



December 3, 2024

Dear Columbus City Schools Community,

Welcome back! I hope Wellness Week offered you a chance to rest, reflect, and spend meaningful time with loved ones. As we approach the end of 2024, the Board remains deeply committed to enhancing student outcomes and is eager to share more details and outline the next steps in our collective journey forward.

As shared in previous communications, I want to provide a deeper insight into the Board's recent efforts. Between October 28 and 31, we had the privilege of touring Broadleigh Elementary, Buckeye Middle, Columbus Alternative High School, Columbus City Preparatory School for Boys, Fairwood Elementary, Lindbergh Elementary, Moler Elementary, North Linden Elementary, and West Broad Elementary School, experiencing firsthand the vibrant communities that make our district unique. During these visits, we listened to your stories, observed the distinct strengths of each school, and gathered valuable insights to further inform the realignment process.

Here are some key themes and takeaways board members observed during the visits:

### **1. Dedicated Staff and Strong Leadership**

Across all nine schools, staff and leadership consistently stand out as key strengths. Teachers and administrators exhibit unwavering dedication to their students, creating positive and supportive school cultures despite various challenges. Many schools benefit from strong, collaborative leaders who work closely with staff and prioritize student well-being. However, concerns about staff shortages remain a common theme.

### **2. Facility and Infrastructure Challenges**

A recurring challenge across the schools is the deteriorating condition of facilities, which hinders their ability to meet modern educational standards. Common issues include non-compliance with ADA requirements, overcrowded classrooms, reliance on modular units, leaks, and outdated or damaged infrastructure. Although some schools have benefited from minor improvements, the overall condition of these buildings creates substantial obstacles to student learning and accessibility.

### **3. Community Engagement and Partnerships**

The schools are integral to their communities, often serving as vital neighborhood hubs. Community partnerships, including collaborations with local organizations, businesses, and initiatives like coat drives and health clinics, play a significant role in supporting students. However, the possibility of closures or consolidations raises concerns about disrupting these connections and affecting the strong sense of community.

#### 4. Diverse and Inclusive Student Needs

Many of the nine schools serve highly diverse student populations, including a substantial number of English language learners and students receiving special education services. These schools demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusivity through robust programming in these areas and the integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) supports to address the needs of all students.

On **December 17**, the Board will take an important step by bringing the recommendations to the table for further deliberation and consideration, including a vote on whether to proceed with the closures and consolidations. Each school community will be evaluated individually in this process.

I want to emphasize that these nine votes, regardless of the final outcome, are not the conclusion of this journey. Instead, they represent a critical step toward aligning our school communities to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for our students.

We recognize that these discussions and decisions are difficult. Please be assured that the Board is committed to handling this work with sensitivity, care, and profound respect for the students, families, and educators who make our district extraordinary. Every step of this process is guided by our steadfast belief that our students deserve safe, supportive, and thriving school environments where they can reach their full potential.

I encourage you to review the comprehensive summary of the school tours available on the [Realigning School Communities](#) page of the district website. This summary provides a detailed overview of each school visit, including key observations and insights gathered by the Board.

[Broadleigh Elementary School](#)

[Buckeye Middle School](#)

[Columbus Alternative High School](#)

[Columbus City Preparatory School for Boys](#)

[Fairwood Elementary School](#)

[Lindbergh Elementary School](#)

[Moler Elementary School](#)

[North Linden Elementary School](#)

[West Broad Elementary School](#)

Thank you for your ongoing partnership, patience, and trust as we navigate these changes and opportunities together. Let us move forward with compassion and a shared commitment to building a brighter future for current and future generations of Columbus City Schools students.

With gratitude,



**Christina Vera**  
President Columbus Board of Education