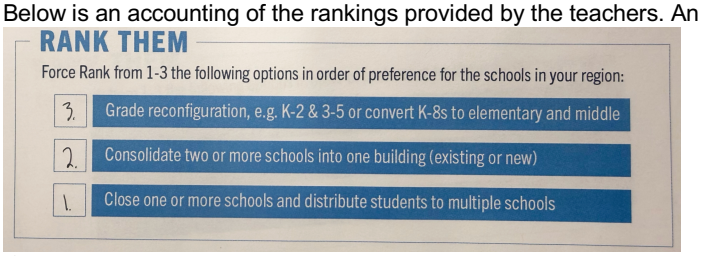
From "Randy Barber <randy.barber@bvsd.org>" <randy.barber@bvsd.org>
Subject **Preparing for tomorrow's roundtable**
To Lucas Ketzer <lucas.ketzer@bvsd.org>
Cc Lora De La Cruz <lora.delacruz@bvsd.org>, Tamara Acevedo <tamara.acevedo@bvsd.org>
Date February 13, 2026 6:36:58 AM MST

Lucas,

We thought it might be helpful for our school leaders to see a distilled version of the feedback we received during the roundtable at their school. Here's what I put together (with the help of AI).

Also, in case it is helpful -- for column five:

Below is an accounting of the rankings provided by the teachers. An entry like the one pictured would be 3,2,1.



If that ranking was the most selected by teachers it would be shown as:
1. 3, 2, 1
2. 1, 2,3

February 10, 2026 - Whittier Elementary

Deputy Superintendent Lora de la Cruz

Executive Summary
Feedback from Whittier staff reflects an overwhelmingly strong commitment to preserving the school's International Baccalaureate (IB) program, diverse student population, and deeply rooted community culture. Respondents repeatedly emphasized that Whittier's identity—built on belonging, inquiry-based learning, socio-economic diversity, and long-standing relationships—is foundational to student success and cannot easily be replicated if the school is closed or relocated. Many expressed concern about staff displacement, erosion of Title I and special education supports, and loss of transparency in decision-making. While there is openness to consolidation if it strengthens and preserves the IB framework and full staffing, there is consistent opposition to closing Whittier. Overall, staff urge decisions that prioritize diversity, equity, community cohesion, and the long-term strength of a mission-driven school model.

Column 1: Biggest concerns and fears regarding the process

- Loss of Whittier's IB program and its unique international, inquiry-based framework
- Disruption or dismantling of a deeply connected, diverse school community
- Separation of staff teams and long-standing professional relationships
- Being forced into new positions, roles, or schools
- Closure or relocation of the historic Whittier building
- Loss of socio-economic diversity intentionally built into the attendance area
- Loss of Title I status and associated supports
- Concerns about grade reconfiguration disrupting long-term relationships (especially for SPED/ELD students)
- Larger class sizes and continued cuts to special education services
- Lack of transparency and thoughtful change management in decision-making
- Fear that critical services and inclusive supports may not be replicated elsewhere

Column 2: Aspects of experience that best support effective teaching

- Deep commitment to IB philosophy (inquiry, global perspective, student agency, conceptual learning)

- Experience working with diverse, multilingual, and international student populations
- Strong relationships built over time with students, families, and colleagues
- Collaboration within a values-aligned, mission-driven staff
- Extensive professional development (IB, Passageworks, Making Thinking Visible, etc.)
- Expertise in differentiation, special education, ELD, and trauma-informed support
- Long-term experience and institutional knowledge (many veteran educators)
- Strong community engagement and family partnerships
- Ability to foster belonging, empathy, and cultural competence

Column 3: New supports hoped to come out of the process

- Preservation and strengthening of the IB program at the district level
- Full-time staffing across roles (special education, counselors, psychologists, specialists, paras)
- Retention of Title I supports and equitable funding
- More hours and stability for paraprofessionals
- Increased collaboration time and professional development to support transitions
- Thoughtful school composition to maintain diversity and belonging
- Transparency and inclusion of teacher voice in decisions
- Resources to welcome additional students and staff if consolidated
- Time, space, and compensation to support staff through change
- Neuroaffirming and student-centered support systems

Column 4: Additional Notes

- Strong advocacy to **not close Whittier**, emphasizing its uniqueness in the district
- Belief that closing Whittier could drive families away from BVSD
- Recognition of the historic and community value of the downtown location
- Willingness to welcome consolidation *into* Whittier if the IB program and supports are preserved
- Emphasis that diversity, belonging, and global perspective are foundational—not peripheral—to the school
- Clear message that community cohesion is central to student success
- Concern that Whittier's distinctive identity may not be replicable elsewhere

Column 5: Ranking Variants (Highest to Lowest)

- **3,1,2 — 12 selections**
- **2,1,3 — 5 selections**
- **1,2,3 — 1 selection**
- **3,2,1 — 1 selection**

On Mon, Feb 9, 2026 at 12:08 PM Randy Barber <randy.barber@bvsd.org> wrote:

> Dear Lucas,

In preparation for tomorrow's roundtable with Deputy Superintendent de la Cruz and your team, we wanted to share a few resources that may be helpful to review—and to pass along to staff in advance.

Feel free to copy and email the message below to your staff:

Dear Whittier Staff,

As you may know, Deputy Superintendent Lora de la Cruz will be visiting Whittier tomorrow for a roundtable conversation.

Educators are invited to join us for lunch and a discussion focused on building resilient schools for BVSD students during this period of declining enrollment. We hope you'll stop by, if your schedule allows, and be part of this important conversation.

In order to maximize your time in conversation, please review this background information in advance:

- Defining the path forward presentation
- Jan. 28 Board of Education presentation (~24 minutes) and the discussion amongst board members that followed (~12 minutes).

The feedback gathered during tomorrow's conversation will help inform next steps, including future engagement with BVSD staff, families, and the broader community.

Thank you in advance for your time and for all you do to support our students.
Lucas

Finally, I've attached the feedback form that we will have staff fill out tomorrow. Lora should have printed forms with her, but I thought it would be helpful to have the file just in case. Additionally, if there are educators that don't have the opportunity to participate during the event, you are welcome to share this electronic version with them: https://forms.gle/h2QyCDKiVsreFQwo9

Randy

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