

AASD BOE Presentation
December 9, 2024

Columbus Elementary School

Potential Repurposing



Declining Elementary Student Enrollment

School	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Capacity
Columbus	161	159	144	113	98	103	79	135
Edison	273	259	232	243	242	245	230	379
Dunlap	373	347	318	371	382	375	314	402
Franklin	345	315	272	271	278	286	267	337



Why are we considering repurposing Columbus?

Grade	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Total</u>
Enrollment	16	15	11	14	9	14	79



- The declining enrollment of Columbus has been a District concern for the past several years.
- During the 2021-2022 school year, the topic of repurposing Columbus was discussed by a District committee and focus groups along with other facility topics.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Enrollment	161	159	144	113	98	103	79

- ABS enrollment in 2018-19 was 177 students, now 139
- 20 of the 79 students open enroll into Columbus



What are the challenges that result from low student enrollment?

- Creating effective learning groups
- Grade-level combination classes
- Limited/fractured student services and specialist staff (FTE: enrollment based)
- High turnover of K-5 classroom teaching staff
 - Grade-level collaboration
 - Lack of mentor options for new teachers

DPI identified Columbus as having an inequitable distribution of teachers under Title 1. This designation occurs when a school is staffed by a disproportionate number of inexperienced and/or out-of-field teachers.



What special education challenges resulted from low student enrollment?

- The district transitioned to a cross-servicing/cross-categorical model to better serve students in their least restrictive environment.
- The change reduced the frequency of students needing to be placed outside of their neighborhood school.
- Due to the small size of Columbus:
 - there were barriers to staff taking a team approach to meet the needs of special education students.
 - there were not enough regular education students at Columbus to allow for appropriate special education to regular education ratios in general education classrooms.



Other Challenges

- Capacity of 135 limits how the building can be used
- Equity of facilities
- With ABS moving to an AASD building instead of renting, the staffing costs for shared positions creates inequitable staffing and expense.



How many students would need to be enrolled at Columbus for it to be more viable as a neighborhood elementary school?

- Two or three class sections at each grade level is generally desired.
- Green Bay, Neenah, and Oshkosh have recently closed or repurposed schools with between 150 and 250 students.
- Of the 20 largest district in the State, Columbus is the only neighborhood elementary school with less than 150 students.

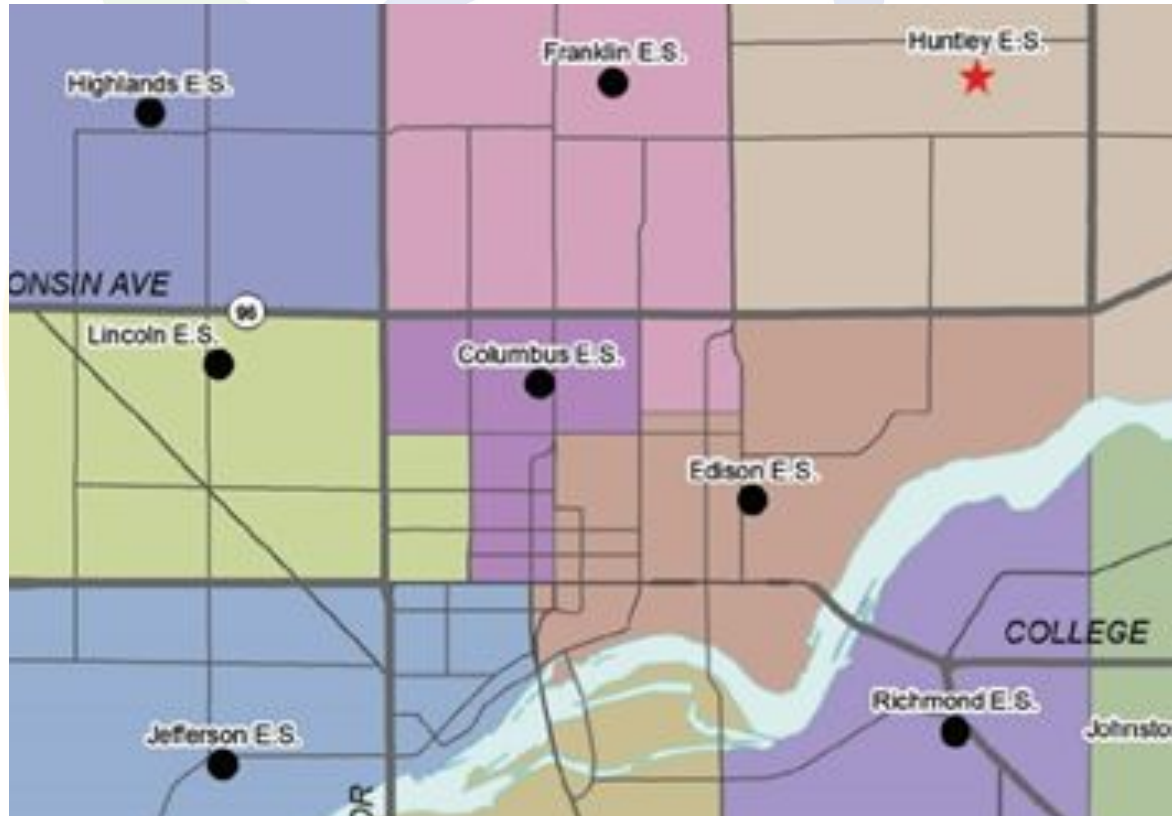


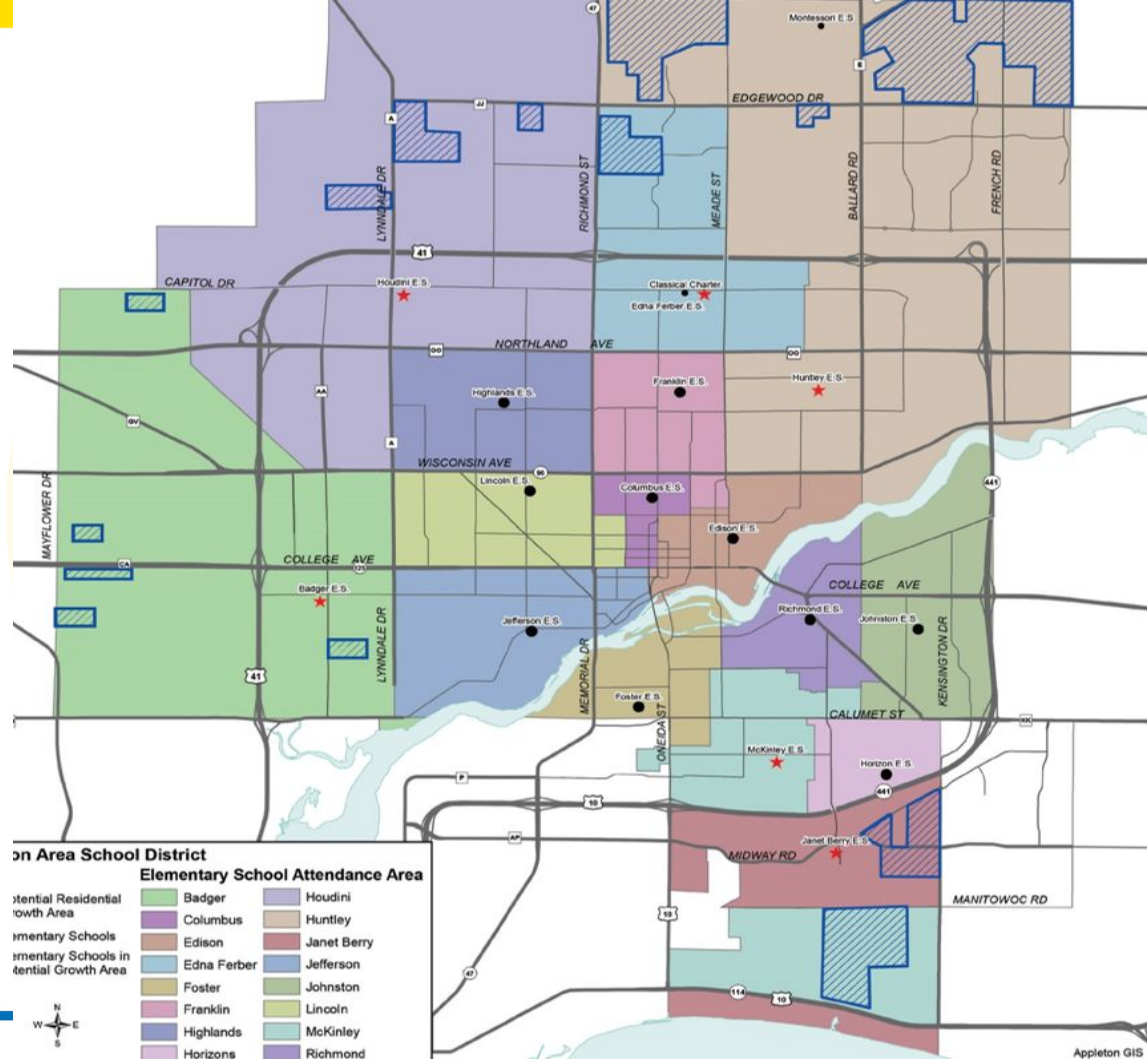
Why not increase the attendance boundaries for Columbus to increase enrollment?

- Capacity of Columbus is 135
- Edison, Franklin, and Dunlap all have capacity



What school would Columbus students attend?



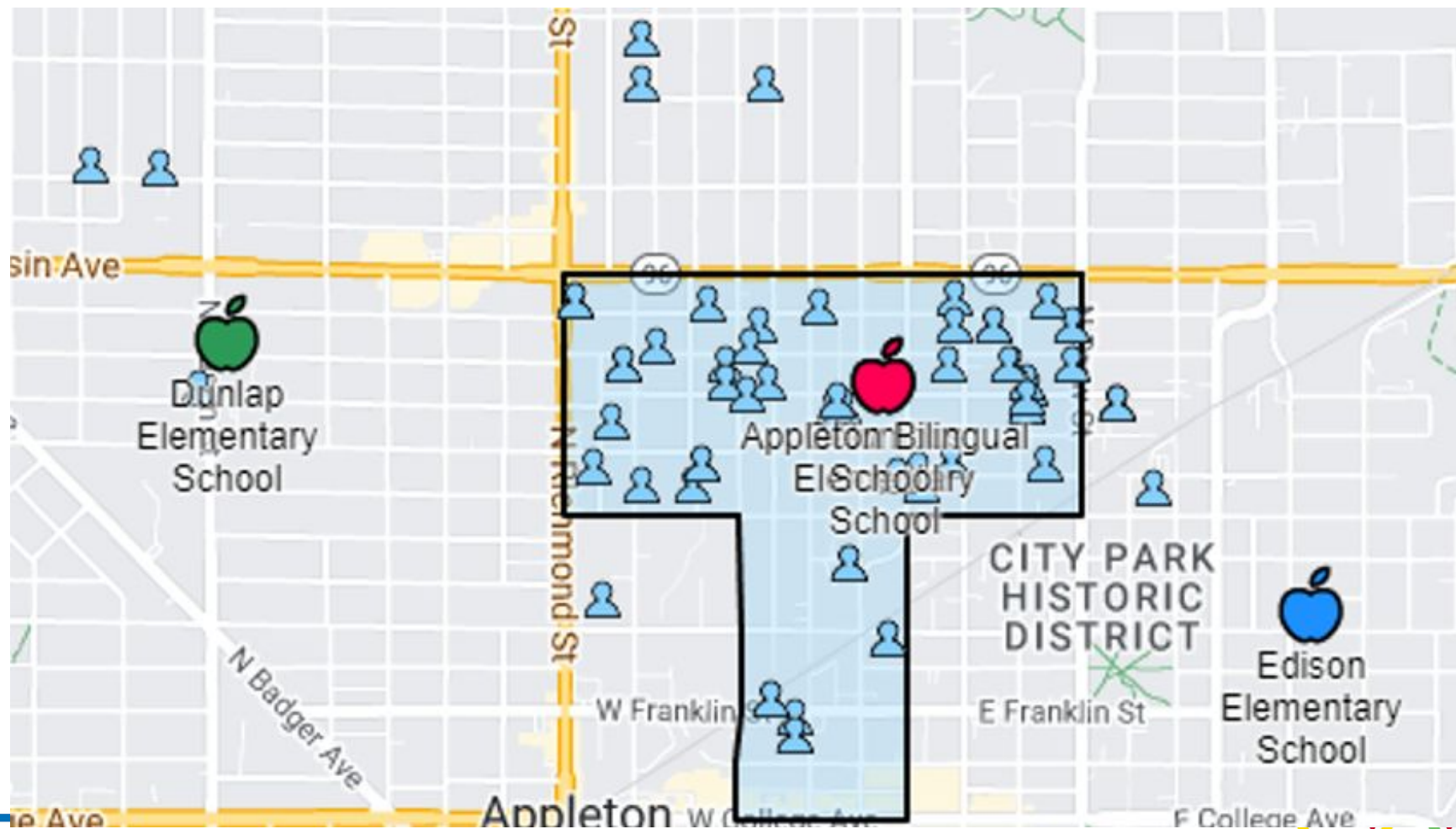


Decision-making Criteria:

- Geographic proximity to the school
- Enrollment capacity and current enrollment
- Feeder patterns to align with middle and high school boundaries
- Transportation and accessibility
- Neighborhood integrity
- Growth and future development
- Demographics

*Balance long-term feasibility with short-term impacts (feedback is important)





How will Columbus staff be impacted?

- Staff would retain all rights to employment
- Depending on position, staff may:
 - Be given “without assignment” status
 - Staff will have the opportunity to apply for vacancies of interest at different schools
 - There may be additional vacancies at Dunlap or Edison if allocation is increased due to student enrollment
 - Be re-assigned through reconfiguration
 - Move with a program



What will we do with the Columbus building?

The district has a need for alternative education spaces. Currently, rooms at Columbus are used for two district-wide special education programs and a Title 1 preschool program. The following programs could also be located at Columbus:

- Students placed outside of the district due to their significant education needs
- Additional RISE program students
- Site for students who are under an abeyance agreement



What is the timeline for a decision?

- Information/Listening Sessions
 - Columbus Staff, PTO, Families
 - Edison Staff
 - Dunlap/Edison/Franklin Families
- Board decision
- Enrollment projections
- Staffing



Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions About the Proposed Repurposing of Columbus Elementary

Question	Response
Why is Columbus Elementary building being considered for repurposing?	Low enrollment makes it challenging to meet the needs of students. Columbus enrollment has declined from 161 students in 2018-19 to approximately 100 students or less in each of the past three years.
What will happen to Columbus students if the school is repurposed?	If Board approved, this would mean that Kindergarten-Grade 5 students in the current Columbus attendance area would be reassigned to attend either Ronald C. Dunlap Elementary School (area North of West Atlantic Street and West of North Division Street) or Edison Elementary School (remaining Columbus attendance area).
How will this impact class size?	As both Dunlap and Edison are Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) schools, K-3 class size will average 15 students per section. Grade 4 and 5 class size will average 27 students per section, which is standard across AASD elementary schools.
If new attendance boundaries are set, what if a family does not want to attend the elementary school they are now assigned to?	AASD offers School of Choice. This process allows a student to attend a non-Charter school outside of their neighborhood school attendance area but within their resident school district. Please see this WEBSITE for more information about School of Choice.
Will Columbus staff move to Dunlap and Edison?	Teachers and staff will not lose their jobs due to the repurposing of the Columbus building. We intend to find

Additional Questions?



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or scan this QR code.



