

Statements from Judge Marshall's Decision on JNPSD Facilities

Federal Court Decision: September 25, 2018

"JNPSD ... it is not unitary in facilities; but the District will be if it complies with the current master plan, as modified by this Order."

"JNPSD will require continued substantial support from the State through partnership funding (or some substantially similar program) to meet its facilities needs."

"JNPSD has made a strong and ambitious start with the new high school, which is partly built. The District's recent decision to build a new middle school, rather than renovate an existing facility, is equally ambitious and prudent. These state of the art facilities will be clean, safe, attractive, and more - they'll be excellent. They'll also serve all JNPSD students equally because they'll be the school home for every JNPSD student in those upper grades. The intervenors have no real quarrel with all this."

"To its credit, JNPSD acknowledged and embraced this obligation at the trial. The District pledged to replace Taylor and Bayou Meto as quickly as possible. The District went further: it pledged to prioritize replacing those two elementary schools ahead of any expansions of the new high school or middle school."

"JNPSD's plan is extraordinary. Within approximately a dozen years of its creation, the District will have built a new high school, a new middle school, and four new elementary schools. JNPSD's good faith is demonstrated by the plan itself and the progress already made."

"Arkansas is in harness, too, with substantial partnership program funding. Continued partnership funding, or some equivalent state assistance, is essential for JNPSD to meet its desegregation obligations through this solid and reasonable facilities plan."

"The Court is convinced that JNPSD's 2018 master facilities plan, as modified, keeps the District on path to do all these things, while also providing clean, safe, adequate, and - soon - equal facilities to all its students."

“The Court therefore approves JNPSD's 2018 master plan with these modifications:

- The replacement elementary schools will be completed as quickly as possible;
- JNPSD will apply for state funding through the partnership program, or the then-existing equivalent program, no later than year one of the 2023-2025 project funding cycle for support of the Taylor elementary and Bayou Meto elementary replacement projects;
- Taylor and Bayou Meto will be replaced before any phase II expansion projects at the high school or the middle school, unless the replacements can be done at the same time as one or both of the expansions without hindering completion of the new elementary schools; and
- All new elementary facilities will be equal to the new elementary school that opened in August 2018.”

“If JNPSD implements and completes its 2018 master facilities plan, as modified, it will be unitary in facilities in approximately 2026. The Court looks forward to that day.”