From "'Tim Plass' via BVS Board <bvs.board@bvsd.org>" <bvs.board@bvsd.org>
Subject **{BVS Board} Input from Historic Boulder, Inc.: Please Keep Whittier Elementary School Open**
To "bvs.board@bvsd.org" <bvs.board@bvsd.org>
Cc Leslie Durgin <durgin1986@gmail.com>, Melanie Julian Muckle <melanie@historicboulder.org>
Date April 28, 2026 10:56:55 AM MDT

Dear Members of the Board of Education,
Please find attached Historic Boulder, Inc.'s Letter of Support for keeping Whittier Elementary School open as you consider possible consolidation.

Best regards,

Tim Plass
Executive Director
Historic Boulder, Inc.
www.historicboulder.org
C: 720.299.4518

Attachments:

- ATT00002.bin
- Whittier School Letter of Supportv.3.pdf

Historic Boulder Inc.
PRESERVATION IN ACTION

April 28, 2026

Via E-mail
Boulder Valley School District
Board of Education
6500 Arapahoe Avenue
Boulder, CO 80303

Letter of Support for Keeping Whittier Elementary School Open

Dear Board of Education Members,

Historic Boulder, Inc. strongly advocates that the Whittier School remains operating as an elementary school. While we understand the current concerns of declining enrollment and consolidation as a possible solution, we hope that you will consider the historic significance of the Whittier School as you undertake this challenging decision.

Built in 1882, the school is a local landmark and, remarkably, Colorado's oldest continuously operating school. It was designed by the architect Frank Edbrooke, who also designed the original Boulder County Courthouse. First known as the Pine Street School, the school was renamed in 1903 for the poet John Greenleaf Whittier, after the poet took the time to write back to a 6th grader, Effie Titus, who was enamored of Whittier's poem, *Snowbound*.

Attending school in a building steeped in history provides enhancements to the students' educational experience that should not be overlooked. It gives a first-hand connection to the history of the community. It also provides an opportunity for students to learn about styles of architecture from previous eras, in this case the Victorian era. Lesson plans can seamlessly integrate connections to the history of the building and the community. One example occurred in 2011 when Historic Boulder, Inc. engaged with students from Whittier to support the Hannah Barker Student Writing Project. Another occurred in 1982, when we partnered with students and parents from Whittier to replace the bell tower, which was removed in the early 1900s.

As the only remaining elementary school in the downtown area, keeping Whittier open makes sense as enrollment patterns historically do change over time and there may be a resurgence in student population. As Helayne Jones, former head of the Board of Education, stated in a recent Guest Opinion in the *Daily Camera*, "Before the school board approves a plan for closure, let's ensure that creative solutions have been explored before jumping to solutions of the past."

We respectfully request that you keep the Whittier School open and continue its run as the oldest continually operating school in the state of Colorado.

Warm regards,

Tim Plass

Tim Plass
Executive Director
Historic Boulder, Inc.