



E.H. Mellon Administrative Center
Dr. Judy Wiegand, Superintendent

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September 18, 2014

Dear Dr. Howard Families:

Thank you for taking the time to reach out and voice your concerns. Please know that the continued success of Dr. Howard Elementary School is a priority for our District and has been the subject of much thoughtful discussion throughout the process to determine the projects included in the November 4 referendum. The decision not to include Dr. Howard in the referendum was very difficult; The Board took into consideration the community feedback the District has received, the current needs of both high schools that serve all students within the District, and the cost to taxpayers.

While Dr. Howard is not included in the November 4 referendum, please know the District is actively working with building leadership on both short term and long term solutions to meet the needs of students, families, and staff.

In the short term, the District is committed to finding solutions to increasing the classroom quality and working conditions for staff members. Funds have been set aside for the 2015-2016 school year to purchase new furniture for classrooms.

One option that is currently under consideration is the relocation of the school to the Columbia Center. Upon an initial walkthrough with Principal Jill Trentz, the assessment is that this facility would provide a number of advantages and improvements over the current Dr. Howard facility. The District plans to continue this conversation with the Dr. Howard staff to assess the viability of this option and address the needs associated with transitioning to this facility. If affirmed, the District would work with Dr. Howard staff on a transition plan to move Dr. Howard to the Columbia Center for the 2015-2016 school year.

The long term plan to address the needs at Dr. Howard is to rebuild the school at a new location when funding from the 1% sales tax becomes available in 2025.

Again, thank you for taking the time to share your concerns and for your continued engagement in your school community.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Laurie Bonnett in black ink.

Laurie Bonnett
Board President

Handwritten signature of Judy Wiegand in black ink.

Dr. Judy Wiegand
Superintendent