

# Board of Education of the City of St. Louis

March 8, 2022



# The Planning Team: Led by Board Members and Administrators



## Planning Team:

- Board Member Ms. Antionette “Toni” Cousins, Committee Chair
- Alisha Sonnier, Vice Chair
- Dr. Nicole Williams, Chief of Staff
- Dr. Isaac Pollack, Associate Superintendent
- Mr. Mike Jones, Committee Project Manager
- Ms. Dorothy Rohde-Collins, Committee Project Manager
- Ms. Lori Willis, Deputy Superintendent/Institutional Advancement
- Emily Zevely, SLPS Foundation Development Director
- Matt Davis, Committee Resource/Chair, Legislative Committee

# Milestones:

- **February 2021**

- Board of Education – Citywide Plan for Education Resolution calling for a moratorium or “pause” on opening new schools

- **October 2021**

- St. Louis Board of Alderman Resolution in support of the Board Resolution
- Kick-off Committee Meeting

- **January 2022**

- Missouri School Board Association (MSBA), in an unprecedented move, unanimously approved a resolution in support of the Citywide Plan.
- Meetings with Stakeholders
- Identified Work Groups

- **February 2022**

- Website Created

- **March 2022**

- Report to the Board of Education

# Background:

- Since 2019, the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis has grappled with the same tough question that presently challenges many cities across the United States:  
  
***“How do you best maximize the 21st-Century education you are charged with providing for the children of your city?”***
- In this presentation, we will speak to ways in which we are attempting to answer that question



# Background Continued:

- Facing a unique set of challenges, the District embarked on an 18-month **Community Visioning** process that explored school consolidation. The process, led by Emerging Wisdom, a local consulting firm included:
  - Individual meetings
  - Small group meetings with stakeholder groups spanning the community in both public and private sectors.
  - Public Forums where more than 1000 community members participated at six different school sites
    - Topics touched on included the need for more collaboration between the District and the City

# Background Continued:

- In January 2021, the Board made the difficult decision to consolidate schools and resources to better serve every child attending SLPS. This resulted in the closure of seven schools and the redesign of another.
- The consolidation discussion and decision also yielded three other important Board recommendations including a:
  - Moratorium or “pause” on the opening of new schools in St. Louis
  - Development of a Citywide Plan for Education
  - TIF and Tax Abatement assessment
- An opportunity had presented itself to realign educational services in St. Louis. **The call for a Citywide Plan for Education was launched.**

# Why is There a Need for a CWP?






- St. Louis' present educational infrastructure is outdated and in need of redesign.
- The resulting DISCONNECT will continue to impede success until addressed. Here is what we mean:
  - St. Louis, once among the 10 largest U.S. cities, is now ranked 65<sup>th</sup>
  - Population dropped from 700,000 to 300,000 in a short time frame.
  - Over the past 20 years, St. Louis' school-age population dropped from 90,000 to 54,000 (40%).
  - Despite these facts, schools continue to open – and close – in the City.
- The timing is right to have this discussion and **The Board of Education is the only entity that has the power to lead it.**

# What the Citywide Plan IS:

- Concept for REIMAGINING education for all school-age children, a concept that was introduced by the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis through a resolution in February 2021.
- Chance to BRING TO LIGHT the actions being actively considered by decision makers, now and in the future.
- Opportunity to OPEN UP intellectually honest dialogue on how best to provide St. Louis children (and families) the education they deserve, no matter what school they attend.
- **Collaborative 18-month process** engaging all who share our vision for an intentional plan for education TODAY



# What the Citywide Plan is **NOT**:

-  **NOT** a process created exclusively by the Board of Education, but a process for meaningful conversation involving all stakeholders in answering the question, “**How will we to move our educational system into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?**”
-  **NOT** a restriction on existing or new district or charter school collaboration.
-  **NOT** intended to produce a system of schools with the same identities.
-  **NOT** a restriction of school choice, but an effort to create a fair and equitable system for all.
-  **NOT** designed by public schools to take funding from other city schools. By working together, the plan will ensure that **ALL** schools have the resources needed to provide the quality education and services that the children of St. Louis deserve.

# Initial Goals:

- Initiate a productive conversation about education in St. Louis and engage the community in developing a Citywide Plan for Education.
- Shift the mindset of our community from being consumers of education as a commodity, concerned only with their particular choice-to being citizens for a better educational system overall.
- Create a better version of public education for all children. Schools, public and private, are currently achieving varied measures of success.
- Increase the number of students studying in St. Louis City public schools.
- Enhance economic development, which draws more families.
- Stand together and committed to creating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools for all.

# Stakeholder Meetings – To-Date

- **Emily Koeltzow**, Parent Action Council
- **Gloria Nolan**, SLPS Parent Liaison,
- **Avis Funches**, Parent Advocate, Emily Koeltzow, Parent Action Council
- **Lance Knuckles**, St. Louis City Director of Strategic Growth and Development
- **Don Roe**, Exec. Director, Planning and Urban Design Agency
- **Eric Scroggins, Jesse Dixon, Tanesia Simmons** of Opportunity Trust
- **Keith Williamson and Bishop Mike Jones**, Opportunity Trust Board members
- **Dr. Candice Carter-Oliver**, CEO of Confluence Academies and co-lead of the St. Louis Schools Collaborative
- **Cardinal Ritter Representatives**
- **Dr. Kelvin Adams**, SLPS Superintendent and Co-Lead of the St. Louis Schools Collaborative
- **Ray Cummings**, President, Union Local 420
- **Vincent C. Schoemehl**, Community Leader
- **Bridget Jones**, President & CEO of St. Louis Public Schools Foundation
- **Wilford Pickney, Jr.**, St. Louis City Director of Children, Youth & Families,
- Alderpersons **Marlene Davis, Carol Howard, Lewis Reed** and **Jeffery Boyd**

# Upcoming:

- **Additional Scheduled Meetings (partial) Listing:**

- Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and other student representatives
- Charter System Leaders

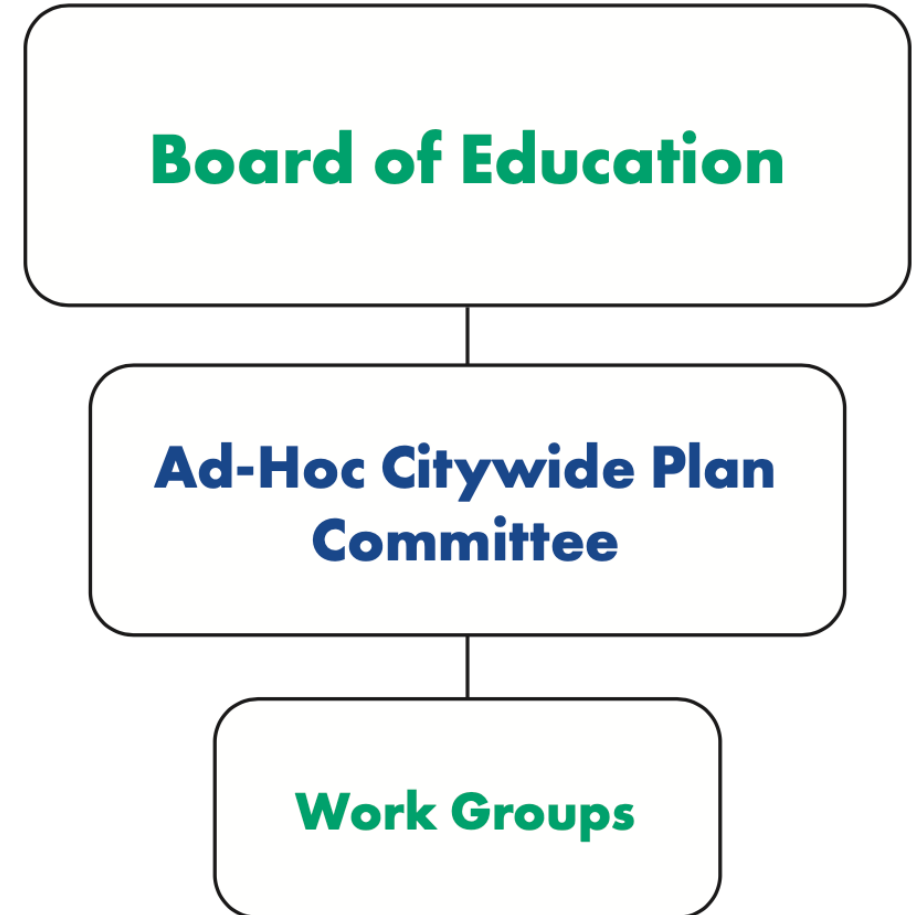
- **Presentations:**

- **March** – Missouri School Board Association
- **April** –
  - State Board, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education State
  - Charter School Commission

# Citywide Plan Structure:

- **Process Flow**

- Reviewing the Committee
- Creating the Five Work Groups





# Citywide Plan Workgroups

- **School Experience**

- Explore what is happening in St. Louis schools and identify needed improvements

- **Health, Wellness & Safety**

- Identify the in- and out-of-school factors that promote or impede physical, mental and emotional health of students

- **Education Workforce**

- Study the City's education labor market to identify needed improvements in order to create powerful teacher/leader pipelines

- **Logistics**

- Examine the current physical infrastructure of the City's public education system in order to build an efficient system that serves current needs and promotes 21<sup>st</sup>. Century schools.

- **Community**

- Understand the relationship between the City and its public education system and identify policy solutions to support and strengthen both.



# Why Plan? Why Now?:

- **District Commitment** – We are all very excited to see where this process can take us and what it could mean to children of St. Louis.
- **Groundbreaking Concept** – What we are proposing is not something that has been done before.
- **Trading on the Impossible** – The work will be hard – some would say impossible – but, if the pandemic taught us anything, it's that nothing is impossible in service to our kids.
- **Timing is Right** – The pandemic also saw the District working closely with all schools in the region.
- **Important to St. Louis' Success** – Our City's success is directly tied to the success of its schools.
- **Our Children Deserve** – **ALL** St. Louis' children deserve the best education experience we can offer.

# Next Steps:

- The Committee's next meeting is Wed. April 27<sup>th</sup>:
- Continue meetings with stakeholders and adhoc members to solicit input and feedback.
- Establish preliminary workgroup leads and members.
- Continue adding members to each of the five work groups including subject matter experts.
- Schedule at least one meeting for each workgroup.

# Building Public Awareness:

- **WEBSITE -**  
[slps.org/citywide](https://slps.org/citywide)
- Press Releases
- Presentation to the MSBA  
Conference in March
- Plans to Present to the  
State Commission
- **“WE HEAR YOU”**  
feedback/comments



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The Board of Education of the City of Saint Louis has created an ad-hoc committee to explore the development of a Citywide Plan for education in St. Louis

**BREAKING NEWS: MSBA Unanimously Approves Resolution in Support of a Citywide Plan for Education in St. Louis**



Main Office

OFFICE 100

FIRE

Citywide Plan for Education website screenshot showing a breaking news banner and a video player.