From "Lisa Relou <lisa.relou@gmail.com>" <lisa.relou@gmail.com>
Subject **4/9 Let's Talk Transcript**
To Randy Barber <randy.barber@bvsd.org>
Cc Claire Redmond Takhar <claire.r.takhar@gmail.com>
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Hi Randy! I hope you're enjoying the beautiful weekend. Attached is the 4/9 transcript.I've added a few related questions to the hot topics spreadsheet. Great content from all three livestream sessions that I'm certain will be helpful in the next phase of this work.

Lisa

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Lisa M. Relou

(303) 522-0848

lisa.relou@gmail.com

www.linkedin.com/in/lisarelou

Attachments:

- 04-9 Meeting_ Declining School Enrollment and District Strategy-transcript.docx

04-9 Let’s Talk: Declining School Enrollment and District Strategy

Speaker 1
This is our third live stream on the topic, and previously we’ve talked talked about how we’ve gotten here. Um Before we actually dive in there, I do want to just mention, I mean this has been on a radar for some time. Uh For the duration, I don’t know how many years have you been board president now?

Speaker 2
This is my third year as board president.

Speaker 1
And then of course you were DAC chair before that so District Accountability Committee. Were you guys talking about it back then too?

Speaker 2
We have been talking about declining enrollment for a really long timeum on the district accountability, in part because as schools started to decline even back in. Individual schools started to experience declines even back in 2015, 2016. It has budget implications, it has staffing implications. And so as individual schools were impacted, those questions will come up in the budget. And, as the overall as the district accountability committee had to make recommendations on the overall budget, We really transitioned into a place of like we have fewer resources to go around. How can we spend those wisely? How, are we? How can we think differently about the resources when we have fewer students?

Speaker 1
Yeah, Dac a big part of DAC’s. Uh, you know, purpose is really looking at the financial aspect of things. And and and making sure that districts are accountable to that.

Speaker 2
Right, and also as some schools declined in different abilities to provide additional service, additional like parent dollars. Like, how were we being mindful that all of our schools got and all of our students got what they needed no matter where they were? And, that was just a really big part of that conversation at the time as well. Um, And part of the reason why differentiative funding came about isum was a part of those conversations.

Speaker 1
I know, Rob. We were talking about that this has been going on for a while. I’ve got a graph here that kind of shows the last ten years. Um, I know that was about the time that you know, that I came into the district and you came in soon afterwards. Um, We’ve lost uh you know, with declining enrollment uh about I think it’s three thousand six hundred students. And then the projections show that in the next five years, we’re expected to lose about

seventeen hundred more students. And this is a pretty significant situation Well,

Speaker 3
You know when when we say lose students, That we'll just have less students to serve. I think that as you look at the graphics, it's important to realize that we have less students coming into the system. And the longer that happens, the less students we have. We're not losing tons of students each year once they're with us, they're just not showing up in the first place. But, it's significant and I'm really, really thankful that we're having this conversation with our community, that our board has been incredibly clear and supportive and um, U h again, uh, over the course of the next four months. Uh in the next couple of weeks, we'll do a lot of engagement, a lot of thinking and planning uh to really bring some recommendations forward that are going to make sense,

Speaker 1
Hopefully to people I appreciate it. Uh, you're on message usually be the thing I'm telling somebody else to remember to talk about. So thank you for saying that I do want to mention I think a lot of folks, you know, especially in our school communities, you know, they see probably kids every day. They're surrounded because they've got kids. They're in the areas that have kids, but and I know that Boulder County is growing in population. But again, we're seeing less folks have less kids. We're seeing very pricey. We're going to talk about housing here in a minute, But you can see kids. And so that might mean that you've got less kids in that community, right?

Speaker 2
Absolutely. And I, what we see is actually the older population is growing here in Boulder County. We're seeing still kids out and about which is lovely, and we're seeing fewer of them. I tell people all the time when my kids started at Foothill Elementary, Back in twenty fifteen, it was a full four round school. It is now a solid three round school, and that was that experience is happening across our district. It's we there are still kids around, but there are just fewer of them and fewer families moving in.

Speaker 1
I do want to make a note because I know oftentimes when people are hearing this, Uh you know, uh, we want to make sure that we're clear about what we're talking about here. Elementary schools are our focus and and mainly here on the plains. So superiorum uh Louisville Lafayette uh into Boulder here. Not our mountain communities. So not our middle schools and high schools at this point as well. And, that's really because the main impact at this point is at an elementary level, Rob.

Speaker 3
And it's regional, right? So Louisville, Superior, Broomfield and Boulder. Lafayette, we're not seeing the impacts uh as as we're seeing in those other communities. Um. And and so that's where the focus of the conversations is going to be.

Speaker 1
I do want to get to that question that uh that we got. Our first question is regard regarding the cause of the decline, Uh, this uh parent wrote, “The housing costs is what drove our family out of the neighborhood. Our neighborhood in Louisville. We were already stretched, fairly thin and weren’t able to find anything close to our elementary school that was affordable.” Um, How can we make BVSD a family friendly community when it’s such an expensive area to live in? This seems like such a large factor in discouraging enrollment. And I’ll mention one other one while we’re at it here. Actually, we got two more. Uh, Paige Dow asked uh has BVSD talked with towns um.

Speaker 1
In regards to their plans for population growth and development. And Martine Conway asks, And she’s a parent of a seventh grader at Centennial and a 10 th grader at Nu Vista High School. How’s the district partnering with other organizations, for instance government organizations, nonprofits, Businesses to address Boulder’s housing crisis, affordable housing, which I see is the main reason for declining enrollment.

Speaker 3
I think you went one slide too far ahead. Thank you. I’ll talk and Nicole would love to hear your thoughts. You know, it’s challenging. I do think that our towns municipalities, uh the ones we’ve mentioned Superior, Louisville, Boulder Broomfield, right? They know and understand that the the affordability of housing is is a challenge. And I think that the solutions that we’ve seen may solve their problem but maybe not ours. So you can solve affordable housing by doing.

Speaker 3
You know, creating housing that’s more affordable that might not necessarily attract families with kids. In the history of our district and and Glenn has been on your this show. He was here last week. What he would tell you is that single family homes is what you need, Affordable single family homes is what you need to attract students and families that come to the Boulder Valley School District. And the yield from condominiums, townhomes, apartments Is significantly lower than for single family homes. So, you could be working on affordable housing in all of these communities. And it may not mean that kids are going to be living in our communities or going to be moving into those spaces because the families that I talked to, and I talked to Randy, you know them. We talked about this two shows ago. We went out and spoke and had conversations with every teacher in the district, which is one of my favorite things to do. And a lot of them have young families.

Speaker 3
Right, and they’re not living in townhomes. Right, they’re not living in condominiums. What they’re doing is they’re moving further away where housing is affordable, Where they can have a yard for their dog and walk to a playground with their kids. Those spaces just don’t exist within our community in spaces that that you would consider affordable. And so I don’t know that it’s that folks that haven’t been working on affordable housing, it’s that the affordable housing that they’re working on doesn’t yield kids. And the

conversation, And maybe the conversations we are having spark the motivation and the urgency to have these conversations more widespread, Which is what do we need to do to make sure that families still live in our community? Because the danger is if we don't do something else, the kids won't be here. We are going to have to adjust in the ways that we're talking about adjusting.

Speaker 3
But, what happens when there's no kids that are able to move into into our community? And how does that change the dynamic of a place where, when I talk to families, a lot of people move here for the schools.

Speaker 1
That's right. That's right. It's one of my favorite things to see when I'm driving into town and you got somebody selling houses and they're, you know, these houses are in the Boulder Valley School District. It's definitely one of my favorite things. I know, you know, the board often talks to our municipalities. I'm sure that this is one of those things that has come up in those conversations.

Speaker 2
Absolutely it has. I can think of last year when we had the Boulder City Council, in particular visiting, we talked about the types of housing that generate our students, The types of housing that our families like to live in like Dr Anderson mentioned. Not only just the housing and the cost of housing, the housing stock that's available. It's also how are you investing in recreational facilities? How are you investing in infrastructure that is something that families seek out, Whether it's sports facilities or youth programming or through the city in a way that's also affordable. That really does make a community feel family friendly on top of having housing that's available. So we do chat with our municipalities, Boulder City Council in particular because.

Speaker 2
Historically, they've been the ones that have been most eager to meet with us. But, it is something that we discuss whenever we have the opportunity to do so.

Speaker 1
I know you kind of chimed in before, and I really appreciated it in regards to losing students. This is not a question about the quality of our schools as you were just talking about. You know, it's not because of failing schools. I know that you get reports regularly that our staff gives, Um, you know, are you proud of, you know, I can't imagine. I've watched you on the diets. I mean, you're pretty proud of the work that's happening here.

Speaker 2
Could not be more proud of the work that's happening here in BVSD. Our schools are performing better than they ever have, and we have overcome some significant challenges to get there. We've invested significantly in curriculum. We, i mentioned differentiating funding earlier or really supporting our teachers to support our students. We are we are giving it our all and we

are seeing uh the outcomes. That we have been hoping for for the past few years. You cannot think of a better time to be in BVSD, to be a student in BVSD, to be a family in BVSD. You are getting top- notch educational experiences you're not seeing across the rest of the state.

Speaker 1
I know you kind of said before we're doing our job. We're doing it, we're doing a good job of it. Our teachers are amazing out there on doing that job. Uh We did get this question from from a parent that kind of dives into uh to the idea of kind of how much do we know about why people choose schools? Uh Some schools are full and some schools have less students as you mentioned, With open enrollment options available, Did you study survey? Any parents? Uh, you know, in regards to why they choose schools for their kids? Do people go to a neighborhood school, or do they choose their neighborhood based on the school that they want their children or their children to go to? Um, they thought you know that this would provide additional insight. That's definitely something that we've done.

Speaker 3
Yes and uh we did this a few years ago. We went out and polledum vast parts of our community for folks who didn't. Had kids in the system, didn't have any kids in the system. You know, parents in an environment of choice they're making their choices. A third of parents who live in our district who choose district schools that aren't their neighborhood schools. Some choose focus schools that are our specialized programs. Some choose neighborhood schools that aren't in their neighborhood, and there's a wide variety of reasons. Sometimes it's the programming, sometimes it's.

Speaker 3
My friends that I, you know, That my kid knows they're all going to this school. So we're going there as well. You know it's interesting Randy because as we go through the engagement processes over the next few weeks, you know we're going to be asking people about that. What's the balance between choice focus programs and neighborhood schools? And, how do you create the right mix of those experiences as we continue to go through this process of closing consolidating reimagining? Uh, what's the right balance? Um, But I do think that choice is something that is ingrained into our culture and is something that our parents really, really support. And they do that by using it, using the process.

Speaker 1
Absolutely. It's important for for you to find a good school that fits your kid and it's state law as well, right? Soum this is a framework that I think uh is really helpful. Uh folks kind of put their minds around how uh the work that we've done up to this point. Um Our teachers and staff have really been trying to make it work up to this point. Resources are, Are stretched thin. I know we talked to teachers that are in these situations, and they're really stretching at this point, and they want to make sure that they keep everything together. It's really tough on our staff, right Rob?

Speaker 3
Yeah, no, I think that, that came through very clear as we went and talked to

our teachers, how much harder they're having to work as resources become more scarce to continue to do the job that. They got into teaching to do, right? Which is to make a difference for every kid in their classroom. And it's not sustainable. And I think it was the rubber band analogy, Wasn't that the one at the episode last week that Josh Baldner shared with us? That the rubber band's going to break. And it's going to do a couple things when that happens. Parents are not going to be satisfied with the experience their kids are getting. We're not going to be satisfied with the results we're getting.

Speaker 3
Teachers are going to burn out because I think the key to teacher burnout is when you are unable to make the difference for kids that you want to make because you don't have the right resources and supports. And with seventeen hundred less kids, give or take seventeen million dollars less, Randy, things aren't getting more affordable. We know the state budget and state funds, even with this new school finance act year in year out. We're. We're trying to scrape dollars together to meet the needs of our kids, and it's coming to a head. And so we're doing the responsible thing here in BVSD. We're going to do something about that. That we're going to look at our school portfolio, we're going to look at the number of schools that we have, And we're going to engage our community in conversations to understand what are the trade-offs that we need to make, To continue to make sure the experience for our teachers, for our kids, for our families.

Speaker 3
And that our outcomes all align with everybody's expectations.

Speaker 1
Another part of this framework on the slide here is the idea of increasing enrollment. And Nicole, I know one of the board's actions was was actually to to bring together our citizens, our parents. It's a long range advisory committee. They've been really amazing in terms of kind of trying to frame up. What are we talking about here? Where are our schools in terms of this? I think when that conversation started, I don't know that a lot of people had a good idea of, You know, uh, was there a danger there or not? Was were schools getting maybe a little bit too small? Uh, was that enrollment a little bit too low or was there capacity? You know, uh, they had a lot of capacity at those buildings. And so you know they really dove in. Uh you know what would you want to say about that Elrac group?

Speaker 2
I think the Elrac group has been an amazing thought partner for for the Board of Education. They were able to both publicly elevate some of the concerns that the challenges with declining enrollment. They were able to, Talk to their communities, they're able to look at data, elevate areas of concern. I think for the first time, our community did understand, we have some schools that are significantly under enrolled, and that is creating challenges, both for the staff and for the programmatic opportunities that we can provide kids. And so I think LREC was a key player. After LREC started we also started having regular meetings to talk about declining enrollment. That was part of the work

that came out of there. We thought through how we could try to increase enrollment so we had this, we started the showcase.

Speaker 2
As a result of some of those conversations, we've been advertising on the main thoroughfares. We've changed our board open enrollment policy to encourage to give priority to people that work within our boundaries. But can't afford to live within our boundaries. So, we've had a lot of meaningful conversation in part due the work of LRAC and some of the issues that they were able to elevate for us.

Speaker 1
And, then you know things have kind of changed as you guys have been looking out there, seeing these updates in regards to the projections. Uh, I think that the tenor with the board changed a little bit. Um, you know, What did you guys see out there? And and what was that, that discussion like on the dais?

Speaker 2
So I think for a while, it felt like maybe there's one or two schools that are just struggling. And maybe for an example would be the Heatherwood STEAM program. Like maybe there's something we can do to create interest to generate interest in more students. And the more we continue to look at the data, the more that we continue to look at our projections, the more we realize this is a system wide issue. And so we have to shift how how we're approaching, As a result, we have to make decisions that are going to benefit our entire system. And it's not one school against the other. It is it is a district wide challenge of declining enrollment that we're facing.

Speaker 1
So back to that slide one more time, the last part of that framework is really the idea of sustainable shift. And so when we start talking about the ideas of where we could go, which I believe is on the next slide here, Um we've laid out uh several options that are possible six. You guys have have have really, you know, sort of stepped forward and said. The idea of status quo really, really doesn't work at this point. Um, and so we're we're looking at the others. We're going to talk more in the second half of the show with Rob Price, Our assistant superintendent of operational services about what are all those? You know what this all means on the screen here. But, one of the things that you guys worked with on staff I think they listened to the board. And the conversation that was going on there and and created some goals that really sort of frame up uh what we're going to do. It's, it's you know about the student experience and making sure that we don't lose that academic rigor. But we also have to keep track of.

Speaker 1
How much money we're spending, right? We have to be fiscally responsible. What all went into that?

Speaker 2
I think part of it, again, having those regular conversations, looking at our budget consistently regularly, looking at our enrollment numbers regularly,

looking at all of our strategic plan metrics regularly. We really started to kind of come to the conclusion that first and foremost, the challenges here, we have to maintain our opportunities and outcomes for our students. That is the first and foremost. And, we can't continue to provide the high level of services with shrinking budgets across all of these schools. And so, How can we think about how our resources are distributed and allocated in a way that both addresses our fiscal needs and our expectations around educational experiences. Our students get? So it was over a bunch of conversations back and forth, talking with staff, board conversation at the dais, That we really kind of came out to these four overarching goals I would say. And then thinking about what options might help us meet those goals and what options were just not. The board did not feel.

Speaker 2
Were viable anymore moving forward, And which is why you'd see on this slide, the allowing schools to stay small was one of the options that the board was pretty resolute in saying we can't allow schools to stay small and do all the things that we're trying to do and be responsible to our taxpayers and our families. Yeah.

Speaker 1
For those that might be just listening in to us, I'm just going to read these out real quick. A future decision should maintain and improve learning outcomes for all students, distribute students so that all schools have the right level of students resources, Students and resources to maintain high quality learning experiences, stabilize overall enrollment by retaining current students and attracting new students to the district, and again maximize all efficiencies to address ongoing fiscal challenges. Um, you know, it's it's not not too long ago that you guys actually had a great opportunity to go out and visit schools and see a little bit of this firsthand. Um. So on the screen here, we've got a few of those schools that you guys visited. And it was interesting because I think I can't remember exactly was at least two rounds and three rounds.

Speaker 1
Do we see some that were down to one?

Speaker 2
We there were some classrooms, yes, That were down to one or you know situations where there was potentially combined classrooms at those schools.

Speaker 1
And I guess it should help us to define that a round for those that aren't in the know. What is a round?

Speaker 3
That is how many teachers you have per grade level.

Speaker 1
Yeah. What, what was your takeaway kind of walking around these schools and seeing what that differentiation is?

Speaker 2
I think the board left that meeting even more resolute about not, Letting

schools stay small. From our smallest schools, We heard how hard staff are really working to maintain that high level of programming for their students in ways that parents do not realize. And, we that The rubber band analogy that it's questionable how much longer that can be maintained. Our staff really are working hard in those schools that are exceedingly small to have those opportunities. When you have a three-round school, Scheduling is a lot easier. You have consistent PE specials teachers, so music, art and PE they're at the school every day. That brings a really important part of the school community and school culture to have those people present, the same people all the way through. You have you know more opportunities for co-curricular experiences, More opportunities we heard about teachers being able to partner and work with each other. And as schools got smaller we really did feel.

Speaker 2
You could feel the difference. You could hear the difference in some of the challenges and the ways that schools were trying to really overcome those different differences at this point in time. So I think it was a very, a very powerful experience to be in our schools.

Speaker 1
Um, we kind of went through those options that we're going to have. Again, we're going to come back to that and go into that in more detail. I know Rob, we've gotten almost every episode we've gotten this kind of question. So I just want you to be able to give us the answer that you've given us before. But. You know, this person was kind of talking about BC SIS. This is Bonnie Wooten. She said, what are the main issues facing BCIS, BC SIS, sorry from the staffing enrollment point of view? I'm hearing rumblings about the possibility of location change. At this point in the game. We're not in that place where we're talking about specific schools.

Speaker 3
That doesn't mean the rumblings will stop, right? That I think that there are lots of rumblings all around. I mean, people want to know what's going to happen before it's decided. And I understand that. And some people think the decision has been already been made. I understand that too. I can assure you that it hasn't been and that these next couple of weeks are really important to our process, to be able to engage our community over six sessions, right? To be able to know and understand How they feel about the trade-offs. What are the most important things to individuals, to our community collectively? That's really important information to know. After that, we're going to be doing polling and surveying. I think we're probably getting into the second part of today, so we'll talk a little bit more about that. And then in June, we're bringing everything back. Bonnie's not alone in hearing rumblings. I think there are rumblings.

Speaker 3
And in some ways, I'm glad there's rumblings, which means that we're not sneaking up on anybody. Right? That this is an issue that we're really trying to be proactive about, being very honest about. Right? This wasn't like just a press release or something one time in the paper where we have it all figured

out and you tell us whether you liked it or not. Again, you know, If we have the ability to listen to people and take what they tell us and allow that to shape our solution, That provides the experience that meets the goals of the board and what our community wants. That is the ideal solution, and it's not not that it's easy, Randy. But that's the right way I believe to go about doing that. I've never gone wrong as a leader when I've listened to people. Listen then lead, And I think that that's a really important difference in the ways that we're looking at. And we talked at this, and we talked about this last week than maybe some others are where it's we're just going to make a decision, we're going to close our eyes, we're going to grit our teeth and.

Speaker 3
We're going to hope that it goes through and then hope people forgive us. That's what happened twenty some years ago in this community, and I still hear about it. So we have to do something different, and so again, why I am excited for the next couple of weeks.

Speaker 1
You were talking a little bit about kind of what that process looks like moving forward, so let's just touch on this graphic real quick. Right now we're in the community engagement part;. You know, we are about to engage the community go out. We've got six sessions. We'll talk about in just a minute. But why don't you paint kind of a picture? You were mentioning about the polling surveys. That will be an opportunity for folks, whether or not they come to sessions, to be able to give feedback. So if you miss out, I mean we really want people to come out to the sessions again. We'll give those dates in just a minute, but that's a great opportunity to do that as well, right? If,

Speaker 3
You care about what's happening and you want to know what's happening and you want to hear from the actual source, which is our team. Come to one of the sessions. We have them all throughout our district. They we have we have some in the morning, some during the day, some on the weekends. It's a really important piece. And. So we're going to be collecting all of the feedback that people give us during those sessions. And so if you're coming to the sessions, it's not going to be feedback one at a time at a microphone. You'll be participating in focus groups where we'll be able to understand the tradeoffs that, that you think that we should be thinking about look.

Speaker 3
Think ing through some of the options of what we could potentially do and telling us what you like, what you don't like about those things. Um, and that's a really important piece. Uh, and then later on, um, In Randy I.

Speaker 1
Just want to mention real quick here here is the the look at those dates. Uh, we do want you to RSVP and come. Uh they start on on Monday at New Vista High School. Uh, that's an evening session. Uh we'll be here on Wednesday at the Ed Center. Uh during the day, starting at ten thirty. On Thursday, we'll be at Boulder High School. On Saturday, we'll be back here at the Ed Center. That's another daytime session for folks in case you know, in between activities, you might be able to join us on Monday, Our final week there

Monday, the twentieth will be out of Broomfield High School. And then on Wednesday, we'll wrap up at Monarch High School.

Speaker 3
So, this is the first piece right. I mean, we've already talked to all of our teachers that was actually the first piece. So this. Engagement sessions, the sessions are the second piece. The third piece is surveying and polling, which we'll be doing in May. Again, really trying to give folks different opportunities to weigh in. Then once we have all those different information and data sources, how do we compile all that information and make sense of it? So when we present it in June, um it's clear what the things are that folks want and really don't want. Uh I do think there's going to be a lot in the middle, right?

Speaker 3
Um, but it's going to give us much more clarity than we have today. Then this summer, we'll develop options and bring those back to the board in August. Board will consider those in August, give us some direction for study in September and then for action in October. In those sessions in September and October, Another opportunity for families parents to sign up for our public comment at our board meetings. And, you know you can, if you have something to say, uh as a as somebody who you know lives in our community, you could have two minutes and, Or if you have kids that come into our community. If you don't live in our community, you don't have kids in our community, then you're not eligible for public comment. So some districts do that differently. We really, we really protect that time for folks who either have their kids here or who live here.

Speaker 1
That's right. We did have a couple of questions from folks in the community, including Nancy Updike, the mother of a first grader at BCSIS. She said, when when does the school district expect to make decisions on shifting funds, building uh building shifting funds, buildings or closing school? And uh Bonnie Wooten was back on this question. Uh asking parents. Uh she's also again, a parent of a first grader at Louisville Elementary. She said, will decisions be made regarding school changes closures combinations in time for next year's open enrollment. So that's exactly why that timing is is what it is. Right?

Speaker 3
That's right. We're going to finalize this in October. So folks can go into open enrollment, knowing and understanding what their options and choices are for the following year and that we won't make any decisions until that decision has been approved by the board. And, then that decision will impact our budget process as we will be in the twenty six, twenty seven school year, but planning for budgeting for the twenty seven twenty eight school year. I will say that we've already taken some early action in setting aside some dollars to help us with that transition in our revised budget from this past year. We're doing everything we can, Randy, to be as proactive as we can be, but some decisions are just going to take time.

Speaker 1
Um, I know that these decisions are going to come to the board here. Uh, so

again, you're going to have updates. I think Tuesday we're giving an update in regards to these these sessions that are coming up and what we're doing there. Uh Rob kind of laid out all these staff updates that will happen to you guys. And then it's going to come to the board. Um Every step of the way the board is going to be having conversations. What do you expect that to look like from a board perspective?

Speaker 2
I expect really thoughtful presentations from our staff. I expect our community to be engaging with us by email, coming into the community engagement sessions, Come fall, I fully expect people will be showing up a public comment. I think our biggest hope is and our biggest hope is to make a decision that will be successful several years in the future. A decision that may not, you know, Check off all the boxes, but it might not be might be not be the most exciting option, but with the might not, it may be the or getting rid of the least desirable options. And so I think, The board moving forward we are we're hopeful.

Speaker 2
We're excited to actually we're hearing for our community, a desire to hear what the plan is going to be, to feel like rather than sitting and waiting, Particularly for some of these schools that have had been really under enrolled for a long time. I think there is a degree of eagerness to understand what what the future holds. And, our biggest goal is to bring the community right along with us and know that these decisions are going to be hard. They're going to be hard for board members, they're going to be hard for staff to draft those plans. It's going to be hard for our community and just have a lot of, Care and compassion for each other through that, And do whatever we can to protect our kids and our students from parental struggles with the changes that may be ahead.

Speaker 1
We actually got a question from somebody in the community here, who was frustrated about the way that the decision was made. So recently you guys had a conversation around the boundaries, and so they were saying, you know, there was a conversation for the twenty six twenty seven school year about boundaries. Uh, you know, the the board, you know, kind of talked about the continuity of of an area that kind of thing. I guess there were some, you know, parents that I remember them coming to the board meeting and and lobbying, you know, Kind of talking about their needs and concerns about transportation and impacts about them getting to SAC in the morning, et cetera. And. So they the question that they sort of asked was You know. How can we be You know, feel good about the board having a conversation about this bigger, bigger picture Uh You know when uh You know in regards to choice when they ignored our feedback during that last decision.

Speaker 1
I would say again, we didn't ignore the feedback. And also, you know, That doesn't necessarily mean that everybody's going to get what they want out of this process. It's going to be a hard situation come up in fall here, right?

Speaker 3
I think two things can be very true when we make this decision,: that individuals could absolutely dislike the decision and it not be what they want, and yet the decision could reflect the will of the entire community. Right? Individual feedback, And when you're thoughtful in listening to people and doing that, Randy, in a way that's fair, in a way that allows all voices in the room, right? Allows you to get the collective will and values of a community. That does not mean that every individual is going to get everything they want right out of this process. Nor does it mean that any individual is going to be able to derail this process. I think that folks are free to have their opinions, and we will do it to the extent that we can listen to everybody, we will.

Speaker 3
Right, I think that as we think about the engagement sessions or public comment or other ways that we'll be engaging with our community, we're going to be very mindful that we listen to everybody. No one's voice in this is any more important than anyone else's. And I think that's an important message for our community and counterintuitive to the way some people are used to advocacy. Right? If, we you know, there's there's just a belief in advocacy that I'm going to be loud, I'm going to I'm going to Try to magnify my voice by getting people to sign on letters or to send email the same email to the board or come to the meeting and say the same things. And, you know, we see those things. And again, we're not going to stop like people's ability to do that. They have a right to do that. But it won't be driving our decision. We're going that's why we're going to be really thoughtful, that's why we have multiple data points that will be triangulating, Uh and um and that's why we're really hopeful that the ways that we've set up.

Speaker 3
These engagement sessions will allow for everyone to have the voice. The parent who who would never stand up at a microphone and and share what they they say, Alongside the person who that might be their preferred method of communication in something like this.

Speaker 1
And I do want to mention the engagement sessions, the way that we've constructed them, The real the idea there is to try to harbor that kind of that uh create that kind of atmosphere. So it's again it's not, The normal thing that you think about where we give a big presentation and then ask everybody to stand up and give their thoughts. It's really about.

Speaker 7
Coming together in small groups, and you know, sharing it. The whole thing is about sharing there I think folks are cheering I mean, we've sat in a couple of these now uh trial ones.

Speaker 3
There's a lot of sharing going on. And and and thinking, and hearing other people's perspectives. About the trade-offs. Very powerful. We, we did have an opportunity to um this past week with our district accountability committee, Have them do a simu run through the simulation activities that we're planning for our engagement sessions. They gave us some great feedback, So the

ones that we'll be doing next week will be even better than that. Uh but the thing that was most powerful to me, Couple things. Uh, were at our best in those sessions when weren't talking. But our community was talking amongst themselves, wrestling with the challenges and issues that we have. They found that very valuable. With the opportunity at the end to give everybody had the opportunity to give their own individual feedback. But having both experiences, I think was really, really powerful. Some people changed their minds, others didn't. And but it was a community conversation.

Speaker 1
And I think those voices get captured Yeah, sorry I didn't mean to step on you there, Um, I you know, I think it really does relate to the way that the board works. I mean, you guys are hearing from all these folks. You obviously bring certain uh of your own perspectives there. And then uh you know, One of the things you know, getting to come to every board meeting, uh, getting to see that the sort of um the heart and the wrestling that you guys do with these topics. You know again, not easy decisions. Most things that come to a board are not easy um, but but then you guys really talk them through. You really consider different viewpoints that you've that you've gathered.

Speaker 1
U m. And then ultimately, you're going to make a decision that's a hard moment. But I think that heart really goes into that right it.

Speaker 2
It absolutely does. And I think we we make a very concerted effort to make sure we're thinking about who who are we hearing from who are we not hearing from, what are we hearing across the district versus in one pocket of our district? How are parents? Um how are they feeling and understanding the decisions that were making and I piggybacking on what Dr Anderson said? I think the power of these in- person engagement sessions is to have to talk to one another, to really think through what are the trade-offs, how do those decisions impact students. I might have my personal opinion and have the needs of my student at the forefront, but when I'm hearing from other people in my community, I can maybe shift my perspective a little bit. I can think.

Speaker 2
Maybe beyond my classroom and my school, And maybe to my entire community or maybe eventually district wide because at the end of the day, Those are the types of decisions. The board has to make are ones that impact everybody. It's not just one student, one classroom, one school. And so I think getting showing up for those engagement sessions will be really powerful for our community if they can do that. I strongly encourage you to attend. The survey is going to be great. But I think that, that engage talking to your neighbors talking to your community members is extremely powerful. And so. Being able to show up at these engagement sessions will provide the board a lot of information and will provide hopefully our community a lot of information as well.

Speaker 1
I know Rob's going to stay for us in the next segment. You're welcome to

stay, But I do want to give you a chance before we go to break here. Is there, anything that we haven't gotten talk about that you would like to say?

Speaker 2
I think between these three sessions, you guys have covered almost all of it. I would encourage the community to continue to pay attention, continue to be engaged, Sometimes I hear a wondering about, are we just going to be listening to the voices that are the loudest or the people that send us the most emails. And I continue to say, board continues to say, that's not a metric that we're tracking. We really are wanting to listen to everybody and make the decisions that are best for the system. And for that, we need to hear from everybody. And, so please engage with this process now through um through October. And and that time, while it feels like it's far away, and some people are eager for a fast decision, it will be on us before.

Speaker 2
Before we know it. So kudos to everybody that's helping us through this process.

Speaker 1
Well, thank you for that and uh thank you for your support. I do want to mention, you know, for those that might be interested, You can listen to these kind of things on the road and I think you were listening in while at a tennis match earlier on. I have to kudos for that. Wearing.

Speaker 2
My parent hat and my school board president hat at the same time. And it's great and if you really want, you can listen at one- and- a- half speed or one point, That's right. You can change that speed, but.

Speaker 1
Yeah, you can go into the captions and just read it if you want to. All kinds of options for you if you want. Yeah. Well thank you again for joining us. We'll be right back after this break.

Speaker 1
Welcome Back again. This is Let's Talk BVSD. I'm Randy Barber and I'm excited to welcome back Rob Anderson, our superintendent, and bring back in Rob Price, our assistant superintendent of operational services. Say, Rob.

Speaker 8
Randy, thank you for having me.

Speaker 1
You ready to be back on the hot seat? Ready to be on the hot seat? I do want to continue to remind everybody, and we have been taking questions as we've gone today, but we do have a way for you to send in questions right now. You can send it in via that QR code. Just use your phone and it kind of opens up a link for you. Or you can go to bitly, that's B-I-T dot L-Y slash let's dash talk dash bbsd. And I'm looking right at this computer and able to get those questions. So thank you for that. Um, Rob Price, I know that previously, we were talking about sort of these options and that kind of thing. I'd like to kind of dive right into what we've got on the on the board there, as Nicole

mentioned and Rob talked about. The one thing that we you know, the board has been clear about is that we can't stay with status quo. We saw some other things on the on the screen here. Talk about what these what these things do.

Speaker 8
Yeah, so Randy, we've as you know, We've been studying this for multiple years now, going all the way back to twenty twenty two really thinking about. Declining enrollment, what other districts have done, et cetera. And, these are kind of the typical tools that districts would use to address declining enrollment. Those districts around us across the country, this has been a national issue and definitely a state issue. So when we look at those, Some of those options meet goals that are listed over to the left hand side, some don't meet all the goals, some meet all of the goals. And again as we're looking at this from a regional approach.

Speaker 8
Not all of those options work in each region, right? And that's important to understand. So that's as we're thinking about our community engagement, understanding the different needs of it. But when you look at those specifically, right? The one at the very bottom, close one or more schools. That's the one that typically makes the headline. I always say, You know what doesn't make the headline is school districts trying to improve the learning experience for students by doing that by consolidating the resources that we do have right by making hard decisions like this. But closure is the one again that people read a lot about, you know, consolidations when you have a school that might fit into another school, consolidating those into those like a three classes per grade level.

Speaker 1
Again, I imagine in that case, most of the time, the headline says school closed because you've got a school in that case.

Speaker 8
That's right. So and then you can go through those other ones, right? Maybe a school is too big if you had two elementary schools, they're too big to consolidate one another. Another model nationally that we've done or we've seen not we've done we've seen, As a K235, Where you have a kindergarten through second grade in one building and a third through fifth grade in the other building. So again, What we do know is that allowing schools to stay small is not an option. So that there will be changes, and these are again, the typical tools that districts have used. And after we're done with the engagements Dr. Anderson has talked about as we're done with the surveying.

Speaker 8
Really looking at that feedback to understand which of these options makes the most sense in the different regions that we're looking at.

Speaker 1
I do want to just, Before we move on from the idea thatum uh the re-, it's a relook, no, it's a classes switching the classes. The K K two three five, or if

you've got a K eight, you can switch it to middle and high school. The idea there really is that by taking a whole population of those two schools and then reformating them into those grades. Now you've got larger class sizes. But, it doesn't necessarily solve the issue of declining enrollment in those schools because you still got relatively low.

Speaker 8
That's and I think that's a great point. It's maybe looking at it on how do we use our resources better to make sure that we're supporting students, right? So when you look at a K two three five, Now we might have three classes per grade level, kindergarten, second grade or first grade second grade teacher collaboration really important right? Now they have someone to collaborate with plan for maybe we have a new teacher, and a teacher has been doing this for a while. They can bounce ideas off each other. When we are the way we're operating right now, if we only have one class per grade level, teacher's on an island, right? And that's that kind of that bumpiness that we've talked about, the differences in class sizes etc. So, that's why that model allows us to pool those resources together to better support our students. Still usually about 50% of the building is underutilized. Right? So that's a model that we have to think about.

Speaker 3
And Randy, it doesn't necessarily mean larger class sizes. You said that. I don't think you meant that. It means larger, more kids per grade. Right, that's right. It gives you an opportunity to distribute those over more teachers, Which actually gives you more consistency in class size and actually gives you the opportunity if a kid moves in or out, right? It doesn't overwhelm as much as if you only have one or two. Yeah.

Speaker 1
Thank you for thank you for that for sure. Um I do also want to mention since we did talk about BCSIS before. Uh You know, that's a school that, You know, was uh relocated uh would have co located with another school. So they're with high peaks. Uh another good example of that. This is one of the options that are on there about a focus school moving. Uh, we've got a good example of that is at the middle level with platte. You got the regular platte middle school, and then you got platte choice in that facility. There are some possible opportunities there. And then also um relocation of a school because you know, maybe they're.

Speaker 1
In an area where you've got a lot of schools that are facing this problem, But maybe they can be in a different part of the district where they would thrive. I'm trying to remember if there's another focus one. Oh, you could obviously develop new focus program. Yeah.

Speaker 8
And you know, so let's just start with that one. That's what we did with Heatherwood Elementary School for example, Where first school in the engagement phase spent on several months engaging with the community surveying. The community understanding what the desire for a program was there. That option works, it worked well there geographically, it kind of sits up

by itself. However, it's not going to work everywhere. There's a cost associated with starting new focus programs etc. But, as you're talking about the difference between a BCSIS and a High Peaks is they are really two different schools in one building. They act.

Speaker 8
Independently. They have their own principals for each program, their own staff for each program. Where you look at a Platt Middle School and a Platt Choice, they're interdependent on each other, right? They have one principal that oversees both programs. So one can't coexist without the other one. So that was we start looking at co-locating a focus program in another school, Those are the options that we have seen in our district work and what we would have to consider in the future.

Speaker 3
And I'd say that it's the balance between your focus programs and your neighborhood schools. Right. What's the right number where folks can have choice? But when you don't have enough kids to go around, if you have too many focus schools in a certain area, that means less kids for neighborhood schools. Right. So, you know, I'm really interested as our community engages us over the next couple of weeks and through surveys and polls on what's the balance there. If you're in a folks program, you probably love it. If you're in a neighborhood school, like like how do you probably love that? So uh, that's why that's why it's so important Randy that we listen um deeply and across our entire community to get people's perspective because there's a balance that we're going to have to strike there.

Speaker 1
Yeah, absolutely. I know visiting some of those schools, Uh we definitely heard from I think Pinewoods on a story where some of the staff were like, what if went somewhere closer to a boundary line? Maybe that would be helpful. Obviously no decisions have been made, but that is the kind of feedback that were hearing. Okay, I think Eddie let's bring in a little bit of heat uh here. So I'm going to go and get us into the questions. Uh, there are difficult decisions as there are no standout choice in this in the uh in the chart of six facility reconfiguration options. We know that declining enrollment has an effect but your language of labeling Fiscal efficiency is a problem to be fixed by your stated goal of maximizing fiscal efficiencies. It obfuscates discussion. I'm a parent trying to keep up with this, but the terminology makes it harder to understand. Would it be possible to anchor decision-making in more substantive and relatable terms? I think the idea that he's kind of getting to is, you know, can we put a dollar amount on the cost that's going to be? That kind of thing. We have not gotten there to that point right now, right?

Speaker 3
No, you know, again we're starting with what's the experience that we want. And a fiscal fiscal efficiency is always a goal, right? Like, it's a goal in this, but it's a goal. We always want to be efficient with our and good stewards of taxpayer dollars. So it's not a new goal and it's not the overarching goal. And um again you know Randy is, One of the challenges, and we talked about this last week, A lot of districts are doing this because they've committed to paying

for things that they don't have the money for. And they go to closing schools. And in those instances, It's like I need $ 10 million to pay for these pay raises I paid last year, But I did deficit budgeting and I gave the raise before I had the money, knowing I'd come back on the back end and close schools to recoup the dollars. Right? This isn't a financial problem per se.

Speaker 3
But I do think what we'll be something. What we'll be able to do really, really clearly on the back end of this is say, these are the moves that we made. These are the dollars that we recouped from that. And, here's how we're investing these dollars back into schools based on what our community has told us, they value and what the board's told us they value. So I understand what Eddie's trying to say, right? And again, this is a theme, right? Folks want a really clear matrix. Really clear. You're confusing me. How much money do you want? How many schools are you going to close? What what you know, what's the most important problem you're trying to solve? Uh, and we're trying to do solve a lot of problems um as we move forward. The most important being that we have to preserve and improve the the experiences for our kids and for our educators to maintain the outcomes that we want to get.

Speaker 1
It specifically answers the question at the end there with clarifying language in regards to the different solutions, uh beyond the reconfiguration option chart work. I mean, those are pretty clear. And again, as Rob mentioned, they're really specifically the options that are on the table. And then again they might be different from from region to region, from school situation to school situation so.

Speaker 3
It's, it's a complicated problem that if we try to oversimplify it like we can't cheat it of its complexity. Right. Right we just can't do it. That's why it's important to engage in the ways that we're engaging, while we're triangulating different data sources. We're being really clear on what the options are, what this could look like. We've been really clear on what our goals are going to be. And when we bring a solution to the board, people will be able to say, oh okay, these are the goals. This what they've done. Oh they're going to be able to recoup these dollars. Oh, that's where those dollars are going to go. And this what it's going to mean for me. And doing that in a way. So we empower parents to make the choices that they want to make come open enrollment window next year.

Speaker 1
Perfect. Naturally, We've gotten a lot of questions in regards to what happens to any buildings that we might have to close. So I'm going to kind of give you some back- to- back questions here from parents that kind of are on the same thing. Sarah News, mother of two children at Douglas Elementary asked, when schools are closed due to consolidation, what happens to the real estate? Will it be sold or developed? Are there any plans to build affordable housing or for BVSD teachers and staff? Julia Henke, U m asks, uh, how will the empty buildings be handled? Uh it will be a great impact to my neighborhood. The school closes and I want to uh I would like to have say in

that redevelopment of the site. What kinds of things are we thinking about? Yeah, no, it's still a little early though, but yeah,

Speaker 8
It's great question I think I'm just going to emphasize what President rospolo what Dr Anderson has said I mean, we're listening first. We don't know the answer to these questions. And as we're moving forward with this process, it'll definitely be a discussion that we have with our Board of Education. But this time, again, focused on engagement. We haven't thought about a plan. We don't have a plan in our back pocket to come out of the gate. But this will definitely be a discussion later in the process. I think we have it actually defined after a decision is made because really hard to have this discussion until you know what schools are impacted.

Speaker 1
Right, and I know you have been visiting our municipalities, And obviously, that idea of again, we will be in touch with you. You know, there's no secret that there will be a conversation if that occurs. And I know that there's a state new state law as well that kind of weighs into this a little bit as well.

Speaker 3
Yep. I mean, I want to be really clear. We're not trying to free up buildings so we can sell them to make money to.

Speaker 3
Do anything with those dollars. That we're really, those are one-time dollars, those aren't recurring dollars. We have to we have to solve problems where when we create efficiencies and drive dollars to to the priorities that we drive them to, that that money's there year after year. And um I do think that when we get on the other side of October, when we've made this decision, We'll be ready to partner with communities municipalities on what this could potentially look like. You know, are there are there great community uses for some of these spaces? Depends upon the building. Depends upon the location. Are there other community partners who'd have some have some ability? Are there other uses for the school district for that facility?

Speaker 3
That might be able to free up space that would create another efficiency that would again allow us to drive dollars back to our schools. So I think that there's a lot of answers. We don't have a plan to build affordable housing today for teachers, and so I can answer that question directly, no, there isn't a plan to do that today. Doesn't mean that there's not going to be a plan tomorrow. I would say that you know we're working very closely with our teachers association, our teachers union, Um, Thinking about the conditions thatum that teachersum that have to exist in where it's it's almostum if you're a brand new teacher coming into our district, The ability to live here, if you haven't already been living here is really, really tough. Right. And as the number of new teachers that we hire increases, that could be a potential viable option down the road, but we don't have a plan for that right now.

Speaker 1
I think this question that just came in, uh, you know, really goes to the heart of

what you're talking about. Um. And and why? You know, again, we haven't made any decisions yet uh and we recognize that the impact that this would have uh the person asked, uh, how are you quantifying the community impact when a local school is lost? Uh it's not just about class size or fewer children to serve, but the impact of to a local community losing a central hub for families and young children. I mean, that really is how we see our schools every day. I mean, we when we talk about, uh, you know the Marshall fire I remember us talking about that. These are the places that people come together in.

Speaker 1
Um, so that's that's why this is such a core hard decision.

Speaker 3
No, it makes it really, really difficult. It makes it very emotional. You know, Not only this that you know if if there's a school that no longer exists come after October, it's not just the families of kids who are there. It's the ones who went there. It's the generations of families that have gone through many of our schools in inum in Boulder Broomfield. Uh Louisville Superior uh, it is. And those are emotional, you know, those are memories. But the reality is we don't have enough kids. Right? We're not doing this. We're doing this because the kids that used to live there when they went to school, don't live there anymore. And, we have to be honest about that challenge, and we have to tackle that challenge head on. And, that's why we have to go through a thoughtful process to make those decisions. But we don't know what will happen to the buildings, Randy? Yeah.

Speaker 1
U m. Another question that just came in was and I don't I don't know that we know the answer to this. But I'll kind of pose this to Rob. Maybe uh, if you close the elementary portion of a K 8, does it have as much money as it would? If you just closed the element? Uh total Elementary School in total.

Speaker 8
I don't know if we know the answer to that I mean, you're still maintaining paying for utilities for some underutilized space, but that's something that we will have to weigh as we get closer to them.

Speaker 1
So I think that actually goes to this next question pretty well in regards to the. El ements of a facility and what we're taking into consideration the physical state of the buildings. Anne- Marie Panetta, mother of a kindergartener at BCSIS asked, how does the current status of a school's infrastructure, for instance HVAC system, plumbing, security systems play into your decision about which school buildings are potentially to close? In other words is the health and safety of the daily environment in older versus newer buildings factored into your decision- making process?

Speaker 8
Well I'll just two things there. Great question from Anne- Marie. The health and the safety of every one of our buildings is always of most importance to us, right? I'll just say that right off the fact. And newer buildings doesn't always

mean better than older buildings, Which just want to emphasize that we've got some phenomenal buildings that are older than some or even our newer buildings. You know traditionally as we've been studying this, what districts have done have came out with some metrics. Typically those metrics are what is the condition of a facility? Maybe it was an enrollment metric, maybe it is.

Speaker 8
How close a building is to another one to make decisions, right? And again, we're engaging first. We haven't done that. Do I believe the condition of the facility is important in our decision making as we move forward? I do. But more importantly, is that educational experience that we're trying to provide for our students. So as we're thinking about it, I think it's a great question. It is something we have considered and will continue to consider, but most importantly what comes out of the engagement process, what comes out of the surveying and the polling that we do.

Speaker 8
Will ultimately lead the decisions as we move forward.

Speaker 1
I think this kind of goes hand in hand with this question, Which has to do with the idea that uh, when I'll just go and ask it. Uh, you know, why do we continue to invest capital improvements for schools that might close? First of all, I think I do want to say, first of all, that our our schools really overall are in good condition, if you know, for the most part. But, that's part of the reason why we're also making this decision in this timing.

Speaker 8
Yeah and Randy, I think the one thing I just want to emphasize here, Very transparent about it. Our voters passed the 2022 bond program. And as we've moved forward, we were in the very beginning of that. We pushed a lot of our elementary schools to our phase four. So because we knew this decision was coming, right? We knew an idea of the timeline. So, a lot of those schools are at the very tail end of the bond so that we are not investing taxpayer dollars into those buildings until we know a decision is made. So.

Speaker 8
I do believe we have been uh very thoughtful about that process. We haveum informed the communities where we have either delayed or moved those projects. Um so anyway, we are not investing into those buildings right now. Uh that could potentially be closed, consolidated, changed through this process. I thought I was too old for elastic pants until I found these.

Speaker 1
Um, I know that capacity has been one of those elements that we've talked about uh a bit. This is I think a great graph when a lot of folks look at it, they I don't think they realize just how many open seats that we have in our school district. Uh Lindsay Eddy, a parent with the third grader at Cole Elementary asked, When when you can uh when you are considering uh close consolidating schools, is it? Are you still focusing on closing schools that aren't utilizing their square footage, Or are you considering closing the smallest school and bringing that population over to larger buildings?

Speaker 3
So, you know, the theme here, um, and Lindsay and the previous comment. You know it. It sounds like folks are thinking about their school, asking questions to get the again. Soum I think that everything's under consideration. Right, And I would say that if you're in a new building or in an older building or in a school that's smaller than the school next door to you, Like we have to listen to folks before we can know and understand what's the right decision to make. It may not be the one that you're thinking of or we've even thought of yet. You know, we don't have the solutions. We don't have a plan, right? But obviously the things people are thinking about are things that we've thought about. Uh but you know once we dial in on what these experiences.

Speaker 3
The experience that our community values is going to make a lot of these questions. A lot easier to answer. And again, I would say that, you know, This our decisions in the backdrop of decisions that are happening in people's hometowns across the country. It, just because in the hometown that you're from, they closed the oldest school and moved them to the newest school, or they wanted to maximize capacity or they were trying to save money does not mean that's why we're doing things the way that we're doing them here. So it's just continuing to communicate and encouraging folks to engage.

Speaker 1
I want come back to, uh you had asked a question in regards to uh other otherum changing of announcer about, okay.

Speaker 8
And as we consider all of these changes, we have to think through everything like a transportation change et cetera. Again, as Dr Anderson has mentioned, that's what makes this so challenging with a lot of moving parts.

Speaker 1
I know we've come up on the hour, so I'm going to just try to motor through a few more questions here. We got this question from Michelle. Will elementary schools that can only support two rounds per grade at their most efficient, be considered as strong operators to continue on? Can you talk about more about what the criteria that you're considering? How important is it that children have. Oh, this is a sort of a secondary question that again, I think goes to the busing kind of thing. How important is it for children to be able to have at least a school that they can walk to from the house, say within 20 minutes? I know that sustainability is a huge huge part for our schools.

Speaker 3
This is where our community's feedback is going to be important. Right rightum, That's how I would answer that, right? How important is that? I think that those are the types of questions that we're going to have to consider. Are we making decisions for how far any one home is to any one school? Is that the determining factor? Or is it the student experience? Or how do those things come together? So, folks that are asking these questions, I really do appreciate it and I appreciate the curiosity. I think that we're going to continue to listen. We're going to continue to gather this engagement feedback and then the feedback from surveys and polling and have better clarity probably

come June for folks that are wondering when are some of these things going to be clarified. Once we have that data, I think some of these become more clear.

Speaker 1
I think this is a good question. I know that we're looking at things regionally. This person had asked, it's a parent from Broomfield.“ I'm a resident of Broomfield. And my concern is that courses of action that make sense at Boulder schools will also be applied to Broomfield schools unnecessarily.“ It sounds like they're talking about Aspen Creek as whole and continually turns open enrollment students away. You know, is there going to be consideration regarding school boundaries? You know, They were kind of I. Think one of their questions is that are kind of close to the boundary line. Would that be something that would you know be of consideration for us? Most certainly we're looking at each region differently right?

Speaker 3
Yeah absolutely there's a reason that we're having regional meetings. Uh I think the solutions in Broomfield might be different than the solutions in Superior, Louisville and different than Boulder. So yes, we are committed to a regional approach.

Speaker 1
I do want to just go back to the last thing that they say here too, just to make sure I honor the question, Which is the idea of, you know, beyond that boundary discussion. Um you know they're saying consolidation seems to be, uh, you know, a last resort option. Um in some places it might be a really good solution, in other places it may not be a great thing.

Speaker 3
That's right. I mean, we've been honest with our community on the choices that we have to consider from. Uh, we're asking for their feedback and what might work in Broomfield might not work somewhere else.

Speaker 1
Another question that we got from parent Julie Henke uh parent of two students at Nevin Platt Middle School is how will kids be reassigned? Um I would hate. Uh I would hate for my area to get further divided between families if our home school is closed. I think these are kind of the heart of the things that we'll be thinking about as we're making these decisions, right? I know Rafael Reyna asked, and he's somebody that we've heard from before. Shout out to somebody asking multiple questions there. What are academic and emotional impacts on students removed due to consolidation? How will those be mitigated? I know that we've been talking a lot about how we might have supports for these schools. This came up a lot in teacher roundtables. And, it's something that we're going to be budgeting for to make sure that we have the supports for families and kids as we make these choices. Okay, I want to honor two more questions that we got that really are elements of the heart :. What will be ours as a school district when making some of the right ones? Kerry Weiner, Collier Elementary parent says : “ H isto ric ally in the US targets for school closures has almost always been schools with most students of color and students with lower socioeconomic status.“

Speaker 1
Or disproportionately more likely to lose uh social services and connections due to closure. Um, you know I think the question is really how do we try to avoid having those impacts on on our equity efforts.

Speaker 3
Well I would say that makes us different than most school districts across the country that even our schools that serve studentsum with with lots of needs are high performing. And uh. And so oftentimes this target for us for these. These school closures comes to underperforming schools that happen to serve the most vulnerable populations that happen to not have been resourced appropriately. I mean there's a snowballing effect that that happens. And so it's something that I've been sensitive to since I started closures, resources, teacher quality regardless and so thats closures, resources, teacher quality regardless and so thats.

Speaker 1
We've shown, I think, that our commitment to all kids here in BVSD. And I think that also goes for the idea in our engagement sessions that we're not just looking for the loudest voices. There's a lot of voices there. Um, I do want to mention that we got a lot of questions that were sort of similar in regards to this one. You know, shout out to all the parents: Catherine, Liz, Tricia, Stacie. Uh Stacie is the one that typed the question on the screen here. Uh she's talking about how many students uh have been identified as gifted and talented in BVSD. Uh you know, and I think the general gist of all the questions was really that, you know, in their mind, every school should be, uh, you know, able to serve the needs of every student, uh, whether that student's either twice exceptional or with special needs or gifted or whatnot. Um you know what plans does this district have in serving GT students? In this case, or maybe we can widen it out to students of all needs?

Speaker 3
Sure, I think that when you have larger schools, It's easier to meet the needs of special populations, gifted and talented students with IEPs, Um neurodiverse students and dyslexic students because you have more kids that you can pull together in small groups. And provide different supports. And it becomes more efficient. And you have your centralized resources spread not as, you know, spread over not as many sites. And. So uh, I think that, that can be something that that comes out of this is that you have larger schools, but.

Speaker 1
Needs of advanced students and gifted talented students amongst the other priorities that we have that we have to consider. Um, this is a secondary question to that, but I I do think it kind of brings up the idea of uh, you know, students leaving because their needs aren't met. Um you know, we haven't shied away from any questions. So I do want to just bring this up. Um even they're saying, you know, if a student's needs, uh twice exceptional students isn't met, they leave because their needs aren't met. I mean again that's that's a huge concern for us. We want to make sure that our students' needs are met. Uh, regardless um again, whatever we're doing here. We're going to be

with that heart in mind. Absolutely, We don't want any students to leave our district because their needs aren't being met whether they're gifted, twice exceptional, neurotypical doesn't matter. Uh and so I think that that's something that as we Uh think about where we're going to end up at the end of this process Randy. We I'm very hopeful that through the decisions that we make, that that all kids are going to have better opportunities. Our last thing here is again to remind everybody that we've got uh these uh six engagement sessions coming up and then following that will be the surveys and the polling going out. Uh if you if you have an opportunity, we really would love you to join us, please R S V P. Uh again, I'm just gonna run them through real quick. Uh, I know. Uh, we're running out of time here over time. Um Monday April 13th 6 : 30 to 9 : 00 at Nubis High School on Wednesday April 1, 5t h, from 10 : 30 to one will be at the BDC Education Center. It's a daytime session Thursday April 16t h, from six thirty nine will be at Holder High School Saturday again will be here nine thirty to noon at the education center Monday April twenty.

Speaker 8
Uh, we'll be at Greenfield High School from 6:30 to nine, and we'll wrap things up at uh Monarch High School on Wednesday, April twenty second. Uh, twenty second. Um, that's from six thirty to nine. All that information is on our website. And and if folks can please RSVP. We want to make sure that we have uh enough childcare, that we have enough facilitators, that we have enough materials. Uh, if you could, if you could RSVP for us for those sessions, it's going to help us and help you have a better experience. Um Rob any last things that you want to mention? This has been a lot going on here. Yeah no Randy I. This is the third one. Thank you for putting this together. I think I appreciate the thoughtful questions. Um We have gotten a lot. I think the best thing people can be doing right now is attending engagement sessions. Uh when we get into the surveying and polling participating in that, which will help us make. Better informed decisions as we move forward. So, just thank you for doing this.

Speaker 1
I think how did you say it again? We listen and then lead.

Speaker 3
You have to listen before you can lead. I believe that is very true in this instance, and we just look forward to seeing everybody next week and the week after that.

Speaker 1
So for that purpose, Do you want to just mention that all the questions that have been given to us as part of this are going to be turned in as part of our our engagement efforts so that we have a record of that. And if that's included in the feedback again, We want to thank everybody on want to thank you guys for staying on with us a little longer than we expected overtime at fifth quarter, ready right?