

## **Final Recommendation of the Enrollment and Facility Study Commission**

On March 13, 2019, the Enrollment and Facilities Study Commission met to consider the Commission's preliminary recommendation to the Board of Public Education: Consider, only if necessary, "Option 2" of the four options presented to the Commission. The other three options were rejected from consideration.

At the March 13 meeting, the Commission amended its recommendation to "Do not Consider" any of the options. That recommendation was amended to include the following statement, which was prepared by Commission members Ben Grant, Councilor Kim Cook, and David Brenerman:

*The Enrollment and Facilities Study Commission was charged with evaluating the most effective and efficient use of our school buildings. The Consultant provided relevant data indicating a steady K-12 student population over the past decade and in future projections, but also showed some facility inefficiencies. The Commission was asked to develop new ideas for potential reconfigurations that would use Portland's existing space more efficiently.*

*The exercise of trying to conceive of new configurations at a single meeting and the resulting analysis and discussion raised questions that extended beyond the scope of the Commission's charge. Facility changes that impact educational programming need to be considered in light of education policy and district goals, as well as budgetary issues. For this reason, we do not recommend that the School Board focus on any specific reconfigurations at this time.*

*Rather, we recommend the School Board and City Council consider the following issues in the larger context of Portland's budget and educational needs and work to develop both a short-term and long-term plan that will ensure both efficient and high-quality education in Portland:*

- 1. It is imperative that Portland's schools run as efficiently as practicable in order to ensure Portland offers a high quality educational experience for students.*
- 2. The Superintendent and School Board have expressed a desire to expand and enhance educational programs and services in the future which, if approved, require additional state and local tax dollars to implement.*
- 3. While efficiency is suboptimal at some schools, the Study Commission did not uncover any obvious or "easy" reconfigurations that would improve efficiency without significant educational programming changes.*
- 4. In the near term, the School Board and School Administration should seriously evaluate filling excess space in school buildings with programs or offices that currently exist outside of the Elementary, Middle, and High School buildings, in particular school administrative offices and Portland Adult Education.*

*Any future consideration to reconfigure educational programming should not be done hastily, or by a group solely charged with looking at demographic and efficiency data. Major shifts in grade configuration involves educational, programming and transportation considerations that went beyond the charge and scope of this Study Commission.*

The recommendation was unanimously approved by a roll call vote of all members present: Peter Eglinton (chair), Nicole Bradeen, Kevin Brewster, Jennifer Cooper, Cheryl Crowley, Christopher Dana, Benjamin Grant, Mark Hubbard, Sheila Jepson, Caitlin LeClair, Sarah Thompson, and Tiana Urey.