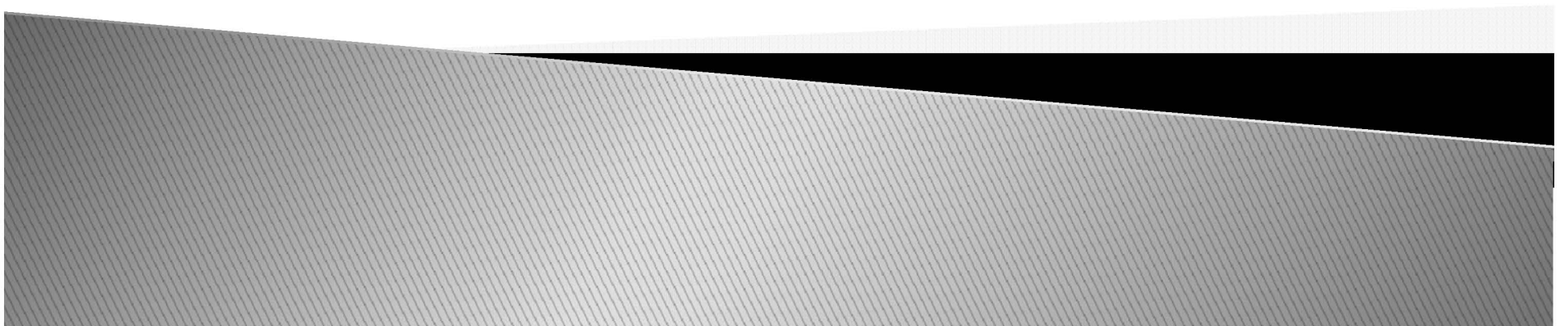


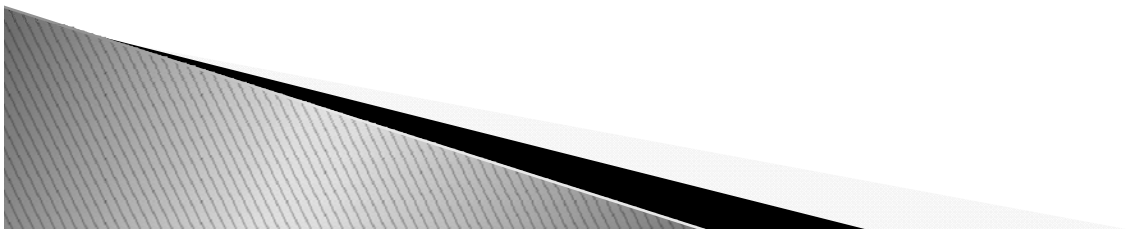
# Spencer Community Schools

Elementary Restructuring Presentation



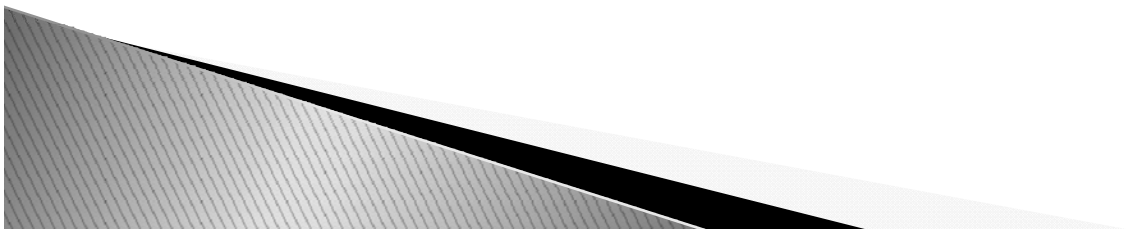
# Elementary Restructuring Study Committee

- ▶ Met on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>, Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>, & Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>
- ▶ Committee members recommended by elem. principals.
- ▶ Committee included parents, teachers, principals, superintendent, and school board members.
- ▶ Committee work:
  - Discussed the Pros and Cons of our current structure and of a grade-alike structure.
  - Discussed and prepared a list of questions and answers related to a grade-alike structure change.



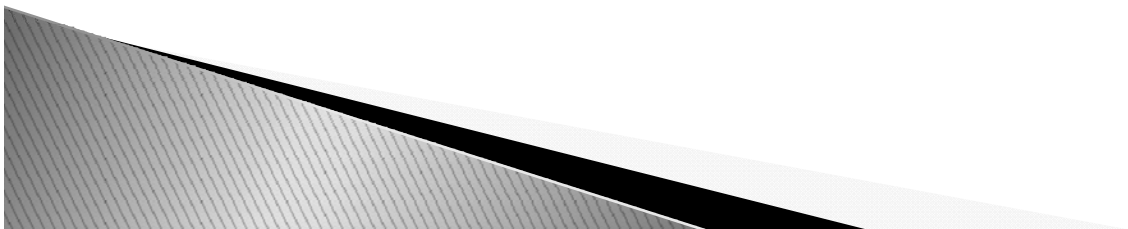
# Committee Continued

- Held open conversations about what a grade-alike structure would mean for our students and families.
- Discussed other school districts that have gone to a grade alike structure.
- ▶ **Committee Conclusion:**
  - After two thorough meetings, the committee voted 17-0 recommending to moving the grade-alike conversation forward to the community and to the school board.



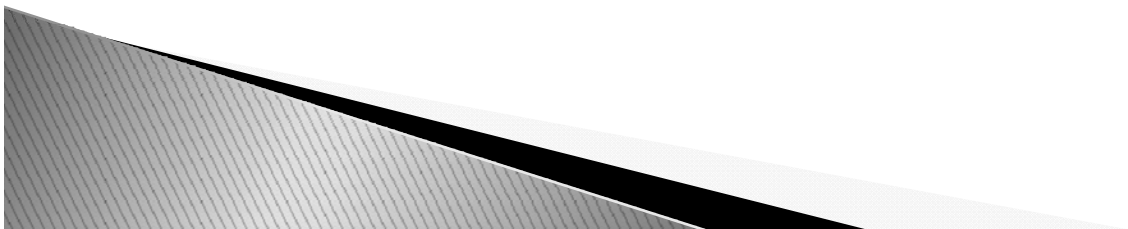
# Elementary School Operations:

- ▶ The Past
- ▶ The Present
- ▶ The Future



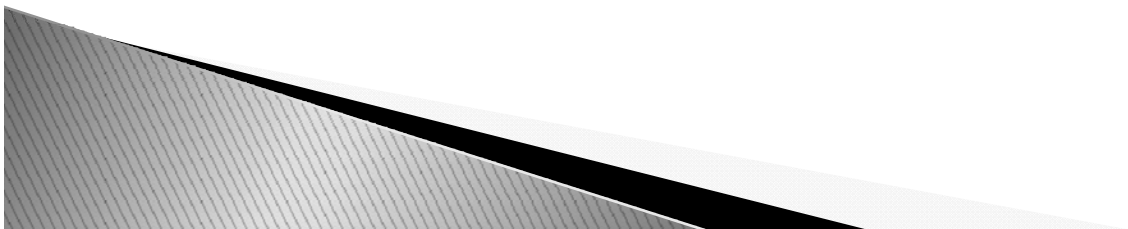
# The Past:

- Operated as separate schools.
- Students were being taught different content and with inconsistent strategies.
- Teachers were isolated from teachers in other elementary schools.
- Had separate leadership and direction.
- Students interacted with a limited population of age-alike students.
- Students had to be moved to other buildings if a grade level was over capacity at one building.



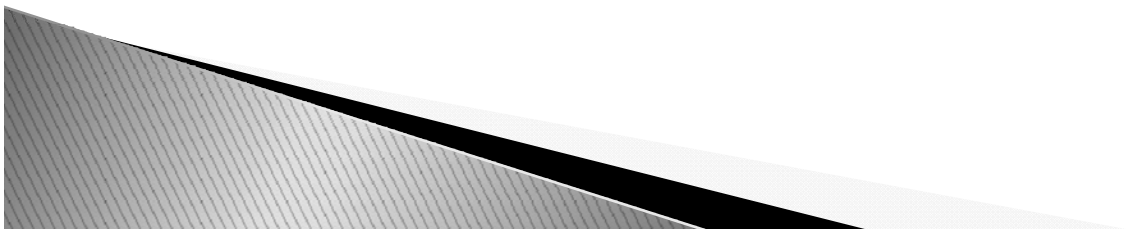
# The Present:

- Students are receiving similar experiences.
- Increased collaboration/discussion between teachers in the three buildings.
- Better aligned curriculum and teaching strategies.
- Consistent leadership across buildings.
- Students have limited interaction with age-alike students.
- Students still have to be moved to other buildings if a grade level is over capacity at one building.



# The Future: Grade-Alike Elementary Schools

- Consistent curriculum and learning experiences for all students.....on a daily basis.
- Daily collaboration/planning between grade-alike teachers.
- Consistent leadership.
- Increased age-alike interactions for students.
- Students/families would no longer have to be reassigned to other buildings.
- Students would be classmates starting at Kindergarten and make building transitions together



**What would the  
restructuring look like?**

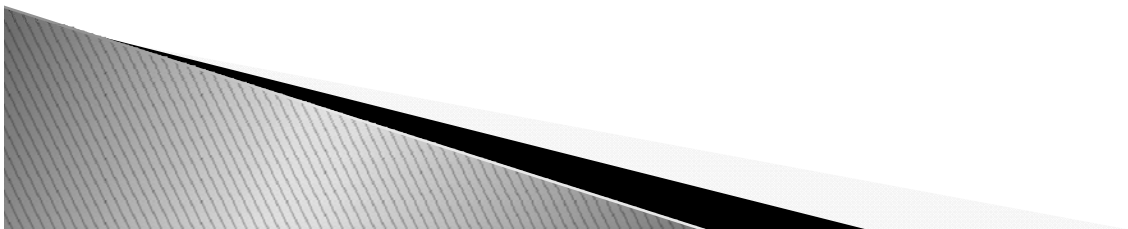


# Proposed Elementary Structure

Johnson	Fairview	Lincoln
Childs' Garden (2 sections)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade (7)	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade (5)
Special Education Preschool (3)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade (7)	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade (5)
Preschool (4)	Special Education	Special Education
KinderKids (2)		
Kindergarten (7)		
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade (7)		
Special Education		

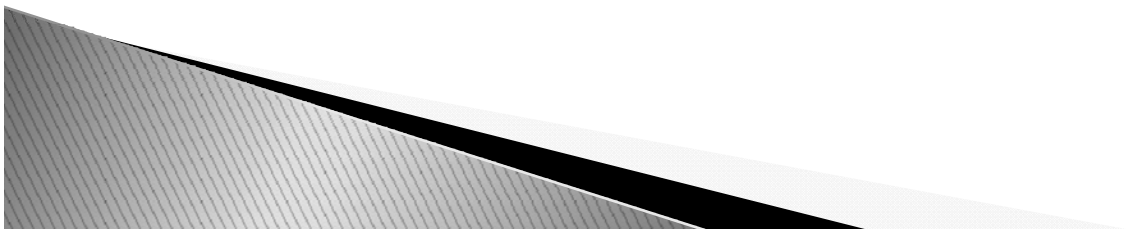
# Teacher Collaboration:

- ▶ What does teacher collaboration look like?
- ▶ Grade level teachers working together on a daily basis.
- ▶ Teachers sharing resources.
- ▶ Professional development could be more fine tuned towards specific grade levels.
- ▶ Aligned curriculum and teaching strategies.



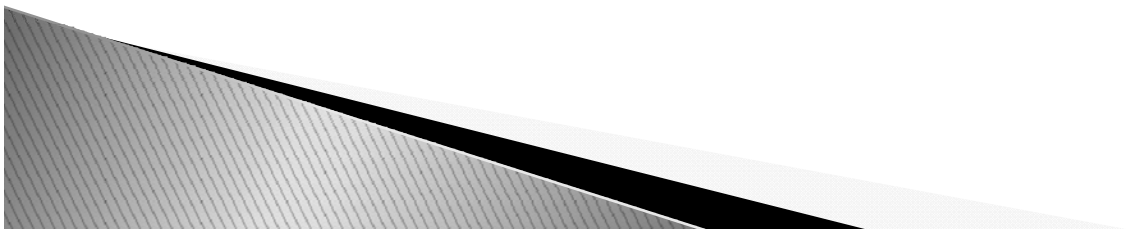
# Collaboration continued

- ▶ Teachers able to narrow their focus and emphasize their strengths with co-teachers. Tasks can be divided among teachers, so have the ability to become experts in specific areas. Then teachers would share expertise with grade level team members.
- ▶ Consistent communication between all teachers at a particular grade level.
- ▶ Teachers would have the ability to make curriculum adjustments/clarifications as needed.
- ▶ Teachers become equal partners in making fundamental decisions relating to both curriculum and students.



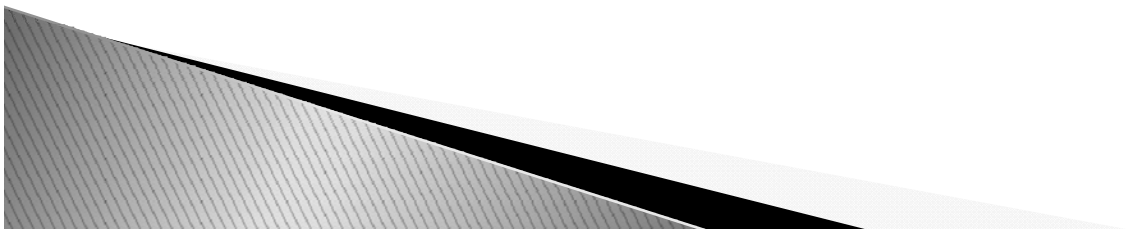
# How does collaboration benefit kids?

- ▶ All students benefit from teachers working together.
- ▶ Deepens the pool of knowledge for teachers to share with students.
- ▶ The ability to share resources and staff allows students to be grouped for guided reading levels in a more precise manner. Ability grouping would be more matched to students needs.
- ▶ Students would benefit from the various resources that teachers of the same grade level would be able to share.



# Collaboration benefit kids?...Continued

- ▶ Collaboration would allow teachers to teach in an area of their strength, so students would have exposure to deeper understanding of content areas.
- ▶ Students with varying needs can be grouped for specifically designed instruction to meet their needs.
- ▶ Teachers who collaborate work toward one common goal: Student Achievement!
  - ▶ ***TEAM... Together Everyone Achieves More!***
  - ▶ ***We are better together!***

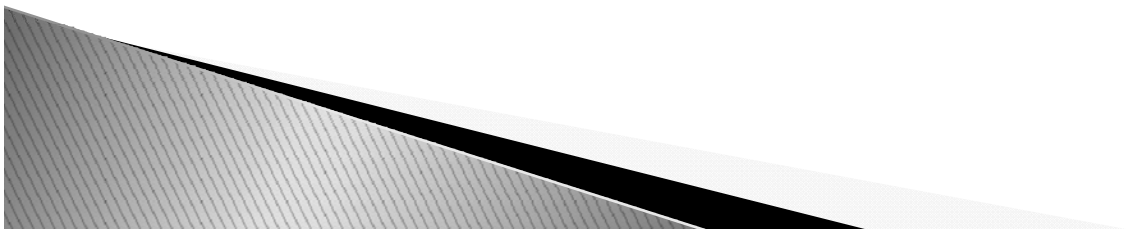


# Pros and Cons of Current Elementary Structure



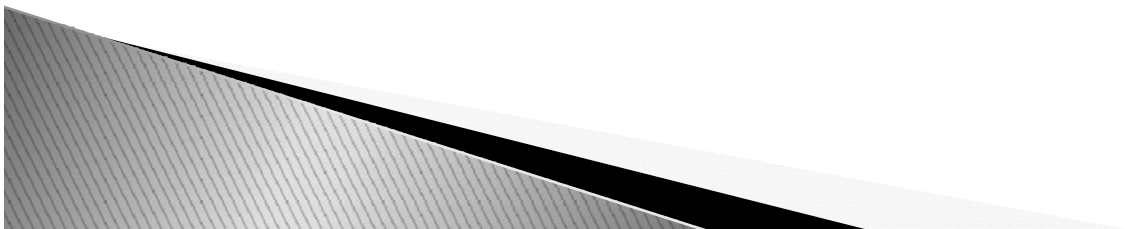
# Pros:

- ▶ Transportation is convenient.
- ▶ Multiple siblings in one school building.
- ▶ Peer activities with different age groups.
- ▶ Consistent building environment.
- ▶ Parent–Teacher Conferences in one building.
- ▶ It is the status quo.



# Cons:

- ▶ Limited collaboration & communication.
- ▶ Difficult to balance class sizes.
- ▶ Enrollment adjustments (moving of students to other buildings to balance class sizes).
- ▶ Limited student exposure to diverse populations.

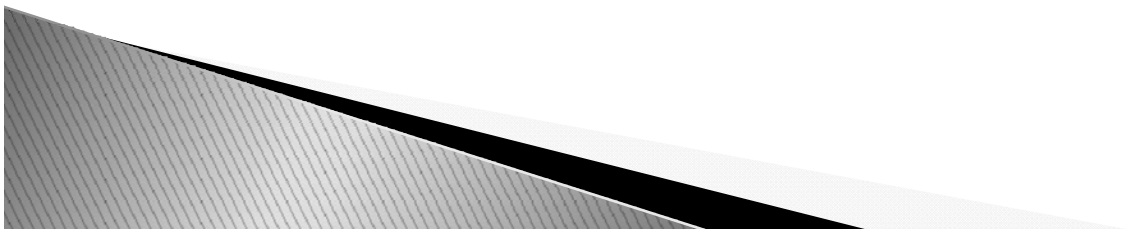


# Pros and Cons of a Grade-Alike Structure



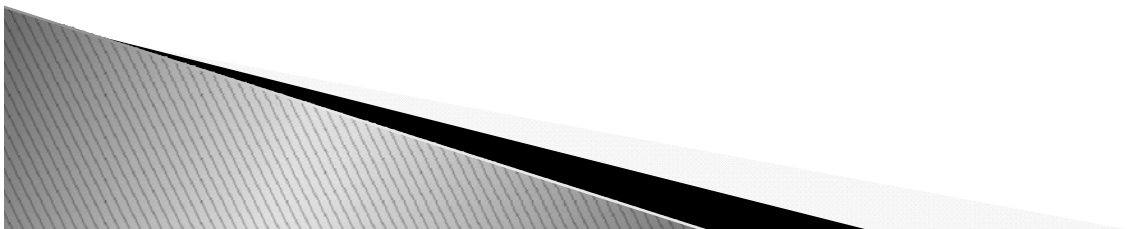
# Pros:

- ▶ All students receive enhanced educational experiences.
- ▶ Consistent collaboration/communication between grade level teachers.
- ▶ Common resources/materials for student learning.
- ▶ Equal class sizes.
- ▶ Balanced demographics (i.e. Gender, SES, etc).



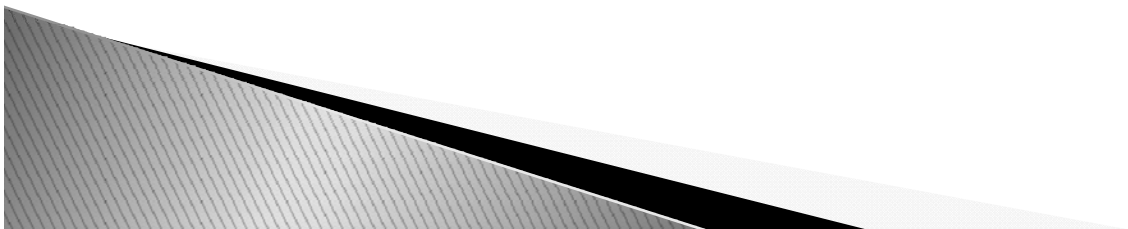
# Pros:

- ▶ Opportunities for grade specific activities.
- ▶ Greater opportunity for students to make more friends/find friends with similar interests.
- ▶ Grade level students together earlier and throughout school years.



# Cons:

- ▶ More transitions.
- ▶ Limited multi-age interactions at school.
- ▶ Siblings in different schools.
- ▶ Increased transportation.
- ▶ Change is hard.

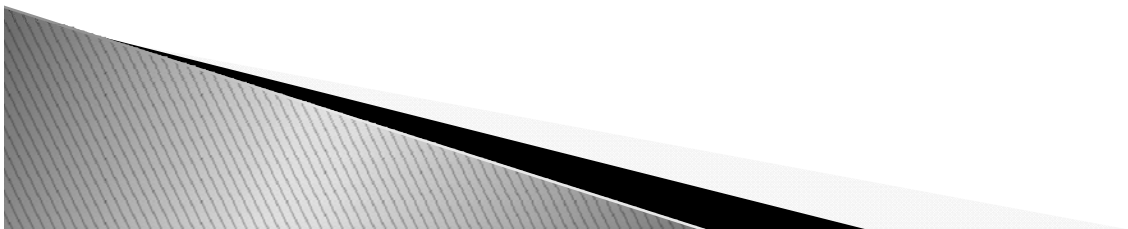


# Questions & Answers:



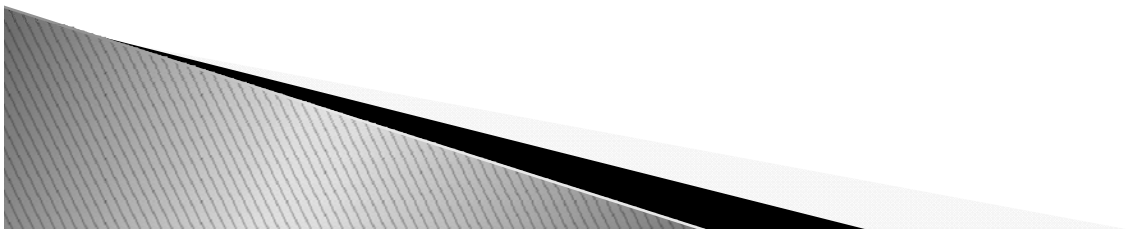
## Question:

- ▶ How will my child(ren) benefit from grade-alike elementary schools?



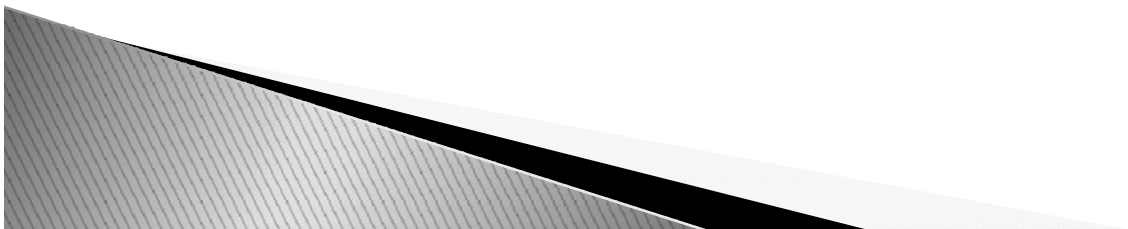
# How will my child(ren) benefit from grade-alike elementary schools?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ Increased interaction with students of varying abilities, cultures, and interests.
- ▶ Collaboration will produce stronger teaching.
  - (sharing strategies, best practices, etc.)
- ▶ Maximize teacher strengths at each grade level.
- ▶ More efficient use of resources, resulting in more opportunities for students.
- ▶ All students in a grade level transition together.



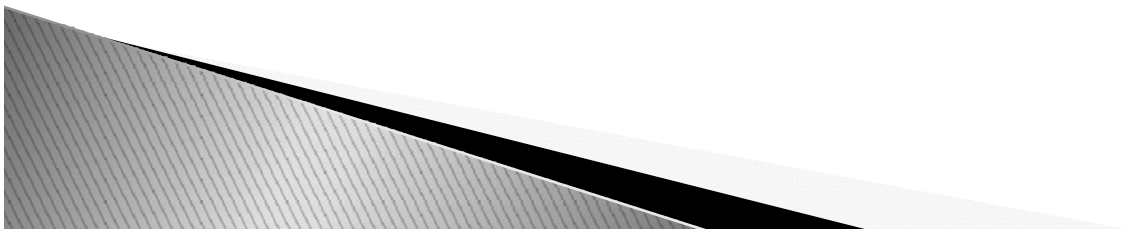
# Question:

- ▶ Why are we going away from neighborhood schools?



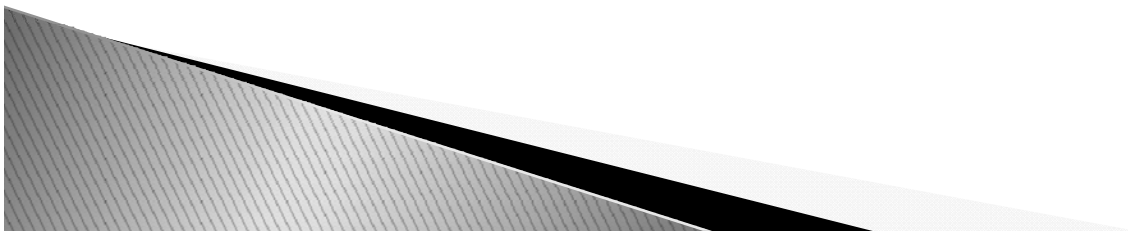
# Why are we going away from neighborhood schools?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ The reality is that we do not have neighborhood schools.
  - Only 21% of elem. students walk/bike to school.
  - 24% of elem. students are riding a bus to school.
  - 54% of elem. students are being transported in a personal vehicle.
  - Pre-school & Kinder-kids are grade-alike.
  - Some of our students with disabilities can only attend at one school.



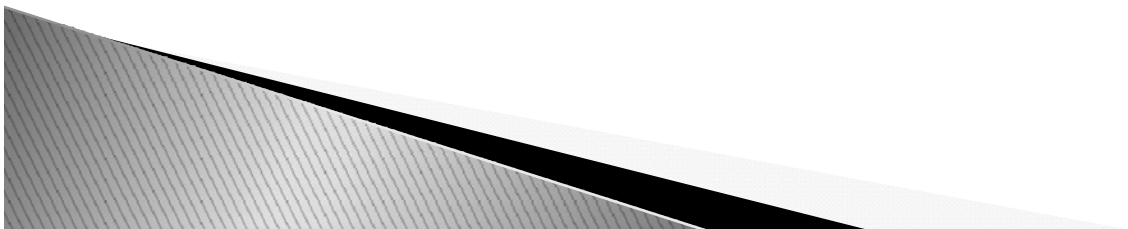
# Question:

- ▶ In general, how does elementary staff feel about this change?



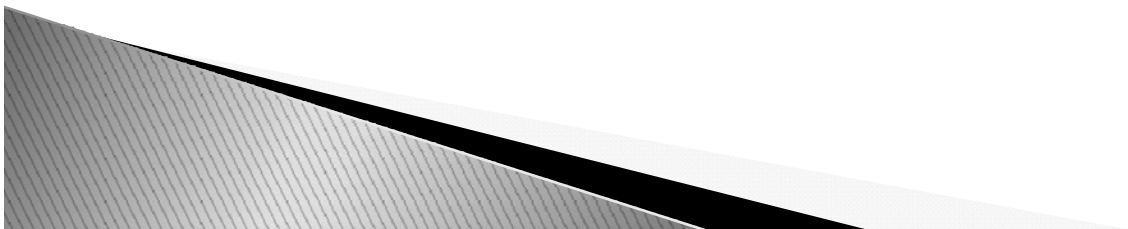
# In general, how do the elementary staff feel about this change?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ Overall, staff are supportive of a grade-alike system. Last year, many elementary staff members signed letters supporting a grade-alike system and submitted them to the school board.
- ▶ Current staff survey data: (61 responses)
- ▶ 47 (77%) For Grade-Alike / 14 (23%) Against



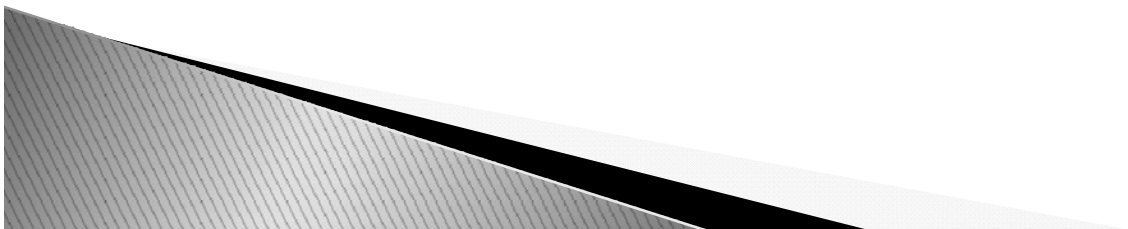
## Question:

- ▶ How will busing be handled in a grade-alike configuration?



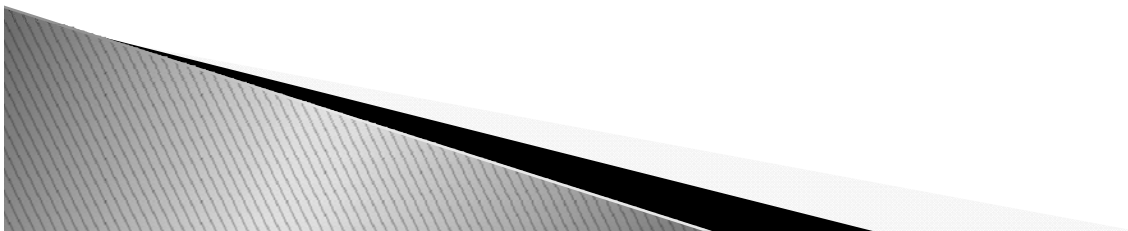
# How will busing be handled in a grade-alike configuration?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ Buses would transport grade-alike students directly from each elementary school to their school of attendance.
- ▶ Elem school shuttles would run from 8:10–8:20 a.m. and 3:20–3:30 p.m.
- ▶ Students could have breakfast at any school beginning at 7:50 a.m. before being bused.



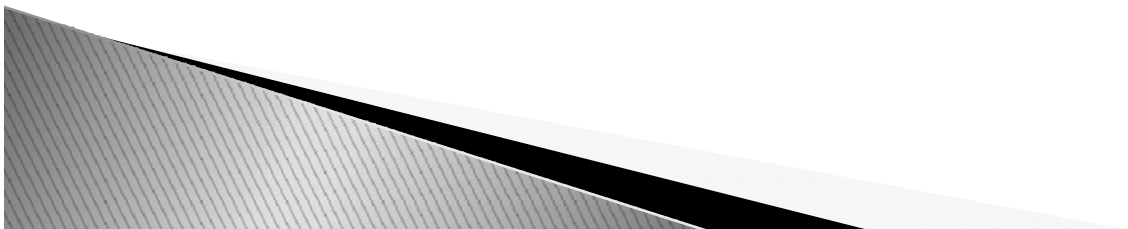
# Question:

- ▶ What will be the impact on school start/dismissal times?



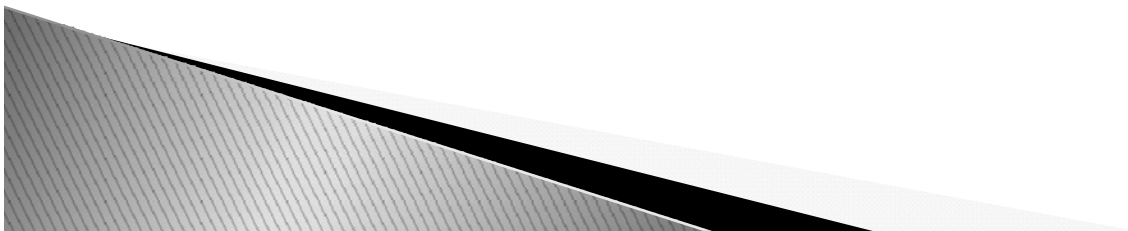
# What will be the impact on school start/dismissal times?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ There should be minimal impact on school starting and dismissal times.



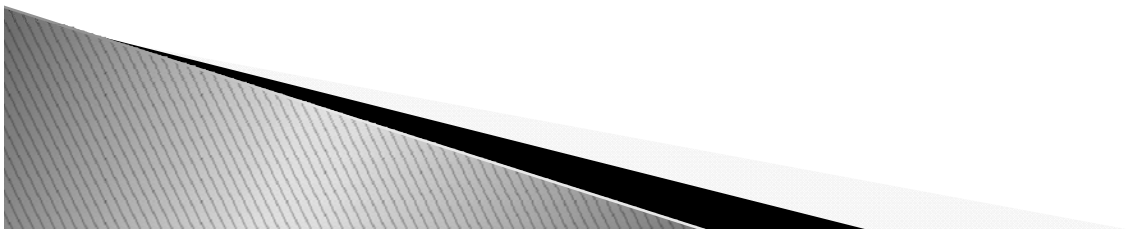
# Question:

- ▶ What will be the financial impact of moving to a grade-alike structure?



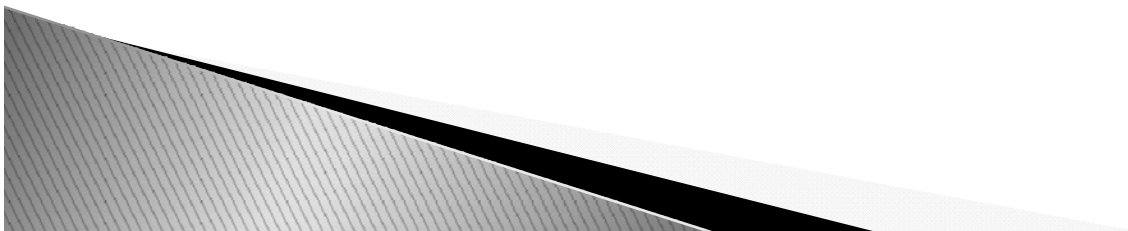
# What will be the financial impact of moving to a grade-alike structure?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ While there may be some initial expenses with making a transition to a grade-alike structure, there will be more sharing of materials and resources within grade levels.
- ▶ The district does not anticipate any major expenses with this change.



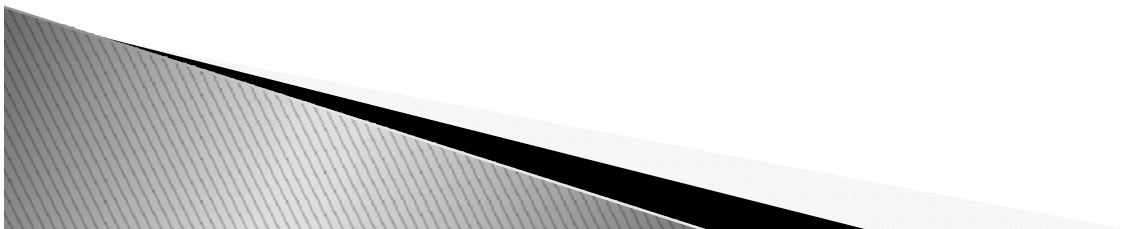
# Question:

- ▶ How will transitions between buildings be addressed?



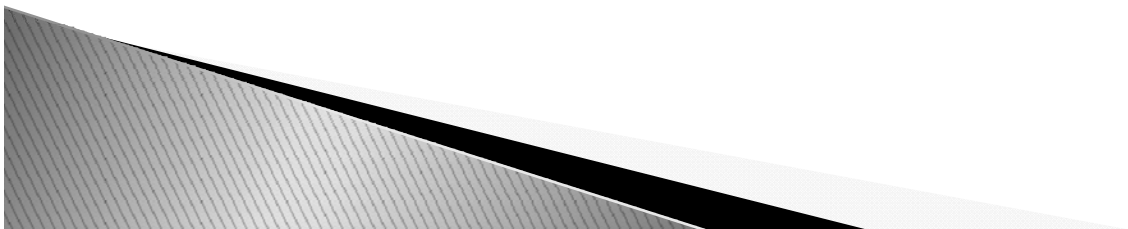
# How will transitions between buildings be addressed?

- ▶ Answer:
- ▶ In order to ensure positive transitions between school buildings the district will:
  - Conduct new building orientations with families.
  - Have students spend time in their next building with teachers and in classrooms.
  - Classes could also establish a pen-pal program with students in their next schools.



# Timeline:

- ▶ September/October – Committee Work
- ▶ November 7, 8, & 10 Informational Meetings
- ▶ November 22<sup>nd</sup> School Board Meeting
- ▶ (If approved)– Jan–Aug 2012 Planning
- ▶ Beginning of 12–13 School Year– Implementation



**THANK YOU FOR  
ATTENDING!**

