

Poudre School District Board of Education
Superintendent Report Video Transcription
October 10, 2023
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnohCYal7HE>

uh members of the board and and members of the community good evening I'm Brian Kingsley my pronouns are he and him and I am grateful to be with all of you today just going to give a moment for the people who are joining our community to kindly take a seat we're glad that you're here. welcome yeah there seats up front yeah we're glad you're here I intentionally wanted to step down this evening off of the day to be in community with you and to speak with you not at you I think it's really important acknowledging the various emotions is that the microphone yeah acknowledging the various emotions that people are holding today uh regardless of how you're showing up this evening I want to acknowledge that your feelings all of your feelings whether you're a student a parent a member of our community an advocate an employee your feelings are valid uh and I want my presentation today to be a space where I can speak from my heart and to acknowledge why are we here and why now as many of you if not all of you know uh joined uh this incredible school system in this incredible Community just over two years ago and I have been a student of this community and a student of this District trying to understand all of the merits of its 54 schools and academic programs I've also been trying to understand our financial positioning to sustain the academic Excellence that you all deserve and demand of this school system we are not only one of the strongest school systems in the state of Colorado I believe and I know I'm biased but I believe that we're one of the strongest school systems in America because of what you saw here tonight students like Gage who learn as a result of their teachers and their families how to take chances you learn from Neo who understands clearly that it's more than okay it's actually more than encouraged it's a human right to be your most authentic self over the last two weeks many of you if not all of you I have stepped or touched upon your Curiosities your anxieties your fears and hopes not just about your individual School culture but what you expect for this school system whether it's about being a crew being an osprey or a bear thinking about what that means in terms of Centennial and PCA and alternative programming and I can recognize that through this leadership exercise that there are things in hindsight that I might have done differently I want to be incredibly clear this board hired me you hired me over two years ago to be bold and to be resourceful acknowledging the way of things in our system were not healthy not just just in terms of where academics were trending but in terms of where our finances were going and enrollment trends that have been trending downwards since 2016 without any significant changes across the system to make ourselves whole that's not your fault that's none of your faults but I want to acknowledge it is my responsibility to navigate the competing interests of all 54 of our school communities that are equally is proud that equally have strong culture that want to succeed and Thrive well into the future navigate the various aspects of their culture and academic programs and make really difficult but necessary decisions to make sure that our system and the various programs that you participate in that are important for all students to thrive not just some are available well into the future and I will share with you in hindsight while being bold and being resourceful and and doing the things that I believe in partnership with this incredible governance team I should have hit

pause I should have brought the community along a little bit more thoughtfully a little bit more slowly to educate all of us on the actual problem that we're experiencing what's great about leadership is that people like me and you can make decisions and we always have the ability to make another set of decisions and so however you're showing up tonight whether you're anxious curiosity happy hopeful I want to try to address something upfront and invite you to be open as a learner be curious with the rest of my presentation if that's okay members of the board I think it's in the best interest of this community for us to not take a vote tonight I believe that we're not ready I have engaged with hundreds of students over the last two weeks I have engaged via email via meetings in coffee shops and in concerts and restaurants in the hallway and in my neighborhood with many members of our community who want to acknowledge that they have ideas of their own that have Merit and value and I respect that well I do believe that the ideas that were put on the table initially were in good faith and trying to accelerate the work moving forward we simply can't do that alone and we need to identify ways to bring the community along with your permission this evening I would like to engage the community more thoughtfully over the next 3 to four months to break down the proposals that are already on the table to identify where there is Merit in them and where there are challenges that make those particular ideas and ways of work potentially not in the best interest of this District right now while recognizing that we have other more difficult decisions to make there are schools that are here today whe in the advocacy of our young people I've never been more proud while I wish it was under different circumstances that people were stepping in to the Democratic process it makes me really proud that our system is working because people like tonight and I know we're going to hear from many of you and I welcome your voice in perspective even if it differs from my own I'm not here tonight to seek agreement but I am asking you to engage with me thoughtfully or over the next few months to identify what we can do to address the more the really really significant challenges that this system is facing and we have a choice to either maintain the high level of status quo and I don't say status quo to equate to mediocrity this system is strong it's made up of incredible employees it's made up of incredible children and young adults and it's made up of incredible community members who make this system go but the reality is is what's taking place in our system from interven or excuse me infrastructure needs and enrollment trends that I'll share more details with in a minute are not going to go away my job as the superintendent is to be compassionate and to be bold in my leadership but all in service of human beings and what I would want to acknowledge upfront is that we are not going to identify a pathway forward that makes everybody happy I want to be clear about that and I really from my heart love to make people happy that's what made me want to be a teacher so members of the board as I share my presentation I'd like to come back with you on the back end because in addition to taking a pause to further engage the community around their ideas and identify how we can think about that more thoughtfully I would also like to extend a timeline to not have any plans implemented no sooner than the 25 26 school year to allow any impacted School the time to plan to be thoughtful and to recognize that their number one primary job is to focus on the children that are in front of them today and while we need to I appreciate that so if it's okay with you I'd like to engage and jump into this presentation we know one of the observations that I have clear just indisputable evidence on is that this Community Values its innovative programming it's why many of you here representing your shirts your schools your mascots your ideas your crew your way of life but this community also highly highly endorses the concept of school choice today in PSD one one out of every three families is choosing into a choice school choice is here to stay but I would also share with you

that our district has a fundamental belief whether it's through its Mission or its District ends that we believe that it's not just for some students and here's the challenge how do we ensure all students have access to the most robust programming that District that this District offers there are some programs in this District represented in this room right now that are in demand and the public deserves and is clamoring for more and the challenge that I have in partnership with you is how to create the need and the demand how do I create the programs that actually support that demand this includes options from ranging whether it's an Expeditionary Learning Program when I speak about programming there's so many of them you saw us represent and recognize earlier our dual one of our dual language principles we have core knowledge schools we have IB programs this school system is full of exemplary programs we also know that these programs don't come to life because of the brick and mortar but school buildings do tell the story they have trophies they have blankets that represent experiences of people they have all sorts of things from the past from the present and hopes of the future but what I would challenge us to realize that it's actually the human beings at the center of these experience that make this program go it starts with our employees our parents our community members and most importantly our students many of them are here tonight and I really welcome you we also recognize that as we're grappling with these challenges and I want to invite you to please be curious about this that while we have tremendous infrastructure needs we have to model incredible fiscal stewardship program stewardship and people stewardship I find it uncountable to be able to go out to the community and ask them for more money via taxes when we're not necessarily maximizing the assets and the resources and the people that we have in our system today and so we have very challenging but necessary decisions to make in that space as I shared with you earlier I want to lead from a space of abundance not a deficit and I know many of you might be feeling a sense of loss and that okay but this system has incredible programs and as I've been studying them they're in great demand and we need to identify ways to continue to grow those programs in order to give more people what they want we also recognize and I'll go into more detail about this a little bit later is that when you s you know sum up all of the various needs from our roofs to our mechanical systems our boilers our HVAC systems the potential of installing air conditioning across 33 of our schools who today don't don't have it the ability to replace our playgrounds who are not at standard the things the thoughts of adding a new school in timmith with dealing with exponential growth in that Community the price tag of all of that is \$1 billion and I share that with you not to scare you or to be an alarmist but to be simply real our budget today has only \$800,000 of it dedicated to capital investment and repair that's not your fault but it is my problem to deal with last year in the first week of school The Chiller at Fort Collins High School broke we ordered the parts to repair they are being installed just this week as a result of delivery chain challenges I share that with you as a small story to let you know that the replacement for that Chiller cost over a million dollars and in very in one day in the first week of school our system went into the red to replace Capital Investments that our children our young adults deserve our employees deserve but we don't have the financial resources to do all over the place that's not your fault but it is my challenge to deal in partnership with you to find a way forward our enrollment has been declining in PSD and it's been happening Statewide you and I are probably reading the same newspapers watching the same news stations and recognizing over the last two years other school systems are having this very same difficult but necessary conversation and I shared with you earlier in my introduction while I was here and hired to be bold what I did not want to do in my decision-making to help you make some of to help make some of

my thinking more visible the last thing that I wanted to do is have a board meeting that put a couple recommendations of what we're considering and what we're thinking and rather than have schools be emotional and curious towards me to do that towards each other what can't happen in PSD is one school lobbying another school elevating one is more important than the other that one is more significant than the other and while my decision making may be flawed in some ways I want to invite you to recognize that I did not want people to deal with that and I'm still nervous that it will still happen knowing that the changes that have been proposed are not the only changes that we need to make or if there's other decisions that come up as a result of new ideas from the community there is more scenarios that we have to contemplate but the enrollment Trends are very real and they've been happening since 2016 I would also share with you that Colorado's funding model for public education funds districts on a fiveyear per pupil average which is a good and a bad thing in the event that there was ever an emergency where we doubt with the natural disaster and the number of students that were in our district changed significantly from one year to another the state doesn't punish school systems because it looks at how many students you've had over a fiveyear span that's the positive aspect of that the negative aspect of a fiveyear averaging budget cycle is that it allows leadership people like me to Kick the Can down the road for somebody else to deal with a decade from now and I would tell you that we can't wait any longer since our district uses a student-based budgeting model and because Colorado fund schools on a per puple basis de clowning enrollment can result in fewer programmatic offerings in schools it's probably easy to identify that many of the schools that we are talking about this evening that are present here tonight or next door are some of our smallest schools in the district it's not because I want to pick on small unique thriving schools I need to figure out a way in partnership with you and partnership with this board of education to ensure that they are viable well into the future and as we deal with future budget cuts that they are not in the crosshairs of being prioritized as something that needs to go away many students many of you thrive in these particular programs not just because of its size but because of its culture of the hundreds of students that I've spoken to in the last week you feel seen you feel heard maybe it's the for the first time that you feel seen and heard and you don't want to be a number you want to be a person all of us have stories including me but the reality is the size of our schools does in some instances matter a lot in terms of the resources that we can provide like school counselors our specials art and music and physical education other types of programs like intensives in small class size those things are not free and that is not me equating you or your school to a number but to in order to make those things viable not just for what you have today but to ensure more people have access to them it requires us to think thoughtfully and differently about our school budget model I would also share with you as I've been here over the last two years that I am learning that there is this assumption that our community is re relatively affluent and I'm not telling you that everybody here is Rich because that is not the case we have many employees that are not yet working and earning a living wage the challenges are real but there is a community assumption with our tax structures that if your property taxes went up recently that you should be anticipating that there is going to be a windfall of cash that enters into PSD to make this problem go go away and I want to demystify that today for the entire Community how the state funding model works is that if our local share of contributing towards our P per pupil allocation increases at the local level what the state does with their contribution is will simply they will reduce it to keep the per pupil allocation for the district the same as it is today it's supplanting not supplementing and I share that with you because many members influential members of

our community are still needing our help in educating and helping them to understand that I would also share with you and I want to just name up front that as I've talked about some of the statistics on this slide some of them are triggering and I don't have any intentions of triggering anybody in this room or who may be watching there are lots of ways in today's world to create and cultivate love in a family bring children into a family into a loving home and as I talk about birth rates and fertility rates these are not statistics that PSD tracks They are go you can search them look them up via Google they're tracked through the census and as I talk about fertility rates I'm going to talk about it just briefly the census tracks fertility rates to identify trends of populations across Ross the country and their statistic around fertility rates suggests that in order for a population simply to maintain the current count of its population that on average there should be 2.1 births for every person of reproductive age when you look at what that means for our school district just PSD it's just more than half of that number 1.09 as I shared with you birth rates have been declining since 2016 this system is not new to having challenging conversations about school consolidation and potentially talking about schools in different ways but as I look at the history it has been quite a while since we have been bold and courageous in that space to ensure that our budget is viable into the future and healthy and the competing interest again not your problem it's ours but I would like for us to think about this as a community not about a specific school but the challenge is of ensuring that every single year that we provide our employees a necessary raise to live in this community while dealing with the competing pressures of the Aging infrastructure of this community while also recognizing we're having fewer and fewer students every single year presents a real Challenge on what's most important important I would also share with you that when you look at and again not to be an alarmist but to be real the number of graduates on average that I shook hands with or high five at graduation and I see one of them right here over the last two years is approximately 2,000 students per class this year's kindergarten class has under 1600 students and the kindergarten class that's coming behind it is anticipated to be even even smaller the blessing that this community has right now is that while our Comm our excuse me our kindergarten is down by 400 students there are people still moving into our community they have children but what I would generalize and I'm not a statistician in the space but when I look at our data of where we're having unanticipated higher enrollment than what we thought many of the families that are moving into our community for the first time are a little bit more well established to be able to afford homes in this community and have older children which is the reason why our high school enrollment today is higher than what we thought it would be we were anticipating this year we would have 540 students less than last year what I would share with you is we have approximately 225 students less than last year 225 students represents one of our elementary schools it's more and larger than some of our alternative schools it's not insignificant if we lose that amount of students every single year for the next five to seven years we're losing a school's worth of young people while still contemplating on whether our budget should stay the same and I just want to be honest as a former math teacher it's not possible I would also share with you that this is not PSD specific when you look at the trends for future decades across all of Larer County what you are seeing is that we are having an aging population and I say that with love and respect we are having an aging population happen in this community which means two things one the likelihood that more children will be coming soon is quite unlikely I believe in future decades that will change gentri for takes place things happen but it's not anticipated for the next decade or so I would also share that another part of this that is interesting for us to be curious about is that the members of the voting public in this

community most of them don't have children in PSD any longer they're proud alumni many of them I've talked to over the last couple weeks from many of your schools and they are looking to this District to make make hard but necessary decisions before they provide us additional tax dollars knowing that there are people financially strapped in this community that in order to invest in education invest in PSD they're looking for us to make the hard leadership decisions that are necessary to show that we're leveraging all of the various buildings and programs and human beings that are incredibly brilliant and talented in this district and without doing those things the likelihood that we're able to Garner that Community Support will be more than challenging and I want to also recognize another important challenge excuse me just for a quick second another thing to add another layer of complexity to this big audacious problem is that in some areas we're still experiencing growth so where we're feeling loss in some spaces we're experiencing growth in others many of you probably are aware that the town of Timnath continues to grow at rates faster than we anticipate ated Tim nith middle school high school today it was not supposed to be let me back up for a second Tim nith middle school high school brand new school that was not supposed to be at 80% capacity until 2026 is over 80% capacity today because of the growth that's over 26% we're still seeing growth at a slower rate but faster than what we're seeing in Fort Collins and Wellington and we anticipate the need to potentially build out there in the next you know decade or so and we recognize what's happening in our hometown of Fort Collins where we're located that growth is not there and in many instances we have buildings that are not being fully maximized what I would share with you is that over the last three years and this is something else that I want to demystify I've gotten a lot of emails and phone calls and they're appropriate they're curious and and and that's where we should be in a space of C curiosity and being open to learning new things but something that I am challenged by as the leader of this district and partnership with many other leaders is that there are some in our community that believe that because we are incredibly supportive of Dei efforts because we're incredibly supportive of ensuring that all human beings are valid and can be their most authentic selves that as a result of our attention and Talent on those particular important aspects of the work and the job that we have more and more students leaving our district to go to Charter Schools that's a false narrative I am pro- charter school we have five district sponsored charter schools and I want to be very clear that we will be supportive of those five but as we think about how many students have left our traditional schools over the last three years to one of our five PSD authorized Charter Schools it's only 293 students now I say that only but that's still the size of an entire school at the elementary level in 2022 to demystify other things that are out there that are just simply not true I want to be really clear that the number of students that have transferred back into our traditional schools from our PSD Charter Schools is more than students that have left to go there it's not significant it's almost a wash but there are many students that are interested in thriving in our programs that are part of our school district that are a part of our traditional offerings and I would also share that there's a lot of value and interest from surrounding communities many of those students I met today who are driving great Great Lengths to come to our schools that they want to be a part of PSD because of what we stand for and we have a history of academic excellence and we simply value belonging more than anything else and we took over a thousand of those students into our school district over the last year which was an increase of 255 students from the year before I would also share that there's uh and I don't have this on a slide but looking at trends of how many students are being homeschooled as a result of the things that we're doing in this system now there's no question during the pandemic homeschooling went up

exponentially Across America we had over 800 students during the pandemic experiencing a homeschooling environment within their home within their family structure today that number is 444 down from the low 500s a year ago so more of those students are coming back into our traditional setting this is an important slide to make the case for change because as I talked to you about budgeting what I want to explain is how one school's budget has implications on other school's budgets this slide is titled enrollment Decline and impact to school budgets and the sub bullet reads and welcome to all of you we're really glad that you're here come on and grab a seat when you look at this Slide the sub bullet says as enrollment declines PSD subsidizes the student-based budgeting allocation that School receives let me explain what that means before I explain the details of the graph as I've referenced earlier our district uses a student-based budgeting model now the state uses a 5year average our district uses an actual so if a certain number of students walks into one of our traditional schools we provide funding to that school principal to make educational decisions on behalf of every student that walks through those doors but when a student enrollment Trends low compared to what it was designed for our district has to subsidize that SBB budget and subsidies means provide more dollars to ensure that that our district ends and our district promise to ensure that all students have access to electives that all students have access to mental health care and school counselors and core teachers and principles and assistant principles in order to do that we have to ensure that we subsidize that members of our public members of our board it is my belief system that our student-based budgeting model is broken and I'd like to explain how that plays out the xaxis make sure I'm in the cone here the xaxis on this graph represents the number of students in a particular Elementary School this graph is labeled Elementary size adjustment for fiscal year 2024 this year that we're sitting in today the Y AIS which is vertical there represents the percentage of the subsidy that our district provides a specific school in order to ensure that it's healthy and whole what I would share with you members of our community is that our elementary schools were designed for 450 students if you look at this model each of these blue dots on that line graph represent today a school in PSD as our enrollments start to shrink not just since 2016 but today and over the next 5 to seven years what you will see is more schools tracking upwards on this graph which means they will require greater sub subsidies in order to be whole we are people not numbers but as we do this and work as a system and increase those subsidies those subsidies prevent other schools from getting resources other departments and school priorities and District priorities from being funded they prevent us from adding on to the \$800,000 capital budget that we have because what we've prioritized are children and young adults and teaching and learning but this model cannot persist into the future and for those of you that are members of very very small schools the SBB model does not work even at all we actually have to have an entirely new financial model for all of you called a zero based budgeting model this looks like for our secondary schools grades 6 through 12 same concept on the graph this graph is labeled enrollment Decline and impact to school budgets this is about secondary size adjustment for the fiscal year 2024 the xaxis again represents the number of students in any specific school and the Y AIS represents the subsidy that PSD provides out of its own budget to ensure that school Community is whole and can continue to offer the elective the intensives the smaller class size the various school counselors that it deserves in order to actually function and make sure that your culture thrives as you can see we have one school an outlier that is funded at a subsidy level of 25% over its SBB model because its student enrollment is under 300 these schools were designed to be built around 700 to 750 students and most of them are trending in the 500s moving to the 400s knowing an

elementary cohort is coming up through the ranks which is going to push them into the 300s I share that with you not to create alarm but to be a realist that our model needs changing I would also share with you that our approach has to change I've heard you and I see you and I look forward to listening to you momentarily but there are three fundamental things that we need to do while ensuring that the dialogue and the engagement with you becomes deeper and more meaningful that is my commitment to this community but we must think about reimagining our program placement we are in the next year when a new board comes on and gets settled are going to need to have very courageous conversations around attendance areas which means our boundaries which also means that there are more schools beyond the ones that have been named and I'm saying you've been proposed named we're going to reconsider that based upon Community feedback so I want to be very clear about what I'm saying here but in addition to schools like many of yours there are other schools that will have to be identified that are struggling with their enrollment trends that their budget is not sustainable that we may have to completely consolidate I share that with you because the conversation in this first phase of work has been around iterating evolving reimagining the other aspect of this work is about completely consolidating all together it doesn't mean one is more painful than the other they all hurt and lead to people feeling a whole range of emotions and all of that is valid and while we approach that work thoughtfully as a community we're also going to need to figure out and this is where I would invite you to see us adjusting to what you desire in good faith because you're important you are the people that we serve but I also want to ask you and maybe I'm being too brave right now but I also want to ask you that we have to Garner more community support for public education not just in this District but across the state it is not your fault but you and I have to comp deal with the complex scenario that out of all 50 states the state of Colorado funds public education at number 43 it's not acceptable we are in a community of abundance we are well resourced but we are experiencing pain in providing services that are thoughtful and important to our youth so I would ask you to be curious about how you can engage and enrolling other people to be supportive of that oh I went backwards I apologize so here is my promise to you as a shift in addition to the changes that I have outlined in my introduction I want to put together we will put together in short order a steering committee that consists of students staff and family representation to be formed to begin to engage the community around other ideas that have Merit and value around how to address this incredibly complex challenge that is centered at PSD it's not just a PSD problem it's happening all across the country but we have to deal with it within our local context within our local values and make very hard decisions more information about how to become a part of that steering committee will be rolled out in the next couple of weeks it won't be rolled out tonight you've asked for a pause I'm asking for a pause to be thoughtful and not just put something into the universe tonight that's not meaningful and truly engaging and and actually super authentic this cannot be disingenuous and we need to think about how to do that together some more information to come on that I would also charge this uh committee to ensure that there is a convening of multiple listening sessions across the entire District to gather feedback these listening sessions and I want to just really hone in on here because this is really important engaging with you is a priority I have we have as a system a sense of urgency to engage to listen and to be thoughtful about what your ideas are but the events that are scheduled as early as this Thursday and into next week we are going to cancel them at specific schools and we are going to relaunch CommunityWide listening sessions that impact all of our schools knowing that this is not just about the five schools that I previously mentioned this is about

other schools as well and so I please I do not take my cancellation as a means of not wanting to engage with you but this is bigger than the schools that have been referenced and other members of our community have the right just as you to be engaged and I want to invite you to reenroll in those opportunities if you're interested we can certainly benefit from your presence these listening sessions will be scheduled over the next few weeks excuse me over the next several months and they're going to be open to all members of the PSD community and more information will be shared in short order both on our website and we will send out information to every member of our school Community to ensure that you're aware of locations of time so you can thoughtfully plan with your families and many of the students who are listening and here in person you are invited to be a part of those sessions as well okay let's talk a little bit about another part of this process we talked about reimagining program placement I'm only simply reorienting you in the community to what has already been put on the table I am not restating this to poke at you to ask you for your agreement I'm simply restating for the community understanding what has been put on the table and why so we can make sure that we're clear that if there are other ideas of how to make this work or counter I you know counter suggestions to think about this differently we want to ensure that those listening sessions flush flush out that best thinking but when we look at our district and thinking and leading from a place of abundance a place of strength not a deficit one of the programs across all of our 54 schools that is in great demand which has a waiting list in every single grade kindergarten through 8th grade is Polaris Expeditionary Learning school it's in great demand not just because you're crew not just because of the building that you're in not just because of your intensives but it's because of your way of work your idea of learning through Adventure is contagious the culture people feel seen they feel heard the relationship that's two-way between your teachers in you is significant and when I think about and meet with community members who want more of that I validate that based upon my own experiences of going into the school myself observing presentations of learning that have been just experiences and memories that I will never forget and being a part of graduation experiences where you can visibly see the significance of not just the maturity but the depth and the level of learning based upon the experiences those students have this community wants more of that and I need to figure out a way to meet that demand I would share with you that when you look at who are and what are the demographics of the students that are on the wait lists at Polaris a lot of those students are living in the olander community they're living in the bevens community what I would share with you and I will be vulnerable that the three schools are actually competing with one another Project based learning at olander and at bevens has originated with trying to identify ways to get the community to engage and see them as something that competes with Expeditionary Learning they're not the same is there a bridge yes but they're not the same and so the proposal that was put on the table that I want this community to continue to Grapple with was to move the K5 program of C today's Polaris Expeditionary Learning school to olander and become Polaris at olander I believe and you can disagree with me and it's totally okay but I believe the location at olander elementary school being adjacent to Spring Canyon Park is incredibly ideal for the Expeditionary Learning model and it also because of the facility size at olander allows our elementary part of the Expeditionary Learning Program at Polaris to grow where those weight lists can go away the proof of Concepts here is to keep olander a neighborhood school where students who live and reside in the olander boundary we would ask them to continue to please stay within that school but recognize like you they have Choice as well but it would also continue your school Polaris at expeditionary excuse me Polaris at olander would

also be a districtwide choice school and we believe we have found a way to provide districtwide transportation to Polaris at older as well as Polaris at blevens the secondary model for Polaris today 6 through 12 has a weight list 6 through eight but the weight list doesn't exist at high school and that's okay many of our students want to go back to a traditional high school for lots of different reasons and that's more than acceptable as I Shar shared with you earlier Our Community Values choice and choice is here to stay but today blevens is a school that is rebounding academically there's a lot of great things that are happening there but the proof of the matter is here that they're only using approximately 40% of their entire facility as a result as a result of their enrollment being what it is our West Side schools are at risk when you look at enrollment Trends it is disproportionately impacting the west side of town this is not just an investment in the community and what they're asking for which is more of the Polaris Expeditionary Learning model to be a part of crew but we also want to ensure that we're investing in two schools that matter olander and blevens who are receiving incredible subsidies to offer the programs they are now because they're under enrolled their neighborhood schools that are equally as proud as any of yours and we need to figure out a way to breathe Health in into their budgets to ensure that all three of these programs are sustainable the idea at blevens for high school would be students have a choice to maintain a level of continuity in the Expeditionary Learning model at blevens for their High School experience or they can naturally choose to go to Rocky or one of our other choice schools again this is a proposal that was put on the table that I'm simply reorienting the community to right now another part of that proposal was to take two of our Alternative High School programs Centennial High School and pter Community Academy and merge them into one high school alternative program I want to be very clear both of these programs are incredibly proud they have incredible legacies they have generations of people that have thrived in these programs and their buildings especially Centennial tell stories whether it's the fabric on the walls the way of work through their disco or Discovery program and you have PCA that is right down the street here that is equally proud in its way of work but is has a and is working in a facility that I will share with you in this public is not up to the PSD standard it deserves better the Centennial program as proud as it is is capped in some ways around how much it can grow because of its facility their strong desire while our enrollment is declining 10% in the next several years what I would share with you the number of students that need different types of programming that's not declining the needs of our students to be Innovative and thoughtful and personal with their educational experience is not only sustaining itself I would actually go as far as to tell you it's starting to be on the uptick and I'm grateful that we're in a community that can provide today but we're not in a position to provide in perpetuity and so the idea was as painful as it might be or maybe you see it from a space of optimism and hope to bring those programs under one facility which would be polaris's current facility and to make sure that we remodel that facility to be what a young adult and a high school student deserves that program and the mergers of those programs is not a reduction in staff because you're bringing two programs together Centennial at 140 students today PCA at 200 students today bringing them together provides more human resources to provide more supports to those students but I want to be I want to recognize it doesn't feel that way in this moment but I'm asking us to be curious about that to think about it and I'm very grateful for the members of not just these two schools but the Polaris Community the olander community and bevens Community as they're going through all of the various emotions that they're feeling hopes and ideas and thoughts around how to make this work our starting to emerge another important critical part of this school system are our students who receive integrated

Services students who are 18 to 22 years old who have been members of our school district Community who are learning how to transition into the world of work the world of Independent Living who are needing intensive and important and Mission critical supports from our district to make sure that their way of life is not only successful and healthy but allows them to be sustainable and independent well into the future and those programs are all over the place across this District today so the idea is to give those students an upgrade and expand upon those programs by bringing them all together to ensure that there's an academy for those students where we could have not just more centralized supports for them but to ensure that they have the facility that they deserve now while the Centennial location is ideal today for Centennial students and I do not challenge that for lots of different reasons I would also tell you that I'm incredibly curious about what it could be from a facility standpoint for these students as well having access to CSU having direct access to the various transport lines having access to the various businesses that exist in Oldtown and all of Fort Collins is really critical for those students to be immersed in ways of work and ways of life that are sustainable the community connections program today which is a building in the parking lot of Rocky Mountain High School like PCA does not meet the PSD standard during the recession and during Co the transport Lane that was adjacent to that program went away due to reductions in Transport Services those students are walking several blocks to engage and access our community that's not your fault it's just the reality of problems that we must deal with and from an Equity lens prioritize those students and their needs at the same level that we prioritize all of yours we have a Cooper home program which is actually in a home that is designed to be both a classroom and a living area that helps students actually deal with the duality of both of those experiences with this particular proposal we would sell that home which is valued today at just under \$600,000 and reinvest the savings from that which are one time and it's not a significant amount of money and it does not address the billion dollars of need or the 10% of declining enrollment but it does help us create upgrades to the various facilities that we're talking about in these particular proposals our district also has various leases in strip malls across the community for office space and other programs that serve our integrated Services students that I would challenge you in this community that we don't need to have leases when we have buildings that have space and so the idea here is not to just to bring these communities in groups of students together but bring all of the wraparound services with them at today's Centennial High School facility so what I would share with you in addition to those that were proposed there are harder but necessary decisions that are still needing to be made and I want to outline my proposal to how best to approach modifying specific attendance areas we know that we have to continue to offer high quality and comprehensive program programming for all of our students to address the long-term needs of our district but also the long-term declines in enrollment and we will have to modify attendance areas boundaries as we consider those particular efforts sorry that's okay I don't if that's a good thing or a bad thing I'm going to take a drink of water from my heart to yours I really appreciate you and your attention tonight it means a lot to me I know this isn't easy as we go through this process there are other programs in this District that we need to find space for as you know the governor rolled out uh Universal pre in the last year and we're going to need to identify ways in schools where we expand Universal prek programs for students that are in those particular age groups as we continue to focus on ensuring that all of our students don't just graduate but they graduate with options whether that's a four-year program a two-year program going directly into the workforce or the military Career Concepts that are built around Career and Technical education we have the desire to

expand those programs across the district and whether that's in satellites or different types of schools we want to identify spaces where we can continue to think differently about CTA our district today has a policy around how to approach this it outlines the spirit of what we need to do what I want to outline for you tonight is the process in which we will accomplish it but that District policy is policy JC we believe that modifications to attendance areas and I want to be really clear similar to what I proposed to the board and we will see at the conclusion of this presentation how they feel about it but I believe they should not go into effect any earlier than the 2526 school year that's not next year want to be clear about that it's the year after so this would be the following uh process we will take attendance areas we'll evaluate them and we'll have Community engagement processes similar to what you and many others will experience over the next several months to gather input from students staff and members of our community and our families from that our district will have to synthesize those ideas identify Trends identify where we believe that there's Merit where we have more Curiosities and questions about and bring back to the Board of Education a recommendation not to vote on but for feedback that would include consolidation of schools recommendations will be based on enrollment Trends proximity to other schools of the same level alignment of programs the feasibility and ease of transportation for students and student-based budgeting subsidies that we talked about earlier that cannot continue in perpetuity for all schools from there we will have Community meetings to gather feedback on that proposal that went to the board following their feedback we'll get your feedback we'll think about what that looks like in terms of recommendations for for consolidation the impact on families on staff and neighbors we'll also make sure that that Community feedback allows for further modifications to be made and ensure that that is also made publicly available in V various forms for for people who cannot come to those Community engagement sessions we want to ensure that they have a voice we will ask the Board of Education most likely in the year ahead and we will as the new board gets settled in the next couple of months we'll have to kind of converge and identify where we are on that um but I believe it'll be really important for the Board of Education to take action by resolution on recommendations presented by the district within the next school year school consolidation committees would then be formed to help ensure that any of the impacted schools that we're walking align alongside people that are impacted to make sure that they have feedback on how we can make that better knowing that that is going to be a very very difficult experience for this entire District as I share with you and I will close these last couple of slides that while we need to deal with these cha changes and challenges we also are going to need to engage the community thoughtfully to invest in our facilities to improve our facilities so every single school not just some of our schools are at a standard that we can all be proud of in order and as I shared with you in my introduction I've only been here about two years and the re another reason why we're here now is that I've spent the last several months with this team and with this board of education studying the infrastructure needs that exist like how much will it actually cost to put air conditioning in our 33 schools that don't have it how much would it cost to have a thoughtful roof replacement program a playground replacement program to ensure that all of the safety upgrades on our doors and single points of Entry are at a point where we all can be proud of feel safe and not worry about the the future of our district we hired a third- party independent company called mckinstry to help with that analysis and as I shared with you the life and replacement cycles of all of those various things whether it's air conditioning all of our mechanical systems that are outlined in our facilities condition assessment the Retro commissioning which helps us think differently about how to

pay for these things and ensure that they live a longer uh living shelf life uh we're having things live way beyond their lifespan and our district as a result of incredible maintenance staff but that's not sustainable into the future and we also know we have community and state values that are around sustainable energy and future uh and and as we think about that what that means for our future all of those Investments including a potential new school in the community of Timnath costs over a billion dollars to be more specific when you look at our air conditioning efforts that if we wanted to as a community to ensure that every school every classroom every building in PSD had air conditioning to improve their work environment to improve the learning environment and to provide greater access to our schools not just during the school year but all year round students don't be scared every school is not going to be a year round school but I want to share with you that it has a price tag of 199 million to \$268 million when you consider inflation when you think about our roofs and security and playgrounds to get them on a replacement schedule based upon where they are that's another \$600 million and we know that we're going to need dollars to renovate schools and programs to meet the demands of other programs like Universal prek and CTE programs that I shared with you earlier another complex part of the problem and I named this a couple of times but I just want to reiterate it what makes this difficult is this Zero Sum game of mentality that in order for somebody to feel like they wanton somebody else has to lose we have schools that are needed in certain areas of our community as a result of where growth is occurring right now where homes might be more affordable right now and we recognized that a new school most likely a K8 school not just to provide relief to Timnath Middle School high school but to take a look at Tim nith elementary school today which is another school that they're doing incredible things with a very old facility that has a lot of character but it has lived way past its shelf life and putting more money into a school that we're not going to get an RO in is not modeling fiscal stewardship so we believe that another 80 to 100 million will be needed to build a new school out in Tim we're also paying a lot of attention to the northeastern area of our community in Wellington where we believe another school an elementary school most likely will be needed within the next decade probably within the next 5 to 10 years as I shared with you this requires a multi-million dollar effort that I believe and I don't know yet how our new board will think about this but I believe looking forward into the future we're about 13 months away in November of 2024 from needing to engage the Community thoughtfully for their support while also recognizing we're dealing with all of these emotional challenges and changes at the same time no easy task but the capital needs of our budget are not going to be met with our current line item of \$800,000 what I would share with you in closing and I really appreciate your time I know this presentation was probably much longer than you anticipated is that all of you are here today to represent you your identities and your individual School culture and I'm grateful for that but what I want you to be curious about is that if two weeks ago or a week ago I named five different schools would you still be here the challenge that I'm inviting you to think about is that this is not about one school or five schools or a district of schools this is about all of us my goal and I don't know if I can thread the needle on this Hail Mary is to have people all feel like they won I don't know if that's possible and that's not my job to make everybody happy but I sure as heck want to try but I am inviting you to be as curious and as invigorating and as intense and as hopeful about other schools that are in your community our community as you are your own recognizing that they all deserve what you want and what many of you might have today which is to be seen to be heard and to have a personalized educational experience that matters to you for the students that are in this room and that are listening I am so proud to be your

superintendent the advocacy that you have exemplified not just to me but members of this community whether it's at the weekends in our Parks being here about to ask questions and offer comments that is what learning in this district and this community is about so however you stand and however you feel I'm here for it and will hold space for you but I just want to invite all of us to recognize that this is bigger than our t-shirts it's bigger than our mascots and those things matter because they are a part of who we are as an educator I still have a t-shirt for every school I worked in 10 years ago during a recession I was sitting sitting in your seat talking to another board in a different Community because I was a principal of a school in your position and I didn't understand why because what we were offering was great it's hard and I care about you and I will try to do this work better as a result of your feedback and members of the board I thank you for giving me the time and the space to engage the community thoughtfully it's what they deserve and I am hopeful you are seeing a response to what you have been asking for so thank you very much for your time