

Lakeside Cluster Summit
Secondary Schools Facility Planning & Feasibility Study
Thought Paper

THIS DOCUMENT IS A REFLECTION OF CURRENT DISCUSSION AND DOES NOT
REPRESENT THE CONSENSUS OF THE LAKESIDE CLUSTER SUMMIT

September 16, 2016

The Lakeside Cluster Summit was formed in January 2016 as a vehicle for parents, administrators and community members in the Lakeside feeder pattern to come together to address issues of concern to our Lakeside school community. The Cluster Summit meetings are open to anyone and specifically include School Councils, PTA leaders, and principals from all schools in the Lakeside Cluster as well as interested parents, community members, teacher/administrators, School Board members and the Regional Superintendent.

Lakeside Cluster Summit has held several meetings where we discussed the proposed options under the Secondary Schools Facility Planning and Feasibility Study. We believe all children deserve high quality schools with safe and positive learning environments. We support all efforts to expand or build new schools to ensure that all schools are able to serve their students consistent with best practices. We also recognize that relieving overcrowding in the Cross Keys cluster needs to be the district's highest priority.

Lakeside Cluster Summit feels strongly that we want to keep our cluster together and intact and not lose any portion of our valued community. We are willing to do what is necessary to absorb the growth in population in our cluster and would like the cluster to have autonomy to work out challenging issues of elementary attendance lines, socio-economic diversity, educational comparability and access to programs. We would like to partner with the DCSD Planning Department to develop strategies and options to support growth, to create a flexible system for addressing changes in the student population, and move students between elementary schools in our cluster as necessary within our cluster boundaries.

Based on participation at several Lakeside Cluster Summit meetings, we have created a Lakeside Cluster option for growth. In addition, we have developed the following guiding principles that we would like the District to consider in addressing Secondary Schools Facility Planning. We also have developed a list of creative ideas to be considered in making a 750 seat addition at Lakeside High School feasible and a list of out of the box alternatives to be considered in planning for growth within the Lakeside cluster.

Lakeside Cluster Growth Plan:

- Keep the Lakeside Cluster intact by not removing any elementary schools or neighborhoods
- We provisionally support a 750--1000 seat addition at Lakeside High School to accommodate future growth in the Lakeside cluster without changing cluster boundaries. However, if it is not possible to build a 750-1000 seat addition to Lakeside at its current location while also addressing issues such as ingress and egress, parking and traffic patterns, then we do not support the addition.
- If building a 750 to 1000 seat addition proves to be unfeasible, we support using creative and flexible strategies to create the additional high school seats needed **within our cluster** per our list of Creative Ideas cited below.
 - *For example, combining a smaller-scale addition to Lakeside's existing building with the creation of an offsite 9th Grade Academy would address overcrowding concerns by opening up additional seats in the existing Lakeside building (the current freshman class is over 700 students). It would also help make better use of existing facilities within our cluster footprint. A 9th Grade Academy also takes into account that our cluster might not always need a super-large high school building. Last but certainly not least, it models an innovative learning solution for our students. 9th Grade Academies have been shown to improve the academic outcomes for students across the board by improving the transition to high school.*
- Based on this increased student population, it is essential to utilize the construction process to make Lakeside High School more accessible to buses, cars and walkers (see Creative Ideas section below)

- Ensure that the post--addition Lakeside has all of the resources necessary to operate in accordance with best practices for large high schools even if these resources and best practices are different than those used at other DCSD High Schools
- Lakeside Cluster is committed to working together to address all challenges as a united community (whether related to diversity and inclusion, growth, or anything else).
- Lakeside Cluster Summit looks forward to collaborating and partnering with the District as we work together in this process.

Consensus Principles:

- Lakeside celebrates its racial and socio-economic diversity including its Title 1 high school, middle school and several Title 1 elementary schools
- We support working with our neighboring clusters in finding region and district wide solutions to overcrowding and honoring those clusters' desires to remain intact
- Consider traffic impact and patterns when determining boundaries between clusters. Take into consideration that the impact of crossing certain boundaries may be much easier than other. For example, it is considerably more difficult to cross I85 at North Druid Hills Road than I285 at Henderson Road.
- Transportation studies should be initiated for schools that currently experience gridlock at the beginning and ending of the school
- Teachers should have their own classrooms and not have to float
- Equity and access are important but one size does not fit all—best practices may be different for larger and smaller high schools—embrace those best practices

Creative Ideas for making a 750-1000 seat addition at Lakeside feasible (our philosophy in developing this list is that we were not rejecting any ideas based on assumptions, past experiences or practices, or challenges. All ideas should be vetted and not rejected at first impulse):

- Reconfigure access in and out of Lakeside property
- Reconfigure student and faculty parking lots, bus lanes, carpool lines and consider a parking deck

- Consider additional access points (including walkways) using property behind Lakeside, space at the intersection of Briarlake Road and Briarcliff Road and the intersection of Briarcliff and Oak Grove Road (for example, if development over the marsh at the intersection of Briarlake and Briarcliff Roads is not possible, build an elevated boardwalk style walkway to enable students to efficiently and safely walk to a school entrance while avoiding street and parking lot traffic)
- Pedestrian access through neighborhoods to back side of Lakeside campus
- Consider acquiring additional parcels of land adjacent to Lakeside
- Dedicated traffic assistance at Lakeside at arrival and dismissal times
- Work with DeKalb County to improve roads and intersections at Briarcliff and Oak Grove Roads and Briarcliff and Briarlake Roads and resolve drainage issues
- Coordinate start and end times with Globe Academy and consider staggered start and end times
- Create shuttle sites (area churches and shopping centers) with school buses to transport students from parking and carpool drop off to Lakeside
- Create and enforce non-resident attendance policies
- Research and adopt, with input and shared decision making from our building leadership and Regional Superintendent, best practices for student learning in high schools with 2,400 or more students

Out of the Box Alternatives for keeping the Lakeside Cluster intact:

- Utilize all existing DCSD properties in the Lakeside Cluster including Heritage School currently being used by Globe Academy
- Sell the old Briarcliff High School site and possibly Adams stadium and use proceeds to support a new Cross Keys High School and to buy land for a stadium in the Doraville/Cross Keys area.
- Create a 9th grade academy at a new property (or existing property in the cluster) such as the Sports Authority space near Northlake Mall
- Acquire property at Northlake Mall to build a new high school
- Reconfigure grades among elementary schools and the middle school, such as a 4-6 school, and a 7-8 or 9 school

The Lakeside Cluster Summit would like our Lakeside school community to have the flexibility to address issues of crowding, equity and logistics together as a community. We would like flexibility to quickly meet changing needs in our cluster and ensure that today's needs are met even as we are planning for the future. The Lakeside Cluster Summit is working hard to honor and preserve the diversity of our community.

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