



JOINT ASSEMBLY/JSD FACILITIES COMMITTEE AGENDA

June 28, 2023 at 12:00 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar

Zoom Link: <https://juneau.zoom.us/j/81449931245> or 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 814 4993 1245

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

C. ROLL CALL

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. May 25, 2023 - Regular Meeting

F. ITEMS FOR ACTION

G. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2. Summary of May 25, 2023, meeting

a. 2023 Goals for Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee

3. May 25th Follow up

4. Draft School Facilities Evaluation Matrix

5. Soon We Won't Have Enough Kids to Fill Our Schools. That's A Problem. NYT Opinion Piece

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(Not to exceed a total of 10 minutes, nor more than 2 minutes for any individual)

I. FUTURE MEETINGS

6. Future meeting topics: Continue filling out Matrix; review of past committee work and draft Comprehensive Facilities Plan

7. Future meeting date: August 3, 2023, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

J. ADJOURNMENT

ADA accommodations available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, TDD 586-5351, e-mail: city.clerk@juneau.org.

JOINT ASSEMBLY/JSD FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 25, 2023 at 12:00 PM



Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar

Zoom Link: <https://juneau.zoom.us/j/81449931245> or 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 814 4993 1245

- A. **CALL TO ORDER** – at 12:02 p.m. by Mayor Weldon
- B. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** – Read by Ms. Woll
- C. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present

In-person: Mayor Weldon, Ms. Sorensen, and Ms. Woll.

Zoom: Mr. Holst, Ms. Hale, Mr. Muldoon

City & Borough of Juneau Staff Members Present: Katie Koester, EPW Director; Breckan Hendricks, Administrative Officer;

School District Staff Present: Bridget Weiss, Superintendent; Cassee Olin, Director of Administrative Services,

Members not present: Ms. Gladziszewski

D. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

E. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - None

F. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

1. Summary of April 17, 2023 meeting – by Ms. Hale. Meeting topics included committee procedures, possibility of child care in schools, space-use analysis, and committee goals.

a. Revisit 2023 Goals for Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee – presented by Ms. Koester.
Goals include

- Review the Charter and come to consensus on committee charges – Done
- Forward a strategy to address declining enrollment to the Assembly and School Board and the possible repurposing of spaces
- Addressing community child care needs
- Provide a matrix to the Assembly to clarify facility CIP needs and ramifications of school closures
- Provide a prioritized plan for major maintenance needs

Ms. Woll – Do we have time to get a bond on the ballot to address school needs?

Ms. Koester – The deadline is in July.

Ms. Hale sees the possibility for a bond proposal in coming years but it is not in the plans for 2023.

Ms. Sorensen suggested rewording goals bullet “Repurposing space to address childcare needs in the community” saying other purposes should also be considered.

Ms. Weldon agreed and suggested “Repurposing space to address needs in the community, which could include childcare ”

Mr. Holst – would like to see some outreach to communicate with the public about the school funding formula

Ms. Hale felt that is addressed in the strategy and matrix bullets

Motion by Ms. Hale that the Joint School District and Assembly Facilities Committee approve the goals as amended by Director Koester.

Motion passed with no objection

G. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2. State funding loss due to school consolidation – introduced by Ms. Koester and presented by Ms. Olin.

Ms. Weldon asked for clarification of the step-down approach of the consolidation.

Ms. Olin gave a brief explanation of the process set by the legislature for funding when a district closes or adds schools.

Ms. Hale – Local contribution is now based on assessed values. Is this value set in statute?

Ms. Olin – The assessed value figures come from the State in October

3. Discuss criteria and variables that would go into matrix to evaluate school consolidation – Ms. Koester and Ms. Weiss presented the Draft Matrix Variables memo.

Quantitative:

Ms. Koester suggested adding a recommendation to staff to review Uniform Building Code with I Code.

Mr. Muldoon – Consider replacing ‘enrollment vs capacity’ terminology to ‘usage’.

Mr. Holst – Consider adding actual usage like number of classrooms available and number of classrooms utilized

Ms. Woll – Consider adding Pupil-Teacher-Ratio numbers

Ms. Hale – Keep in mind the true purpose of school is to educate children.

Qualitative:

Ms. Woll – There should be analysis demonstrating the impact of committee decisions on quality of education.

Ms. Weldon – Would like to see the paragraph simplified for clarity and understanding.

Opportunities:

Ms. Hale – Need to keep in mind the costs of demolishing versus repurposing a building.

Mr. Holst – Consider adding how much space the school district is renting.

4. Review 6-year CIP: Do we need a high-level condition assessment of facilities? – Presented by Ms. Koester

Mr. Holst recalled a study commissioned and conducted within the last 5 or 6 years and suggested they refer to and build upon that study.

Ms. Hale and Ms. Sorensen suggested breaking some of the items into smaller pieces, (i.e., \$42 million for one item is a 'huge number').

Mr. Muldoon – It is not something being considered currently but, is there anything that would need to be considered before closing a school like Marie Drake?

Ms. Olin – The school district IT network service structure and internet services are housed in the basement.

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

I. FUTURE MEETINGS

a. Future meeting topics:

- Revisit the Matrix
- Understanding Montessori Borealis, Charter School and Yaakoosge Alternative School programs

b. Future meeting date: TBD

J. ADJOURNMENT - 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by *Kathleen Jorgensen Business Assists (907)723-6134* 



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 23, 2023

TO: Chair Hale and Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee

FROM: Katie Koester, Engineering & Public Works Director

SUBJECT: 2023 Goals & Committee Work for Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee

The purpose of this memo is to remind the committee of the goals for the Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee for 2023. These goals were presented at the April 17th meeting and amended at the May 25th meeting, as reflected below.

2023 Goals & Committee Work

- Review Charter and come to consensus on the committee's charge as it relates to capital funding and facility maintenance. ✓
- Forward a strategy for addressing declining enrollment to the Assembly and School Board.
 - Determine the potential of repurposing space to address needs in the community, which could include childcare.
 - Provide Assembly and School Board a matrix to aid in understanding the capital improvement needs of facilities and ramifications of closure for schools.
- Forward a prioritized plan for facilities major maintenance to the full Assembly to ensure CBJ is making the most strategic investments.
- Establish a framework for future Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee meetings.

Recommendation: No action requested.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 23, 2023
TO: Chair Hale and Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee
FROM: Katie Koester, Engineering & Public Works Director
SUBJECT: May 25th Follow up for Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee Questions

The purpose of this memo is to answer Committee questions and follow up from the May 25 Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee meeting.

1. The Committee, at the recommendation of staff, requested an updated Fire Marshal review of capacity of Juneau School District (JSD) facilities based on the current International Building Code.
 - Staff reached out to the Fire Marshall and Building Official and concluded that though the UBC building code is outdated, the occupancy numbers would remain the same under current building code. I have also contacted the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to get clarification on where the DEED capacity number came from. These numbers are derived from a formula in Alaska Administrative Code 4AAC 31.020 and used as a way to provide equitable funding for space needs across the state.
2. How much space is the school district using for storage off site?
 - In addition to 2,750 sq. ft. of indoor space at Thane Warehouse, JSD has cold storage at the airport for food service.
3. Can the Committee get more detail on what constitutes the \$42M for Marie Drake Renovations and \$25M for Mendenhall River Renovations.
 - See attached JSD Memo
4. Does Marie Drake House Information Technology for JSD? YES
5. About 5 years ago this committee commissioned a Facilities Condition Assessment that has lots of information on what priorities are.
 - Staff was able to find a Comprehensive Facilities Plan file from 2015. There was debate about the plan at the Joint Facilities Committee meeting in 2017. The Committee last discussed it in May of 2017 and was on hiatus until December of 2019 where it was not on the agenda. I have not been able to find any evidence that this document was ever finalized or adopted. Nevertheless, it is full of good information that will be of interest to this committee. It goes into extraordinary detail on the use of the facilities and their strengths and challenges. Many of the capital projects recommended have been complete and needs updating.

Recommendation: Informational.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

10014 Crazy Horse Drive
Juneau, AK 99801-8529
(907) 523-1771

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 28, 2023

TO: Joint Assembly/JSD Facilities Members

FROM: Cassee Olin, Administrative Services Director *CSO*

RE: Marie Drake and Mendenhall River Renovations Broken Down

The following information is regarding the Mendenhall River Community School's Renovation in the estimated amount of \$23M:

- Site Improvements (Foundation, Structure,) - \$6,000,000
- Exterior Walls, Windows, Doors, Roof Systems - \$4,000,000
- Interior Partitions, Doors, Floor Finishes, Ceiling Finishes - \$4,000,000
- Plumbing, HVAC, Electrical Upgrades - \$7,000,000
- Roofing - \$2,000,000

The following information is regarding the Marie Drake's Renovation in the estimated amount of \$42M:

- Site Improvements (Foundation, Structure,) - \$3,000,000
- Exterior Walls, Windows, Doors, Roof Systems - \$10,000,000
- Interior Partitions, Doors, Floor Finishes, Ceiling Finishes - \$14,000,000
- Plumbing, HVAC, Electrical Upgrades - \$12,000,000
- Roofing - \$3,000,000



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 19, 2023
TO: Chair Hale and Joint Assembly School District Facilities Committee
FROM: Katie Koester, Engineering & Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Draft School Facilities Evaluation Matrix

The purpose of this memo is to continue the committee work on establishing matrix variables for the evaluation of school facilities. Staff has vetted the matrix variables established at the last meeting with the two high schools as an example (attached). The memo is broken up into two sections: 1) Approved Variables Incorporated into the Draft Matrix and 2) Proposed Additional Variables. The first section represents columns the committee has debated and decided changes made by the committee at the May meeting. For example, the committee requested simplifying 'operational' use by breaking it out into categories, for example. It also shows amendments the committee made, like adding the category 'Impact on Quality of Education.'

The second section contains unadopted variables that came up as recommendations as staff worked on applying the variables to actual schools. The committee needs to discuss the variables, their value to the matrix and decide whether to include them.

It is my advice that the committee walk through each one of the variables and provide staff feedback on the definitions and the content for the two schools populated in the draft matrix. A key with these definitions will accompany the matrix as it moves through the process.

Section 1 Approved Variables Incorporated into the Draft Matrix

Quantitative

This section reflects numbers and metrics that can be used in analysis. The definitions below attempt to help provide narrative and context to the figures.

Enrollment versus capacity (as a percentage).

This category reflects how many students are enrolled in the school versus the capacity according to the Uniform Building Code.

Capital Cost of Renovations: This figure was pulled directly from the JSD 6-year CIP. The 6-year CIP is based on the renewal and replacement schedule submitted to DEED annually. It is not a comprehensive condition assessment.

Question for the committee. What level of detail do you want for a condition assessment?

School size and impact on funding formula: This figure reflects the annual loss in state funding after a four-year step down. It is based on FY23 enrollment and will change annually.

Maintenance and Operations: What would the savings be in M&O by consolidating schools.

Note for committee: Staff recommends breaking this category out into instructional and non-instructional operations (see proposed additions in next section).

Qualitative

This category helps decisionmakers think about the variables that are more difficult to measure but no less important. 'Operational Use' is broken out into 3 separate metrics. Some of these uses are determined by the Pupil Teacher Ratio set by the Board of Education each year, others are determined on the number of students identified with special needs and the federal regulations associated, and others are set by which special programs are housed at individual school sites.

Operational Use, Special Services: Schools serve programmatic and educational needs and buildings are used for special education classroom use, related services (OT/PT, SLP, School Psychologist) needs, small group instruction, etc. This category reflects the classrooms reserved for those purposes.

Operational Use, Classrooms used for Instruction: This category reflects the number of classrooms the state considers instructional for budget purposes. It includes administrative space, computer labs, etc.

Question for Committee: Discuss if that definition of instructional space serves the purposes of this matrix.

Operational Use, pupil teacher ratio: The pupil teacher ratio is set by the Board of Education annually and varies by grade level.

Question for Committee: Would it be useful to understand best practices by grade level for student teacher ratio?

Cultural Impact: Often a school has a strong identity and sense of place; students, faculty, teachers and community members develop a culture rooted in the facility and what it represents. Any changes need to be considered the cultural impact.

Question for committee: Discuss and highlight any additions.

Impact on Quality of Education: Speaks to the JSD mission statement "In Juneau, we partner to provide each student with meaningful, relevant, and rigorous learning experiences in order to graduate diverse, engaged citizens ready for a changing world."

Question for committee: This category was added at the last meeting. Would be helpful to get more feedback from the committee on the definition.

Impact to the Neighborhood: School facilities are often used outside the school day and are key gathering spaces for community functions. What impact would repurposing a facility have on those uses?

Question for committee: Discuss and highlight any additions.

Section 2: Proposed Additional Variables

Predicted Enrollment

Question for committee: Does the committee want to know predicted future enrollment by grade level band? For example, what enrollment vs capacity is in 10 years for grades 8-12? Would it be useful for planning purposes to set a target enrollment that could flag for the committee when enrollment was expected to dip below a certain level? What is that percentage. (Note: some of this work may require additional analysis by Erickson group and according to JSD can only be done on the basis of grade level, not individual schools.)

Maintenance and Operations (non-instructional): This figure reflects the maintenance and operations line item in the JSD budget for this facility. If this facility is consolidated into another, some, but not all of those expenses will be transferred to the new facility.

Question for committee: I recommend replacing the current M&O variable with the more tangible non-instructional number for this level of analysis. This level of analysis would be most efficient once the universe of schools under consideration is narrowed.

Cost to Mothball: Even abandoning a building for the short term has a cost, this figure includes basic heat utilities and property insurance. It does not include deferred maintenance if a facility were to sit idle for years on end.

Question for committee: Is this useful information?

Opportunities

Alternative Facility Needs: This reflects alternative facility needs in the community this facility could serve.

Note for committee: This will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the location, size and condition of the school.

Can it be Repurposed and at what cost?: This figure reflects the cost of reconfiguring a building to meet an identified community need.

Note for committee: This number can only be refined after determining the alternative needs the facility would fill. However, staff could provide generic number per square foot for remodeling.

Recommendation:

Discuss, provide amendments or recommendations to be incorporated in a future draft matrix.

DRAFT School Facilities Evaluation Matrix

Variables

Facilities

High Schools

Thunder Mountain High School/
Year Built: 2008/ 169,000 square
feet

169,000 Square
Feet; Built in
2008; no major
renovations

UBC: 71%

\$6.7M

-925,911

TBD

2 Special
education rooms

31/32 Classrooms
used for instruction

26 to 1

Go Falcons! Auditorum
used for community
performances.

Part of larger Diamond
Park complex.
Important resource for
valley residents.

Juneau Douglas High School/
Year Built: 1956/ 216,700 square
feet/
Middle Schools

216,700 Square
Feet; Built in
1956; 2004 last
major renovation

UBC: 61%

\$17M

-\$925,911

TBD

3 Special
education rooms

36/44 Classrooms
used for instruction.
Other uses 4
computer labs, 1
training room, 1
teen health, 7 JCCS

26 to 1

Lots of alumni with
history and roots. Crimson
Bears as a sports
presencee has a rich
history of competition
and championships. The
auditorium is a resource
for entire community.

Part of educational
campus with congruent
facilities

TBD

Elementary Schools

TBD

Alternative Schools

TBD

SUBSCRIBER-ONLY NEWSLETTER

Jessica Grose

Soon We Won't Have Enough Kids to Fill Our Schools. That's a Problem.

June 14, 2023



By Jessica Grose
Opinion Writer

You're reading the Jessica Grose newsletter, for Times subscribers only. A journalist and novelist offers her perspective on the American family, culture, politics and the way we live now. [Get it in your inbox.](#)

The number of school-age children in America is declining. At least one reason is the falling birthrate after the Great Recession. And declining university enrollment based on a lower school-age population — which has been described as a “demographic cliff” — is something that some colleges are already grappling with.

K-12 public school systems around the country are facing a similar demographic reality. Declining enrollment hit cities like Chicago and states like Michigan before Covid, and the pandemic hit many other school systems — Philadelphia, New York City, Seattle and several districts in the Boston suburbs — like a wrecking ball. As The Times's Shawn Hubler reported in May, “All together America's public schools have lost at least 1.2 million students since 2020,” according to a survey from the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute.

And the discussion around the more recent downtrend may have obscured demographic changes that were developing before the pandemic: According to analysis by Thomas Dee, a professor at Stanford's Graduate School of Education, “the population of school-age children in the United States, those 5 to 17 years old, actually fell by over a quarter million” during the pandemic, suggesting that “some of the enrollment loss during the pandemic simply reflects declining birth and immigration rates rather than an active choice not to attend public schools” — after all, today's school-age children were born before 2020.

While the school district in Florida's Orange County, home to Orlando, is expanding, the trends aren't uniform throughout the state — Pinellas County in the Tampa Bay area saw an enrollment decline approaching 5 percent from 2020 to 2022. Even in states like Arizona, where there's been overall population growth in recent years, enrollment has remained below prepandemic numbers, and rural schools in the state have been struggling for several years.

In some places, wealthier suburbs, long seen as desirable public school destinations for families, aren't immune — the tony Grosse Pointe, Mich., has seen a significant enrollment decline since 2010.

If declining enrollment is a reality for many of the country's K-12 public schools, what might the future look like, and how should states and local districts prepare? Right now, there aren't a lot of great answers to those questions.

I talked to Bryan Alexander, the author of “Academia Next: The Futures of Higher Education,” who said that we'll likely see efforts in various jurisdictions to “reduce overhead,” which often looks like closing and consolidating schools — even districts. With the caveat that because of local control, different states, counties and municipalities are run differently, Alexander pointed to Vermont as a harbinger of what's to come.

In 2015, Vermont passed Act 46, which, Vermont Public radio reported, “is designed to make education more equitable and sustainable in the face of declining enrollment — by consolidating school administration.” The first phase of the law's implementation allowed districts to voluntarily consolidate and offered incentives to do so, like merger support grants and the potential of a temporary homestead property tax reduction. But it later “allowed the State Board of Education to order involuntary mergers,” The Burlington Free Press explained.

Heather Bouchey, Vermont's interim education secretary, told me that the goal was to create economies of scale for districts that were losing both their tax bases and their school-age population. When enrollment declines too drastically without consolidation, she said, “the services available to those students who are at the school, the extracurricular activities that are available,” get cut.

At the same time, said Ted Fisher, the director of communications and legislative affairs for the Vermont Agency of Education, while there are parts of the state with too many school buildings that are expensive to maintain, he knows there's tension for individual towns and villages. “It's really hard to tell a community you might be better off if you and your neighbors in another small town operated one school,” he said. “That's a really hard local conversation to have.”

That tension has played out in a variety of ways since Act 46 was passed. For example, in 2021, two towns in Addison County, Lincoln and Ripton, voted to withdraw from consolidated school districts. The story is a bit wonky and complicated, but as the Vermont Public reporters Anna Van Dine and Abagael Giles put it, it ultimately boils down to small towns wanting to keep control of their local schools, no matter how tiny, because “having a local school gives people a reason to be a *community*, and not just a town.”

Chicago, which closed a bunch of public schools a decade ago with the rationale that they were underperforming and underenrolled, is dealing with some of the same issues as Vermont, but in a very different context. WBEZ and The Chicago Sun-Times recently published a pretty devastating analysis of the impact of the closure of those schools, assessing that when officials closed them, they made “three core promises”: “Students would be better off after their schools were closed”; “Their new schools would be transformed”; and “Former school buildings would be reborn as community assets.” Instead, WBEZ and The Sun-Times's reporting found that “these promises largely have never been realized. And city and school leaders haven't tracked the outcomes.”

In essence, the majority Black neighborhoods where these schools were closed had lost more population between 2013 and 2018 than majority Black neighborhoods that did not close schools (a 9.2 percent versus 3.2 percent decline). The cost savings of closing schools turned out not to be all it was cracked up to be, and the schools that remained open and absorbed the children from the closed schools — schools that were supposed to be better supported — got a short-term resource infusion but are now “just like any other school in Chicago — at the mercy of enrollment swings and budget constraints.”

Chicago's new mayor, Brandon Johnson, is a former teacher and teacher's union organizer. He campaigned on overhauling the Chicago Public formula, which currently allocates funds on a per-student basis. He opposes closing smaller schools.

Section G, Item 5.

Instead of closing smaller schools, Nader Issa, Lauren FitzPatrick and Sarah Karp report in The Sun-Times, experts recommend allowing some schools to remain small but create their curriculums "with more intentional educational models" and more input from communities. "That might mean a projects-based curriculum with a teaching staff built for that purpose. Or sharing art, music and sports teams among schools in close proximity."

The rub, of course, is that small schools can be expensive to maintain. Individual schools need their own administrations and facilities, and the fewer students a school serves, the higher that cost is per pupil. Additionally, some areas of the country and some academic disciplines are facing teacher shortages. Beyond that, schools across the country are about to face another kind of cliff: Pandemic relief funding is winding down, leaving many districts with a budget crunch.

I asked Dee, the Stanford economist, if there were any states, cities or districts that had dealt with declining enrollment in an inspiring way. He said that "no one comes to mind as an exemplar," which is why it can be "a bit of a downer" to work in education policy. As he pointed out, in K-12 education we're still dealing with the fallout of the pandemic — we're still seeing some children struggle with mental health, chronic absenteeism is up and some children are developmentally behind. Declining school enrollment, then, is potentially another "layer on top of the already substantial educational harm" America's children are experiencing, he said.

Unsurprisingly, kids who are already vulnerable, who have the least amount of choice, will have the most to lose as we face a future with fewer children enrolled in public schools. I worry that with graying populations, even in states that are supportive of public education, voters will turn against major funding initiatives. Vermont does offer some hope on this front: Earlier this year, "the largest year-over-year increase in five years" to education spending was approved.

While there's a lot of parental and political energy burned on culture war issues like book banning, I wish more legislators were focused on big, blue-sky solutions for the enrollment crunch. Or at least preparing their constituents for the hard choices that will have to be made in the near future. Based on long-term birthrate projections, it's coming nearly everywhere, even places where schools currently seem bustling and full of life.

Tiny Victories

Parenting can be a grind. Let's celebrate the tiny victories.

My son is skillful at delaying bedtime. He was at it again recently when I placed his Pocoyo doll on his bed with a blanket and told him that Pocoyo needed a pal to fall asleep with. My son tucked Pocoyo in, cuddled up next to it and then told me good night.

— Diana-Marie Laventure, Jersey City, N.J.

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