

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Wilmette Public Schools**

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: May 21, 2018

To: Members, Board of Education

From: Building Principals
Assistant Principals

Gail Buscemi, Business Manager

Katie Lee, Administrator for Curriculum & Instruction

Subject: Kindergarten Enrichment

BACKGROUND

On October 23, 2017, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2017-2018 District 39 Strategic Plan. Kindergarten Enrichment, a New Strategic Initiative, is in year 1 of the developing phase. Therefore, District 39 initiated a study regarding the feasibility of a fee-based Kindergarten Enrichment program. Although full-day Kindergarten was initially not part of the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan, a fee-based Kindergarten Enrichment program may serve as a step toward a goal of full-day Kindergarten.

Administration presented a Kindergarten Enrichment initiative update¹ on study to the Board of Education on March 19, 2018. The board report provided detailed, background information for board members to consider on the following topics:

- Illinois State Board of Education Mandates and School Codes
- Prior Exploration of Kindergarten Options
- Factors that Influenced Past Decisions
- Current Situation
 - In October, the Board of Education approved the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan.
 - STR Architects conducted a space study revealing an estimated cost for construction to be \$5,681,600; space available by 2020-2021 school year.
 - Based on STR's findings, administration surveyed families to gather information regarding utilization of a \$6,500 tuition-based half-day Kindergarten Enrichment Program.
 - Since the D39 Kindergarten Enrichment Survey results indicated much support for a fee-based kindergarten enrichment program, the Board of Education requested more space and funding options.
 - To address space, administration presented two possible scenarios: build classrooms OR build modular units.
 - To address funding, administration presented two possible options: District 39 assumes all construction costs while parents assumes all program costs OR parents assume all construction and program costs.
 - Administration presented the space and funding options at the Committee of the Whole on April 9, 2018 and at the April 23, 2018 Board of Education meeting. This review included the potential impact on fund balances for each space and funding option.
 - Using the information presented in this report, District 39 resurveyed the same population of families in order to draw comparisons from both survey data.

¹ March 2018 Report to the Board of Education: "Kindergarten Enrichment" <https://bit.ly/2H3mSJp>

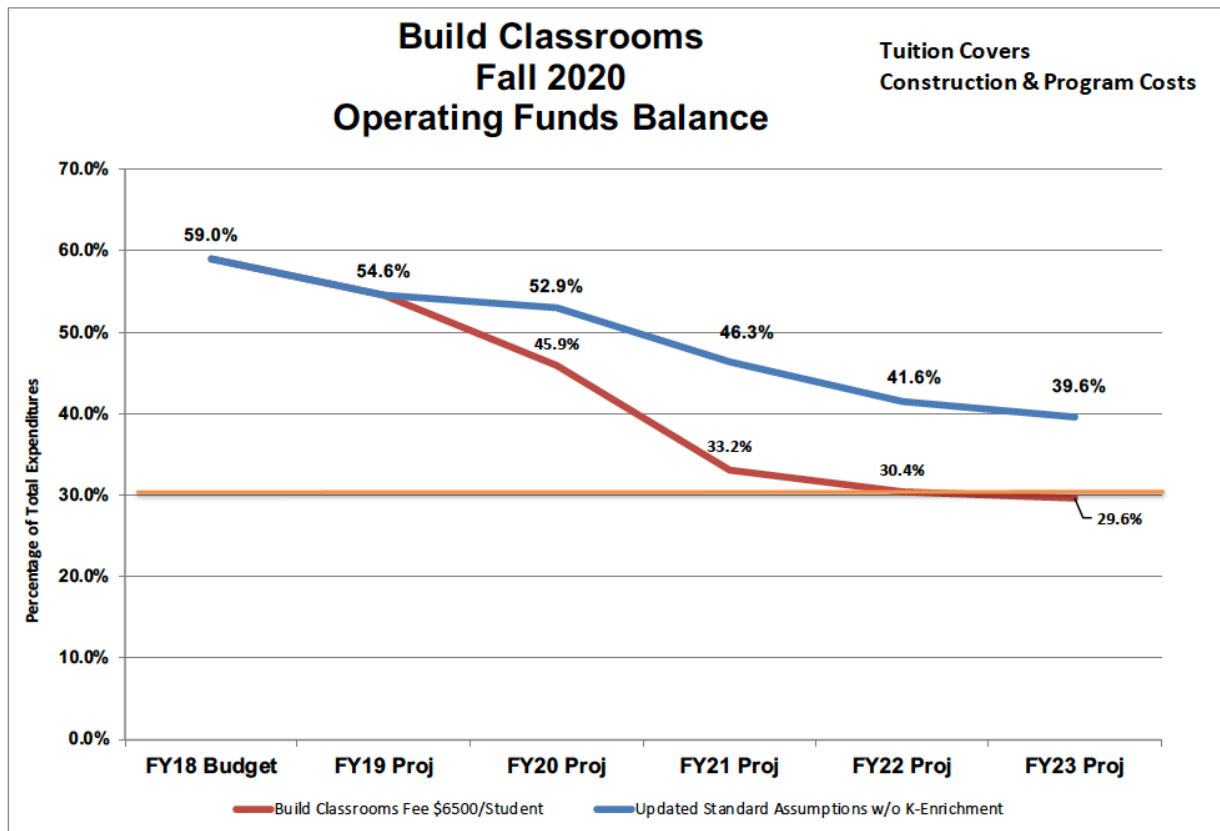
SPACE AND FUNDING UPDATE

Gail Buscemi, Business Manager, reviewed space and funding options and its potential impact on fund balances at the Committee of the Whole meeting on April 9, 2018. A board report² was also presented at the April 23rd Board of Education meeting. The following graphs provide further clarification.

Graph 1: Build Classrooms – Tuition for Construction and Program Costs

The estimated cost to build two classrooms at each of elementary school is approximately \$5.7 million. In a “cost neutral” scenario, per-pupil construction costs would be \$2,355, and per-pupil program costs are estimated at \$4,145. Taken together, a \$6,500 annual tuition/fee is needed over a ten-year payback.

Note that in FY 23 the gap between the red line & blue line begins to narrow. While the red-line meets the 30% fund balance threshold in FY 23. After FY23, the gap between the red/blue lines will narrow further, as construction costs are recovered.

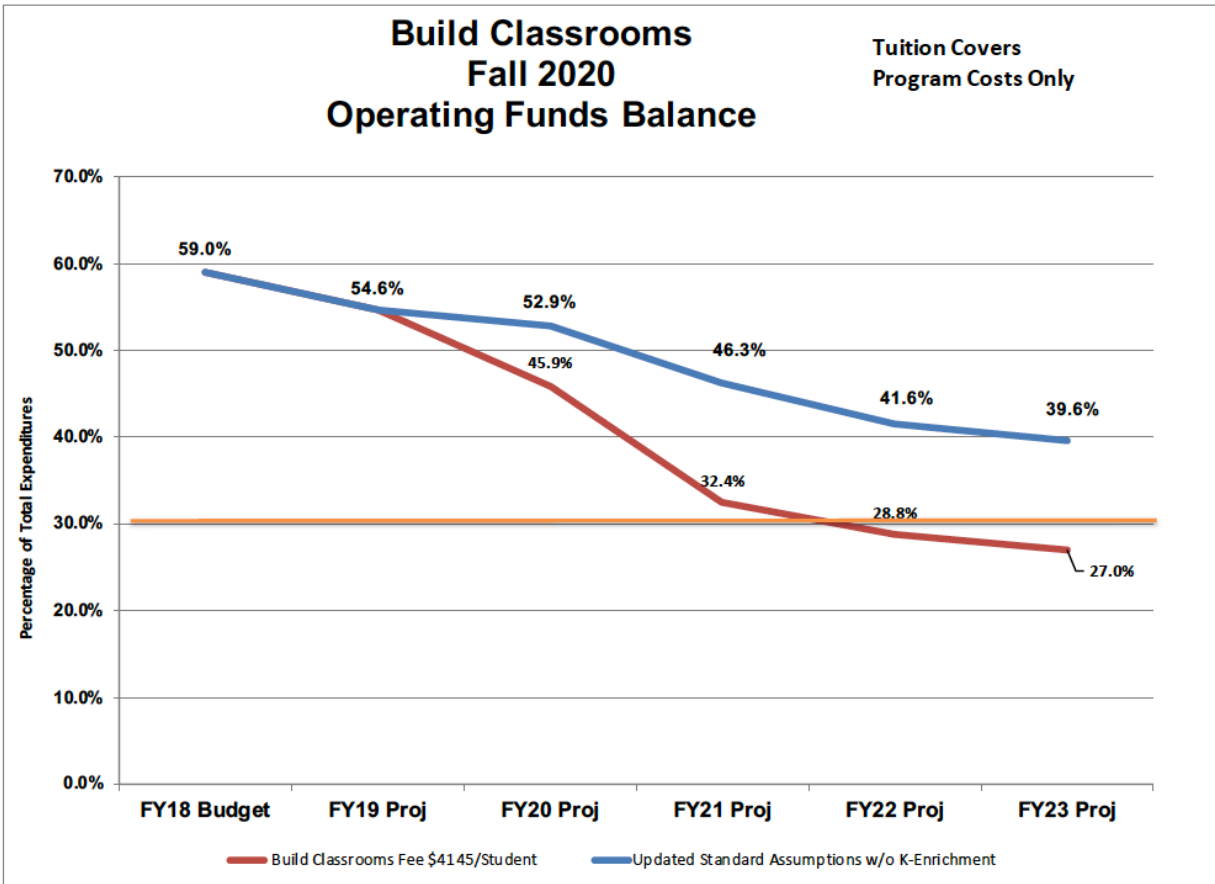


² April 2018 Report to the Board of Education: “Kindergarten Enrichment” <https://bit.ly/2FcQ7rps>

Graph 2: Build Classrooms – Tuition for Program Costs Only

This graph reflects the cost of building two classroom additions at each of our elementary schools, at a cost of \$5.7M. In this example the district pays for the full cost of construction and charges only fees covering program costs of \$4,145.

The red line falls below the 30% fund balance threshold more rapidly and continues to decline.

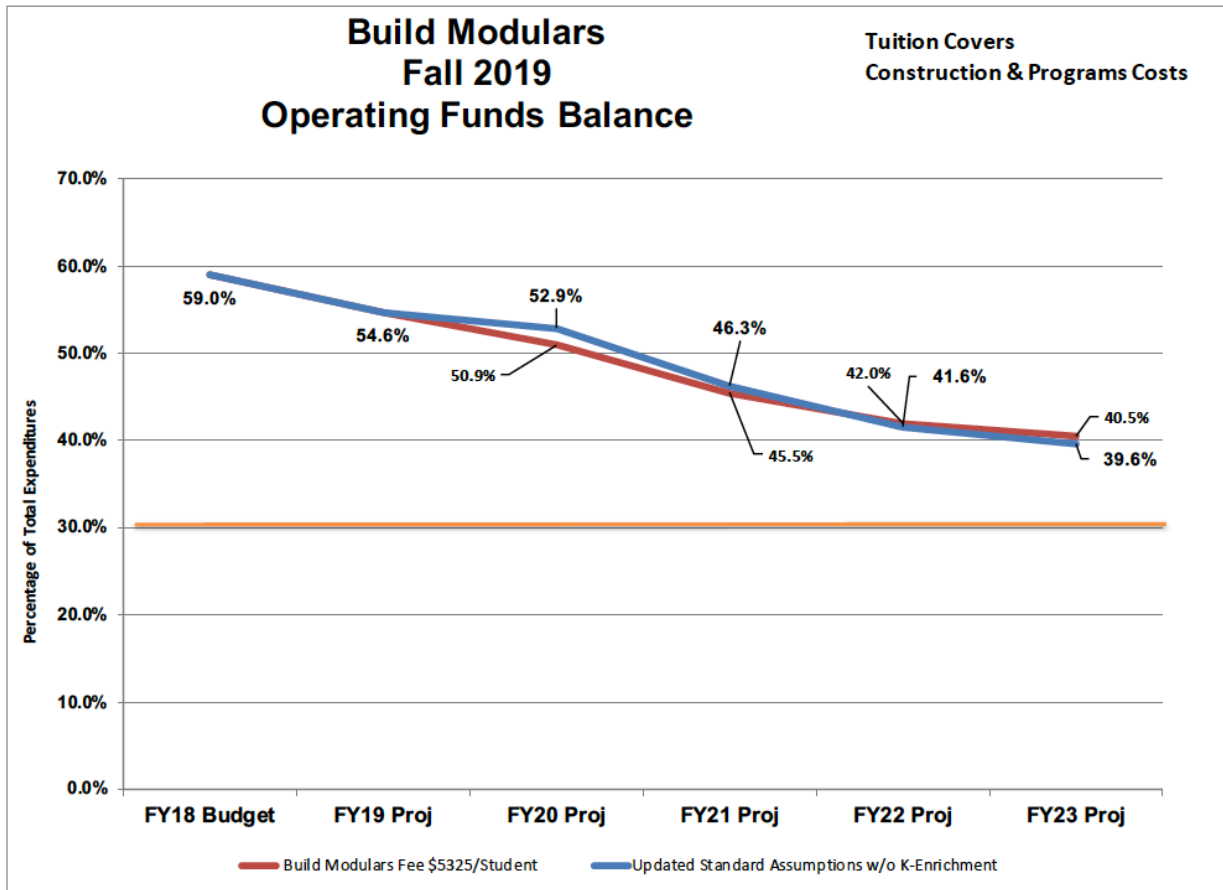


Graph 3: Build Modular Units – Tuition for Construction and Program Costs

Adding modular units at each elementary school is a second option for kindergarten enrichment. These can be built one year earlier (Fall 2019) at a cost of \$1.1M.

In a “cost neutral” scenario, per-pupil construction costs would be \$1,180, and per-pupil program costs are estimated at \$4,145. Taken together, a \$5,325 annual tuition/fee is needed over a five-year payback.

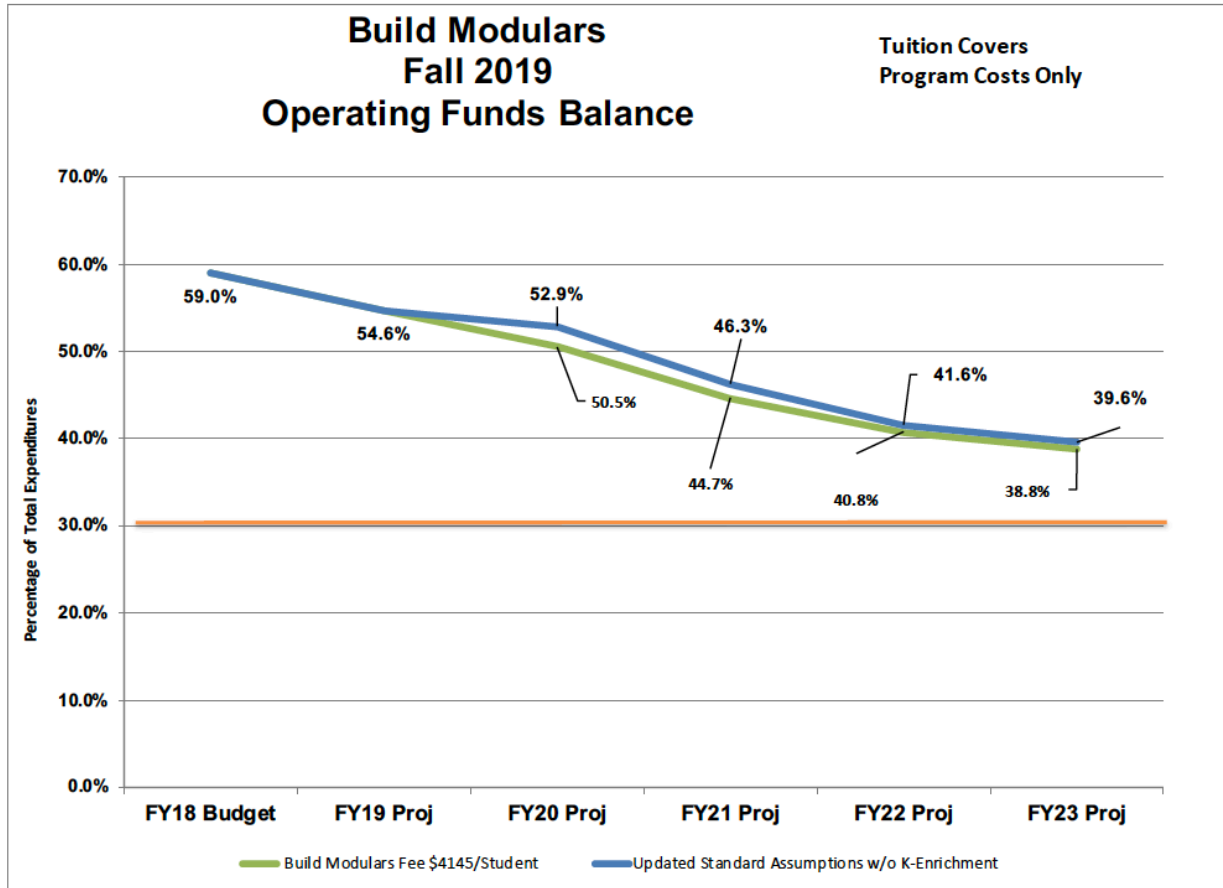
The graph reflects a decline in fund balances in FY19 & FY 20 for construction but increases as construction costs are recovered in future years. This scenario allows flexibility for the district to determine the tuition rate on a year-by-year basis.



Graph 4: Build Modular Units – Tuition Covers Program Costs Only

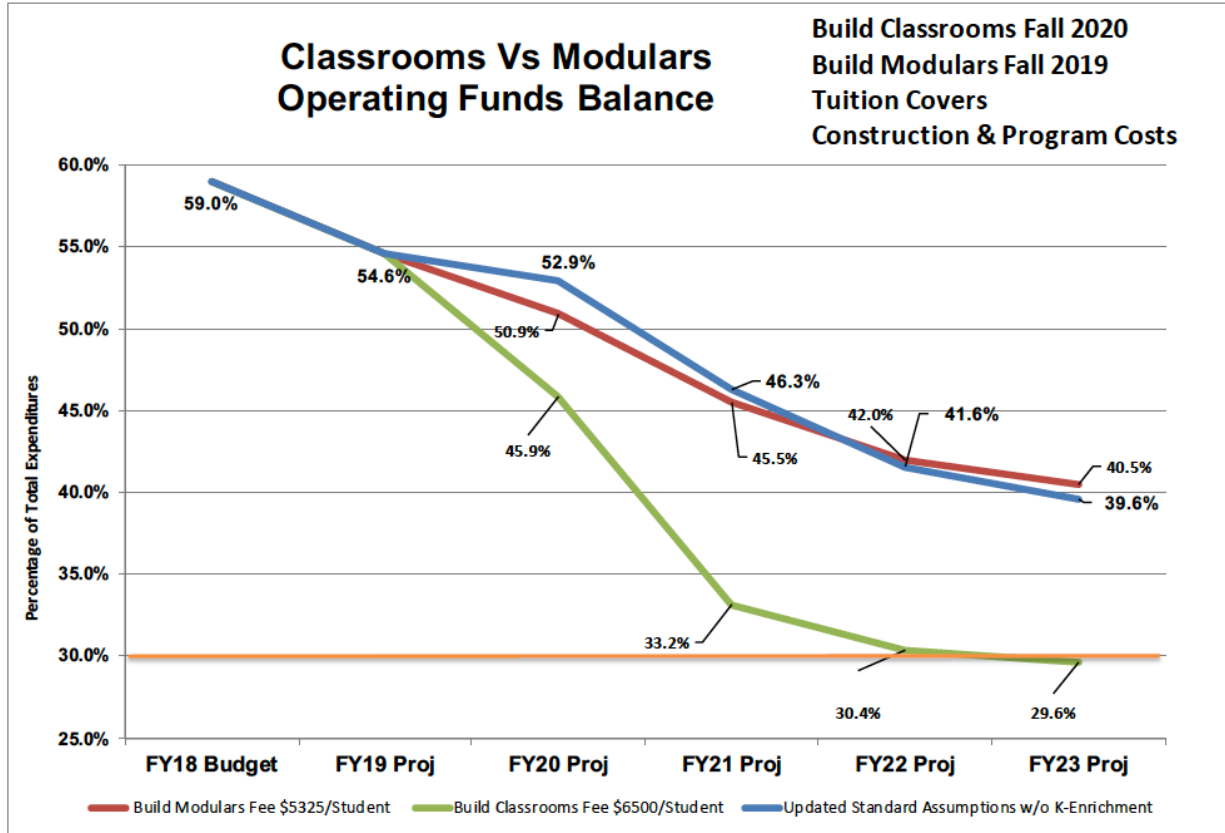
This graph also reflects the cost of adding modular classrooms at each of our elementary schools, at a cost of \$1.1M. In this example the district pays the full cost of construction and charges only fees covering program costs of \$4,145.

In this scenario the green line will continue to stay slightly below the blue line due to the annual program costs being met by parent fees.



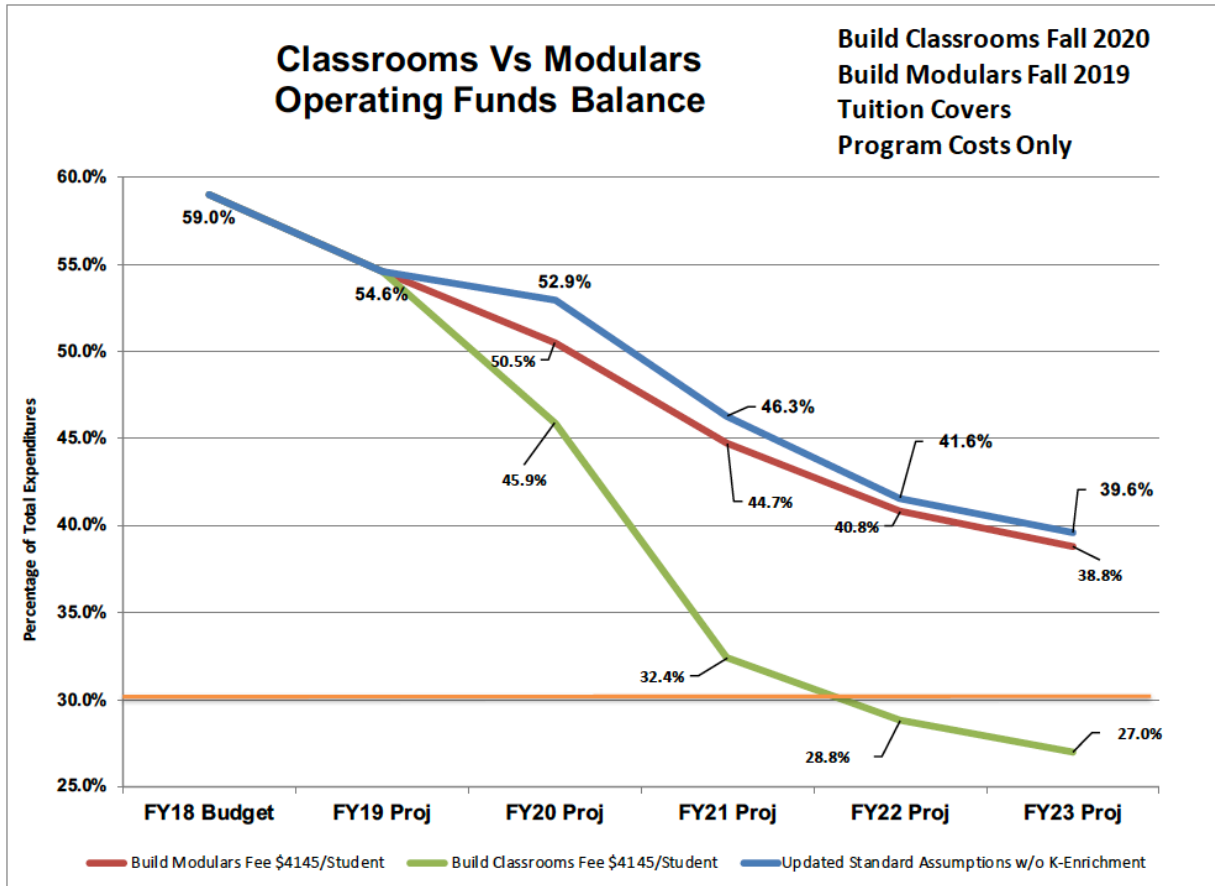
Graph 5: Classrooms vs Modulars – Tuition for Construction and Program Costs

The graph compares construction options, while charging fees to cover all costs. This is a “break even” scenario comparison. Note, the green line is a 10-year pay-back scenario and will move closer to the blue line in future years.



Graph 6: Classrooms vs Modulares – Tuition for Program Costs Only

The graph compares construction options, while charging \$4,145 fees covering program costs. Due to the large difference in cost, the green line will continue on its downward trend below the 30% fund balance threshold. The red line will remain closer to the standard assumption line but will also continue in a downward trend though at a less significant trajectory.



KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT SURVEYS

Administration conducted two surveys to gather information regarding the feasibility of offering a sustainable, fee-based kindergarten enrichment program from District 39 families.

Kindergarten Enrichment Survey I

The first survey’s purpose, as reported at the April 2018 Board of Education meeting, was for families to share with the District whether they would have utilized the proposed kindergarten enrichment option, had it been available, or would consider in the future. District 39 shared with families that the district was exploring the feasibility of offering a sustainable, fee-based kindergarten enrichment option; the per pupil yearly cost for a five-day a week, 176 school day enrichment program is estimated to be \$6,500.00. The earliest the District would be able to offer this program would be the 2020-2021 school year.

Survey I Results

Approximately 650 people responded to the survey and produced the following results:

- 70% (457) of respondents indicated that their child participated in a kindergarten enrichment program.
- 68.8% (444) of respondents shared they would participate in the proposed kindergarten enrichment program.
 - Of these respondents who indicated that they would participate in the proposed kindergarten enrichment program:
 - 71.6% have children aged three and under.
 - 72.8% have a kindergartner currently enrolled.
 - 68% have a first grader currently enrolled.

Kindergarten Enrichment Survey II

Based on the results of the first survey which indicated much support for a fee-based kindergarten enrichment program, District 39 resurveyed the same population of families in order to draw comparisons from both survey data.

In this survey, District 39 shared with families that the January 2018 kindergarten enrichment survey indicated that 70% of parents were willing to pay \$6,500 for an optional D39 Kindergarten Enrichment program. To lower fees, the District now has a second option to offer for a proposed five-day a week, 176 school day enrichment program. Both of these options would be for the enrichment program only and would not include transportation or lunch.

- Option 1: The per-pupil fees to build classrooms onto each school continues to be estimated at \$6,500.00 (\$37 per day).
- Option 2: The per-pupil fees to build modular units at each school is estimated at \$5,325.00 (\$30 per day).

Survey II Results

Approximately 527 people responded to the survey produced the following results:

- 54.8% (289) of respondents indicated that they would prefer to have classrooms built and pay a tuition of \$6,500.
- 23.3% (123) of respondents indicated that they would prefer to have modular units and pay a tuition of \$5,325.
- 16.1% (85) of the respondents indicated neither as their preference.

In addition, the survey provided additional information for consideration:

- 57.1% (301) of the respondents have children aged three or younger.
- 63.9% (334) of the respondents reported that their children have participated in a private kindergarten enrichment program.

RECOMMENDATION

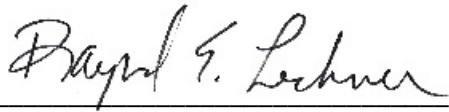
District 39 administration continues to recommend providing a fee-based, half-day Kindergarten Enrichment program for District 39 families. The enrichment offering proposed would be self-sustaining with no (or minimal) impact on tax dollars. In addition, the Kindergarten Enrichment survey results indicate much support for this goal:

- In the first survey, 70% (457 of 650) of respondents indicated that their child participated in a kindergarten enrichment program.
- In the second survey, 78.1% (412 of 527) of respondents indicated that they would pay tuition that would support building classrooms or modular units.

Therefore, moving forward with any of the proposed options would take the district a step closer to accomplishing the goal. However, the administration recommends a completely cost neutral option.

- Option 1: The per-pupil fees to build classrooms onto each school continues to be estimated at \$6,500.00 (\$37 per day).
- Option 2: The per-pupil fees to build modular units at each school is estimated at \$5,325.00 (\$30 per day).

Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education,



Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent