

## **CHERRY LANE HIGH CASE STUDY: RESTRUCTURING A LARGE, COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL TO SMALL SCHOOLS**

### **LAKEVIEW CONTEXT**

Cherry Lane High School is located in Lakeview, MA<sup>1</sup>, a city of 172, 650 residents who are 77% Caucasian, 7% Black, 5% Asian, and 15% Latino/a. The Lakeview Public Schools serve 25, 500 students who are 54% Caucasian, 10% Black, 28% Latino/a, and 8% Asian. 54% of students are eligible for free/reduced lunch. The school was built in the late 1970s, and many of the school's administrators have worked in the school building since it opened.

Cherry Lane High has begun a multi-year, focused effort to convert from a large, comprehensive high school into three small schools with unique identities. The goal of this case study of Cherry Lane High's first year of conversion is to share the background, design year, and early implementation of the multi-year process to becoming three small schools. By highlighting the impact on the school community and the major challenges they face, we hope to inform the work of other districts and schools.

The data for this case study are interviews of Cherry Lane High staff, observations of meetings and events, and documentation of activities. The interviews were all completed in April 2002, prior to the identification of staff for the first small school at Cherry Lane High. Therefore, this case study should be read as the first year, a planning year, in the process of converting a large, comprehensive high school into small schools.

Additionally, readers should note that only nine staff members were interviewed for the study. They were all quite involved in the planning process. Six of the nine were not classroom-based. Therefore, the opinions and perspectives of those who have not yet been involved have not been expressed in this case study. Most of those interviewed have been members of the Cherry Lane High community for over 10 years. Finally, this study focuses on only one school. We caution against generalizing the findings to other settings.

### **BEFORE NESSN (1990-2001)**

More than 10 years ago, the district began an initiative to transform "shopping mall" high schools by developing "Pathways," which were electives that focused and built upon one another towards certain career and college avenues, such as human services, technology areas, and the arts. Several of the current departments at Cherry Lane make up these Pathways. For example, in human services there are courses in food services, child care, and home economics. While still taking traditional core courses such as English and

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<sup>1</sup> This is a case study of a real school in a real district; only the school and district names have been changed.

math, students take a sampling of Pathways courses their first year or two at Cherry Lane and then focus on one Pathway the second two years. The goal of Pathways was to prepare students to conduct an internship by the end of senior year. All students chose a Pathway in their final two years.

In 1995, the then principal introduced the idea of “teams” of teachers, all teaching a small group of students. Teachers volunteered for the first teams. Teachers who elected to be on teams received an extra planning period a day (for team planning) and the extra pay that comes with extended day (an extra 30-45 minutes at the end of the school day). While teaming was initially voluntary, today the principal sometimes assigns teachers to teams, depending on the needs created by teacher vacancies. Currently, all of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and some of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade are in teams. Some teams work better than others. Students report liking teams and missing them because they do not necessarily stay with the same teams from one year to the next.

In school year 2000-2001, a faculty team was assembled to assist in writing a district-wide grant for the Carnegie Corporation to restructure all secondary schools in Lakeview. This faculty planning team was voluntary and made many of the design decisions which are still in place today and will be described in detail below. The Carnegie grant was awarded in October, 2001. The grant required a partnership between Lakeview Public Schools and a local business or entity. LPS and Windsor University formed the Lakeview Education Partnership.

The idea of restructuring Cherry Lane High was introduced current to the faculty by the faculty planning team. Thus, much of the thinking behind the restructuring work was already in place in school year 2000-2001. Information Technology Academy would open in fall 2002, Government, Education, Service in fall 2003, and Arts and Humanities in fall 2004. The first roll-out plan was that each school would start with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and add one grade per year. In this way, the whole school would be converted by school year 2007-08. The structure for the new Cherry Lane High with three small schools rolling out grade by grade was decided upon by the Carnegie planning team.

### **THE FIRST NESSN DESIGN YEAR (SCHOOL YEAR 2001-2002)**

New England Small Schools Network began working with Lakeview in the summer of 2001. The agreement between NESSN and the Lakeview Public Schools gives NESSN the role of providing coaching and professional development on critical aspects of small schools design and implementation, such as the flexibilities and critical friends groups. Three Cherry Lane High administrators attended the inaugural event of New England Small Schools Network, a Small Schools Design Week held at Jiminy Peak Resort in western Massachusetts. The two representatives from the school created an action plan and timeline for the design team, an initial school design, and a plan for gaining district autonomies (or flexibilities).

The design team was formed in September 2001 and was composed of four administrators and a handful of teachers who volunteered, with a stipend to compensate

for their time. The teachers on the design team ranged from new to veteran teachers, but they were all intrigued by the idea of small schools and interested in learning more about the effort. The role of the design team was to plan the first small school, to write the governance policies and curriculum in alignment with state, district, and NESSN mandates and principles, and to present the model for approval by the Lakeview Public Schools. Information generated from design team meetings was disseminated to staff and parents in faculty meetings, memos, and newsletters.

Faculty committees were also created for each NESSN flexibility: governance, staffing, budget, schedule, facilities, and curriculum/assessment. Teachers were compensated for their time. Team tasks and timelines varied, depending on the topic. Some teams met every day after school, while others quickly realized that they could do little until the new school staff had been chosen. About 35-40 teachers were involved in these smaller planning teams.

Cherry Lane High teachers are aware, to varying extents, of the plan to break all of Cherry Lane High down into three small schools. They also know that each current assistant principal will likely become a “dean” of a new small school. The small schools will have themes based on the current Pathways at Cherry Lane: Information and Technology (ITA), Human Services, and Arts.

### **THE ROLE OF NESSN IN CHERRY LANE HIGH'S CONVERSION**

NESSN's role has been that of collaborator with the LPS district, the WEP/Carnegie initiative, and the schools. NESSN staff have been flexible in meeting the school's needs during the school year. The NESSN network-wide professional development offerings have built capacity within the school. Administrators and teachers at Cherry Lane High have attended NESSN activities including the Critical Friends Group training, Professional Development days on each flexibility, and the summer Design Institute. Participating design team members consistently mentioned the norms for meeting behavior and facilitation as being very helpful for focusing the design team meetings and making them productive.

I think in [having Critical Friends Groups], it's only going to help teachers. Because I know now there are teachers I'll ask, “what do you think of this?” And I like the way that the Critical Friends Groups are organized. There's a certain way to do things so people aren't going off on tangents and losing the focus, which can happen very easily.

Teacher

Many of those interviewed acknowledged NESSN's role in supporting district level leadership and union leadership through including them in professional development opportunities and in meetings. The district's and union's understanding of NESSN principles and flexibilities promises to make the work smoother by keeping the dialogue alive.

NESSN could help with several aspects of the conversion in the coming year. Within the large Cherry Lane High, coaches could help to ensure that information is disseminated to all staff and students not yet involved with the first school or planning the second school.

Second, teachers anticipate a need for more professional development on integrating core academic curriculum with the pathways, such as how to use technology in a social studies curriculum. Third, NESSN may have a role in identifying additional resources for the new small schools. ITA anticipates needing computer equipment and software to fully become a Technology academy.

Almost everyone interviewed expressed the need to visit and hear about other schools undergoing conversions to other small schools. The intention to pair Cherry Lane High with a founding NESSN school did not result in any visits in 2001-02.

What do other small schools look like? What do they do? Especially for the incoming teachers who maybe weren't part of the process and haven't seen much of that yet. [I would like] ideas of how other schools faced problems, and how they overcame those challenges, because you know we're going to run into obstacles. I know things aren't going to go perfectly. If we knew ahead of time what some problems schools faced were, that would make us better prepared if we met the same challenges. Teacher

In 2002-03, a team from Cherry Lane High joined a visit to small schools in New York City, enabling them to see examples of other small schools and to connect with other New England conversion schools. This team has subsequently visited and communicated with two Boston conversion schools.

### **THE FIRST SCHOOL: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY**

The first small school in Cherry Lane High is the Information Technology Academy, opened in September 2002. The mission of ITA reads as follows:

The Information Technology Academy is a personalized learning environment where students achieve their highest level of success in core academics through a variety of technologies. This academy challenges students and fosters interactive learning experiences. The students are confident, independent, reflective learners who are involved members of the community. Our self-governing faculty is committed to innovative instructional practices. The active participation and support of each student's family is critical to student success and indispensable to the educational process.

Critical aspects of the ITA plan were worked out by the design team and flexibility committees, before the staff were selected. During this process, one flexibility committee member described the empowerment of being able to make decisions at the teacher level.

Probably, the biggest surprise was how much control the teachers will have, and hopefully that stays true. I'm dealing with discipline, I'm dealing with scheduling, I'm dealing with the materials they're going to have. You know, I had heard that we would be able to make decisions, but I wasn't sure of the extent of the control we would have. That's a great surprise. Teacher

The framework for the school is described below.

*Staffing:* Applications for the first small school were accepted in March 2002 and staff were chosen in April 2002. The school opened with 100 ninth graders and 9 faculty members. The proposed faculty includes five core academic teachers, a foreign language teacher, a technology teacher, an inclusion specialist, and a dean of the academy. For some positions, there was one applicant. For others, there were several applicants for one

position and so the positions were competitive. The principal made the final decisions on hiring for the first small school.

*Scheduling:* The school day is in two main instructional blocks, with tentative periods assigned to satisfy district requirements. There is a three hour block in the morning and a two hour block in the afternoon. Teachers have 180 minutes/week of common planning time and approximately 90 minutes per week of individual preparation time. Since the current teachers are all volunteers, the school anticipates no union issues or grievances for the reduction in individual preparation time.

*Budget:* The school anticipates flexibility to use funds and other resources as necessary. Administrators report that this is not a big change from current practice.

*Governance:* The ITA is led by an academic dean, who is also one of the assistant principals. The dean runs ITA in collaboration with a Governing Board composed of 15 members: students, the teachers, parents, and community partners from Lakeview Education Partnership.

*Curriculum and assessment:* The faculty committee has developed the following guiding practices for use in development of curriculum and assessment.

- Integration of technology throughout the curriculum
- Rigorous and equitable course selections in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, and technology
- Project-based learning and direct instruction
- Multiple assessments, including a competency check-list and exhibitions
- Graduation requirements will include demonstration of mastery over the school's competencies
- State frameworks will be met through the curriculum design
- Special education services will be provided to adapt the curriculum to students' needs

*Student recruitment:* The design team has conducted sessions at the neighboring middle school to encourage graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders to attend ITA. As of April 2002, 83 students had applied, with 18 of those classified as special education.

Recruitment in April 2003, for the entire fall 2003 entering freshman class, has included informational sessions for parents and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. In addition, 8<sup>th</sup> graders are taking a test of interest and abilities to support their applications. Other factors to be taken into consideration for assignment to one of the three small schools includes preference order, report cards, and MCAS scores.

*Community engagement:* The action plan facilitator at the school has communicated extensively with various organizations such as Lakeview Working Coalition, Cherry Lane East Asian Coalition, and Uniting Our Voices, which advocate for the major groups of non-White students, like African Americans, Latino/as, and Eastern European

immigrants. They will in turn build awareness of ITA and the other small schools with families.

### **IMPACT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Ultimately, the reason for converting Cherry Lane High to small schools is to improve student engagement and performance. When school staff members were asked about the reasons for the restructuring of Cherry Lane High into three small schools, interviewees talked about low achievement and lack of pride. There is a perception among some teachers that MCAS scores are too low and that Cherry Lane High students are the neediest and most troubled in the city. Staff struggle with how build a school that serves a greater percentage of students.

In the design year and first year of implementation, the impact on teachers who are not on the design teams or the planning teams for flexibilities has been minimal. However, teachers do anticipate major changes with the move to small schools.

Staff were interviewed about their perspectives on how the change to small schools would impact teaching and learning. While those interviewed were not all directly affiliated with the first small school, most predicted that increasing personalization among students and adults would positively affect achievement and morale. They felt that teachers and students would know each other better in small schools and that the collaborative planning would encourage teachers to “make decisions together [and] deprivatize their practice” (Administrator). In moving from isolation to collaboration, one teacher described the predicted changes below:

I think, for some teachers, it’s going to be a radical change in their style and what they’re used to, but I think when they get used to it, it will be good because it will get them out of their classrooms, people who are just used to being by themselves...It will get them to sit down and have the time to talk to other teachers...Teaming is so great, because I did both. When I started out, I didn’t teach on a team. If I had a question or if I needed help with something, I had to try to find someone in the two minutes between class.  
Teacher

I hope the impact will be a higher level of achievement. The second impact will be the cohesiveness of the faculty, the students and their parents being one unit to achieve this purpose, and everybody working together.  
Administrator

Most of those interviewed focused on the hope for increased academic achievement as measured by MCAS scores due to the increased time on core academic subjects rather than electives.

My hope is that students will feel more pride in the school, because I think right now there’s a lack of pride in the school. Because they’ll be with the teachers [for longer], it will be more rigorous, more structured for them, and I think our students need that more than anything. I think also that the learning process is just going to be so much richer for them...  
Teacher

Others predicted a positive impact would be a more peaceful and welcoming school culture.

[It will be a] more sane, quieter, more peaceful learning environment when the whole building is split up...There will be reduced traffic in the building.

## **FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Through those interviewed in this case study, several challenges emerged repeatedly for the coming school year and beyond. Interestingly, the challenges differed from common, practical concerns of many large, restructuring schools, like facilities management and scheduling in a large building. The concerns raised in the interviews were both structural and cultural:

- 1) Staff buy-in for the conversion
- 2) Potential for equity concerns
- 3) Resources for the technology component of ITA
- 4) Roll out beyond 2002-03 and ITA

### ***Staff buy-in for the conversion***

While the majority of those interviewed enthusiastically participated in the planning and design for the conversion of Cherry Lane High, they also discussed resistance among a significant number of teachers. According to the interviewees, two factors affect buy-in: district mandate for reform and resistance to and fear of change.

Because the conversion is a district-mandated effort, involving all secondary schools becoming small schools, teachers have had little choice in making the decision to convert Cherry Lane High. A challenge in the coming year will be for the district administrators to work with school leadership in organizing teachers to become empowered in shaping how the small schools will look and feel. This is difficult in a historically administrator-driven culture.

As with all reform initiatives, teachers differ in their opinions and experiences of change. At Cherry Lane High, interviewees spoke of a core of teachers resistant to changing their practice. They are skeptical that they will be given decision making power, that the reform will be sustainable, or that student achievement will improve.

This is a very veteran staff, and they've see changes come, and seen changes go. They don't see anything tremendous about this new proposal compared to 10 years ago's proposal, 20 years ago's proposal.

Teacher

We have to convince them that change is a good thing and it will work. I think that, if they thought it would work, they would change, but they're not convinced it would work. The first small school is going to be highly critical, not only for the students, but, if the people who are working together are smiling at the end of the day, are working together, if they're promoting their own program, that's going to spread to the staff. I think it's a really, really great opportunity for experienced staff to change.

Administrator

I think that a lot of teachers are very nervous, especially with union issues. They're nervous about the idea of making a radical change maybe in what they do.

Teacher

It may be violating union rules, like scheduling. Teachers like to have some time for themselves, and one of the downfalls of the schedule is you don't get a lot of time to yourself. Everything is the team, from basically the minute you walk in to the minute you go home...The comment was made, "teachers should be working with other teachers." That may be true, but that doesn't mean I can't use my prep period to prep. Why do I have to spend it all with my colleagues? or with kids? I need an hour or so

during the day just to make photocopies and stuff. I don't see that in the schedule. Teachers want that up front, they don't want to have to bargain for things down the road. They're changing some of the rules, so that's one thing that teachers aren't crazy about.

Teacher

These comments suggest that the coming years must include outreach to resistant teachers regarding concerns about union rules, sustainability of change, and decision-making power among teachers in designing the new small schools.

### ***Potential for equity concerns***

Small, autonomous schools have the potential to improve achievement among students who traditionally perform less well than their peers, particularly low-income students and students of color. Equity is a guiding principle of the small schools movement. As Cherry Lane High moves to small schools, staff must address several equity concerns explicitly. Two student groups currently have significantly different experiences from the majority of the students at Cherry Lane. The Scholars program is for students identified as gifted in math and science in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Scholars are currently housed both at the neighboring middle school and at Cherry Lane. Scholars students take all core academic subjects with each other and take electives like health, gym, and music with the general student population. With the restructuring, Scholars would be housed within the Arts and Humanities Academy.

Second, since Cherry Lane High is the only district high school physically equipped to serve severely handicapped students, this program would remain in the building. The severe special needs students have their own space on the first floor of the building. According to administrators, these students would be included in as many music, art, and food courses as possible. All of the new schools will include learning disabled and mainstream special education students.

A final potential challenge at Cherry Lane may emerge from the decision to base the themes of each new small school on the existing Pathways, or elective offerings, such as Information Technology; Government, Education, and Service; and Arts and Humanities. Often, such career-based pathways select for students with certain strengths and weaknesses, decreasing the diversity of each small school's population. Maintaining representative student bodies will be a challenge as the small schools roll out.

### ***Resources for the technology component of ITA***

Being the Information Technology Academy, the first small school requires resources for computer equipment and software it currently does not own. In order to integrate technology into each subject area, computers must be accessible to every class throughout the day. These computers must be dedicated to ITA students and not shared with students throughout the building. The new staff of the school are concerned that the current budget does not allow for such equipment.

### ***Roll out of all three small schools***

Converting large, comprehensive high schools to small autonomous schools is an experiment. There is no one way to change the existing structure and culture of a school; there are no successful models which survive leadership changes or happen without “hot-housing” new small schools (starting them in separate buildings). The first Cherry Lane High roll-out plan would have taken eight years, as described above. As one teacher suggested,

Plan the whole building at once. I think everybody would be in the same boat. everybody would see the successes, and everybody would feel the challenges. Instead of just a small small group to begin with. Even if the school next year is successful, that is not indicative of future success, because that is a special group of teachers who volunteered. If everyone has to volunteer, it's not so frightening. People are concerned and nervous. They don't feel like they're in the same boat.

Discussions are underway to speed up the roll out of the small schools. One plan would be to have the second and third small schools open in fall 2003 for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and then to have the rest of the building join the small schools in fall 2004.

### ***Lessons for Other Schools and Districts to Consider***

This case study has illustrated the groundwork and design year of one small school in a large comprehensive high school in Lakeview, MA. The context of this high school's restructuring is that all district secondary schools will become small schools in the next five years, as mandated by the district. While each school and district context differs in details, this case study reveals four major implications which have broad relevance independent of context.

### ***Decision makers at all levels must communicate regularly***

In the LPS district, the decision for all secondary schools to restructure came from the central office. The LPS district has received funding through the Carnegie and Gates Foundations for implementing these changes. When mandates are coming from more than one source, the leaders must have common understandings in order to answer questions from school level people. The district, funders, and grantee organizations (LEP and NESSN) must delineate clear expectations and goals for the changes planned, especially in light of the many reform initiatives that have come and gone in the teachers' experience. Teachers are eager to understand how this initiative differs from previous ones. They expressed a perception that the funding sources and the district are not in sync about their expectations of the restructuring initiative.

NESSN has established clear guidelines for the district and schools, but acknowledges that NESSN staff are not daily players situated in Lakeview's context and must therefore remain flexible. While NESSN's role is to constantly push its principles and flexibilities, the district and individual schools must distill NESSN's message for their own context.

If there is clarity among central office and grantees about the different initiatives and how they synergize, then when teachers, families, and administrators ask questions, any of the administrators and grantees can answer consistently and quickly. Without clarity, those not in decision-making roles lose trust and focus.

You have to be given the givens. Don't promise us complete autonomy and flexibility in design when we don't have it. Tell us "this is what you gotta do." This staff was told that we would have complete freedom.

Teacher

When asked what advice they would give to other schools undergoing restructuring, all those interviewed expressed a priority on communication. At all levels, communication of process and decisions must be quick and widespread. All stakeholders, including students, parents, and teachers, must be informed about impending changes which affect their schools.

School administrators and design teams must also have clear goals and means of disseminating information and decisions discussed at planning meetings. This information should be shared in as many modes as possible, in minutes, memos, and orally at faculty meetings. The more people are in the loop, the more the challenge of buy-in, discussed previously, will diminish.

### ***Teachers and administrators must have a voice in the new small schools***

In this case study, the school is restructuring due to a district mandate. By the end of the restructuring effort, all of Cherry Lane High's (and Lakeview's) secondary teachers and administrators will be working in a small school. Even though teachers will eventually all work in a small school, their buy-in will affect how smoothly the transition goes. This study points to several factors that promote increased teacher buy-in: building level leadership buy-in, incentives for changing practice, communication of the initiative's goals and expectations or marketing.

At Cherry Lane High, the administration is fully in support of the move to small schools. Each assistant principal will become the leader of a new small school. They all enthusiastically believe that small schools will lead to improved academic achievement. These leaders, while facing enormous change in their daily roles in the school, both know the culture of the large school and are committed to small schools. Such strong leadership buy-in and familiarity with context affects the willingness of teachers to change their thinking and practice in different ways. On one hand, administrator support for small schools indicates a solidarity and focus for a reform which will happen. On the other hand, strong administrator support may silence some teachers who fear speaking out against the leadership of the district or the building. A balance between strong mandates and safety to disagree must be struck.

While the district mandated the move to small schools, many of the decisions about what the small schools will look like are left up to the design teams. In that way, teachers have a voice in decision making that will directly impact their daily lives. Ensuring that decision making is shared and collaborative and involves all stakeholders builds teacher buy-in. Most teachers have weathered many changes and have little faith that this latest

initiative will substantially change their working conditions or the culture of their school. Early and substantial decision making power will increase teacher buy-in by demonstrating that the district is serious about giving up control.

Cherry Lane High used incentives for teachers to become involved in the change process early. Teachers who volunteered for the design team or for any of the planning teams were compensated for their meeting time (after school) with a stipend. In addition, these teachers were given extra time for prep rather than teaching a class. Compensating teachers for their extra work is one way to professionalize teaching.

***Restructuring large comprehensive secondary schools is a slow process involving both structural and cultural changes***

The Cherry Lane High story implies that converting a large high school to small schools must proceed slowly, with lots of groundwork and homework done before creating any small schools. In addition, the roll out of new small schools can not happen all at once.

As described, many changes in Cherry Lane High's structure had been implemented in the years before Carnegie and NESSN entered the picture. For example, career pathways based on electives were instituted in the early 1990s. Teachers were grouped by teams, first on a volunteer basis and then by school mandate, by the mid 1990s. As one administrator said, "you can't make big changes unless people have had a taste of how they work."

Additionally, Cherry Lane High plans to start one small school a year and add one grade to each small school a year. Reasons for starting one small school a year include the ability to focus change on a smaller subset of people and learning from this school's lessons in its first year to apply to other small schools. Reasons for adding only the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class each year include the ease of building a school culture and climate from scratch with students who have not experienced the large school culture before and not making changes to students' experiences late in their careers. Another reason for a slow roll out includes giving time for increased buy-in among teachers not involved in the design and planning or for veteran teachers to retire.

Several arguments against such a slow roll out include:

- Too many students in the school will not be beneficiaries of small schools for too long.
- There is the danger of those teachers and students in small schools being viewed either as favored or as second class citizens.
- The reform is less likely to be sustainable after funding ends, predicting a return to large schools
- Resisters remain uninvolved in the change process for longer, potentially harming the work of those involved

The district must acknowledge that structural changes happen before cultural ones do, and that small schools without cultural change replicate many of the ills of large schools

and do not serve students equitably. While many of the structural changes have been mandated from the district and funded initiatives, teachers may lead the cultural changes that follow. How the district, NESSN, and Carnegie promote explicit conversations about the culture of small autonomous schools will go far to enhance those changes and the voices of teachers in those changes. All of the key stakeholders, from students to district administrators, must be involved in these conversations.

***Small schools must serve students equitably***

A premise of small schools is equity. The Cherry Lane High case study raises two equity concerns. The first is the inclusion of students who are different in some way into the new small schools, such as the Scholars and severe special needs students.

Another equity concern is that the themes for the small schools, which are based on the existing Pathways, may result in unintended tracking. As plans at Cherry Lane High move forward, the following questions must be addressed by design teams:

- What existing data are there on the ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, and prior academic achievement of students in the different pathways? Often, students choose pathways based on strengths in given subjects or friendship patterns.
- What if Cherry Lane High students do not find any of the three schools' themes interesting?
- Will high school students in Lakeview be able to pick from any of the new small schools, even those outside their attendance zones?