steps designed to improve education in North Shore School District 112 (NSSD112).

District 112 is fortunate to have a highly involved, invested, and knowledgeable community. Members of our community have participated in discussions around facility management and planning for over 8 years, beginning with the initial SFAC committee, through Reconfiguration 2.0 and with our current long-range planning committee. Through the efforts of multiple, highly involved community members, the Board of Education and District 112 Administration has received significant feedback and information.

As a public school district, our number one priority is to ensure that students achieve academically, socially, and emotionally. To achieve this goal, we have been focusing on our motto: *Inspire...Innovate...Engage.* All NSSD112 initiatives focus on our motto in order to ensure excellence. This year's intense focus on providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students in all schools every day is the result of the district losing its way and steering into non-educational focus areas over the past 7+ years. We’re correcting our course by starting to execute a plan that brings upgraded, modernized, enhanced, and equitable learning spaces to both middle schools. We are working to establish a guaranteed and viable curriculum across grade levels and schools, especially in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.

As a result, we’re making strides to operate as one unified school district to versus a system of schools and we’re supporting our teachers by providing them with resources and training in the implementation of the newly adopted math and ELA resources. This support of our staff is in concert with our operation as a coherent and excellent school system once again. Phase I will impact all students in the school district since every
child will attend Northwood or Edgewood before matriculating to high school.

Some would say this Long Range Planning Process process started in the 1990s — others would say it’s never been quite refined or finished, and still others would say a recent iteration almost tore the communities apart. We proudly serve the people of Highland Park, Highwood, members of the United States military on Ft. Sheridan, and residents of the the Town of Ft. Sheridan in Highland Park. The Board of Education selected the superintendent of schools last December with the expectation that he would execute policy, vision, mission, and planning. Together with the Board we will lead the district back to a position of greatness and leadership. Over the past few years the district has drifted off course and has, in many, many ways, lost its way.

The quote from Theodore Roosevelt “Do what you can, with what you have, where you are” captures the spirit of the opportunities we have in North Shore School District 112 at this time. We have the responsibility and great opportunity to do what we can (make changes to improve educational outcomes, facilities, and equity one step at a time), with what we have (accumulated fund balance savings as well as a limited bond issue paid for out of operation funds) where we are (in 2018 with 10 schools in operation for 3852 students grades PK-8). This first phase can be done without a tax increase to residents. We are quite proud that this first phase moves us ‘light years’ ahead of where we are; we are mindful that learning from past history, we cannot repair in one fell swoop that which has been broken over time.

This first phase, to address long overdue needs at the two middle schools, will address and affect and impact long overdue improvements to educational quality, facilities, equity, student learning needs, and overall community growth at the middle schools. Subsequent planning efforts will require additional infusion of money into the District. These can be realized via tax rate increase requests, bond issuance requests, or a combination thereof. Subsequent planning will also need to look into and explore the following: elementary to middle school boundaries, elementary boundaries, expansion of pre-k to full day, dissolution of assets and other priorities as defined.

Our Long Range Planning Process, documented and archived at the Long Range Plan Web Page shows a rich, dynamic process where extensive and expansive community engagement, information review and analysis, historic and political and sociological impact study and review, and financial analysis yield a plan that will provide dramatic and profound impacts on the learning environments for the greatest number of students immediately within financial resources accessible and on hand with no tax increase in phase I. Subsequent planning will also need to look into and explore the following: elementary to middle school boundaries, elementary boundaries, expansion of pre-k to full day, dissolution of assets and other priorities as defined.
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Even after this first phase of the plan is approved and implemented, there are still unanswered questions, lingering historical conflicts, and disagreements in the community stemming from the consolidation in 1993. There are unanswered questions about funding sources for the remaining work that needs to be done (do we stretch it out over time or do we seek referendum support); and we need to come to agreement on the proper configuration, long debated boundary issues, and the number of schools PK-5. Once phase one is complete we can gather as a community to address these unresolved issues.

This first phase of the Long Range Planning process has confirmed our belief that there is a need to have serious discussions and planning for the remaining elementary schools and attendance boundary areas and their future configuration. Those discussions will be part of additional future phases of the planning process. The challenges that exist in our school district did not arrive in “one day”, nor will the solutions that continue to vex us be resolved quickly. Nonetheless, we’re thrilled to be able to proffer a plan that can take existing resources with no tax increase and make dramatic improvements to the school district.

Even after spending around $75 million on both middle schools, the financial realities and needs will exist in terms of the district needing more than $70 million in remaining facility needs in the K-5 and PK school sites. With phase I, we are dedicated to creating the best middle school experience possible for our students by impacting the two facilities that will serve all of our students.

After we successfully improve both middle schools, we’ll begin to craft plans for the other needs we still have in the District. Right now we want to make significant investments into the middle school facilities where all children in the school district will attend prior to completion of their elementary school careers.

After a great deal of thought, analysis, engagement, meeting, document review, plan review and reconsideration, and cost analysis, I proudly submit the following recommendations for the improvement of the School District’s facilities and learning environments. The revised, updated, draft Long Range Plan Phase I (to be formally recommended for approval to the Board of Education at the November 27, 2018, Regular Board meeting) calls for the following:
• Major renovations at Northwood Middle School at a cost of approximately $40 Million (build out for up to 600 students)
• Major renovations at Edgewood Middle School at a cost of approximately $35 Million (build out for up to 950 students)
  ○ **With a total combined cost not to exceed $75 Million for both Northwood and Edgewood Middle Schools.**
• Use $20,000,000 of the $49 Million fund balance (savings account).
• Use of $55 Million in Alternative Revenue Bonds (paid for over 20 years at $4 Million a year)
• Option Areas & Dual Language Potential Boundary Proposals 1-5 (see below)
• Plan to save/spend $3,500,000 a year from the operations budget on school upgrades, repairs, and modernization -- over time or engage the community in Phase II funding.

**Potential Boundary Recommendations as part of Phase I**
With the Phase I changes, I recommend we begin to explore some Boundary area changes across the District. I recommend that children in Red Oak’s Dual Language School matriculate to Edgewood effective with the next school year. The Dual Language programming at the middle school level would be more like at the high school level than current practice. For example, for children who complete the K-5 Dual Language program, at the middle school levels there will be two one course options: heritage course in Spanish (for native Spanish speakers) or Advanced Spanish course (for any students who successfully complete the K-5 program).

In addition to this change at Red Oak, I recommend four potential boundary option areas: two in the north, one in the south, and one potential change for the military personnel neighborhood of Ft. Sheridan who are currently assigned to Sherwood (Wayne Thomas remains one of the two school sites for the Ft. Sheridan neighborhood).

The potential boundary option areas as shown in numbers 2 and 3 could accomodate students at WT/NW. The potential boundary option area as shown in number 4 can accomodate students at Ravinia (and possibly at Braeside). And the potential boundary option area shown in number 5 could change the school boundaries for children of US Military personnel currently assigned to Sherwood. When possible, I would recommend we move Military east from Sherwood to Indian Trail; all currently enrolled military families/children at Sherwood would be grandfathered (siblings too). In an ideal world at some point in the future, I would like to have the space available to offer additional school choices for children of US Military Personnel.
As a recap ... Phase I impact on boundaries:
1. Red Oak Dual Language students to Edgewood

Potential Boundary Option Areas:
2. Berkeley North - catchment = SW, option = WT/NW (space available)
3. Vine North - catchment = IT, option = WT/NW (space available)
4. Lincoln Ave. West (possibly additional neighborhood area) (South) - catchment = IT, option = RA / BR (space available)
5. Families of US Military Personnel = Phase I - no changes; for the future, the goal is to have Ft. Sheridan east from SW to IT (until we determine K-5 enrollment & sizes we cannot make changes at this time), Ft. Sheridan west - Wayne Thomas (no change). Whenever changes are implemented, any children of the military at Sherwood (or other schools) grandfathered in - siblings too.

We anticipate that we will complete these “phase I” major renovations and work no later than fall 2022. Plans are in concept phase right now for the temporary relocation of students at Northwood and Edgewood during the respective construction timelines at each school; please see page 9 for the details of timing. We are considering use of Elm Place School as well as other sites within the District.

A Brief Look at what we’ll get for an investment in our future of $75,000,000 - Sharing a brief look at initial planning drawings representing conceptual design ideas with the potential investment of $75,000,000. Detailed development of these concepts will begin with input from student, staff, & administration immediately following BOE approval of recommendation.
Some concepts under development and consideration (subject to input from students, staff, & administration, include (but are not limited to): Rebuilding, adding, renovation, upgrades of many classrooms, enhancement of existing and creation of new auditorium spaces, relocated, upgraded, updated, socially inviting dining space, STEAM/Makerspace upgrades, general paint, light, HVAC, piping, safety, physical site upgrades, ADA considerations and modernization...and more!)

**Long Range Planning Phase I - Middle School Reconstruction & Modernization --Timeline--**

July 1-October 17

Long Range Planning Committee July 28-October 4, 2018
(2018-19 school year) (LRPC Meetings July 28, September 12 & 24, & October 4, 2018)

Community Engagement

- Thought Exchange I **July 3-July 15**
- Thought Exchange II **August 8-August 22**
- FAKO Telephone Polling **August 7 – 11, 2018**
- Board meetings with informational updates:
  - Regular Meetings July 17, August 21, September 25, October 2, October 23
  - Finance Committee Oct. 2
  - Facilities Committee Oct. 9
- Plan Consideration, Approval, and funding Oct 23-March, 2019 (2018-19 school year)

The timing of construction would be as follows:

**NORTHWOOD:**

- Bid by end of May 2019.
- Move out Northwood Summer 2019.
- Start Construction September 2019.
- Relocate students at NW to Elm Place School
- Completion January 2021

**EDGEWOOD:**

- Start additions Spring 2021.
- Move Out Summer 2021.
- Relocate students at EW to Elm Place School, Lincoln School and possibly some to NW school (depending on enrollment)
- Full renovation and upper floor additions through summer 2022.
- Need to review overall schedule to determine if work can be completed for August 2022 occupancy or winter break 2022.
• Review dollars, funding, school needs in the 2022-2023 school year (Planning Year)
• Re-prioritize needs and appropriations for 2023 and beyond

Notes:
Phase I is a 3-5 year plan that address the middle schools for around $75,000,000
Overall Needs to improve the whole district = $160,000,000
Current access to resources = $75,000,000
Remaining Needs = $85,000,000 (elementary school construction, elementary boundaries, expansion of pre-k to full day, dissolution of assets and other priorities as defined.).

We looked at and tested a variety of 9 school models, 8 school models, 7 school models and combinations thereof. We learned about community engagement, financial implications of desired and needed work, value of the district’s land and art holdings, and more. We explored closing and relocating schools, closing and combining schools, doing it piecemeal and doing it all at once. We explored 25 years’ worth of history, 8 years’ worth of community engagement, and in three plus months, we synthesized, evaluated and analyzed a great deal.

This Phase I long range plan also calls for the sale of Green Bay Road School (at such time of sale/development, the early childhood center and the administration would move out). In an ideal setting, the early childhood center becomes a $15,000,000 investment — in a practical setting, we can move the ECC to Red Oak or another site, or we can split the programming if needed; the district center can rent office space if needed.

The District can generate millions of dollars from the sale of Green Bay. With respect to Elm Place and Lincoln, at present, both assets will remain under District ownership as they are needed immediately and in the next three years for potential relocation of students from Northwood and Edgewood. Both schools would be safe and secure and appropriate for students (per Regional Office of Education and minimum investment of safety and security dollars) prior to actual enrollment. The vast and historic artwork and artifact collection would be secure and ultimately persevered and possibly conserved. More study is needed within the art community as to the best and most reasonable future actions for the WPA murals, historic document archives, the clock, telescope, etc.