

Buildings and Grounds Committee Frequently Asked Questions
 Follow-up from October 4, 2023 Public Meeting
 Originally Compiled 10/12/23 and Posted 10/20/23

1. Why is the District going through this process...and what exactly is the process?
 This conversation was started many years ago, prior to COVID, when the District continued to see declining student enrollment. What was once a 3,600+ student District, now rests at 2,433 students in 2023. With 322 8th grade graduates this year and 216 kindergarten students currently enrolled, the District total enrollment will again decline next year. For a specific school example, there is a predicted 22 student decrease at Frankfort Square Elementary School based on 4th grade students moving to Walker and Kindergarten students moving to FSS, bringing the total FSS school enrollment to 146 students. This brings forth the topic of equity, are all students in SHSD161 being provided the same and equal education? The process is to examine all available relevant data and determine if changes to the District are needed.

2. What are the underlying concerns of the BOE and the administration to provide the information that was shared at this meeting?
 The District has historically seen a drop in achievement scores as students attend 5th grade, all back together again at Walker Intermediate School. This again brings forth questions as to whether each and every SHSD161 student is being exposed to the same experiences and education. Looking deeper into the topic, the cost per pupil expenditure at each school varies as follows:

School	Cost Per Pupil Expenditure
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	PPE= \$19,437
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	PPE= \$16,529
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	PPE= \$18,470
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	PPE= \$14,597
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	PPE= \$16,008
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	PPE= \$15,670

The 2023 Per Pupil Expenditures can be found at:
<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/district.aspx?districtid=56099161002&source=environment&source2=sber>

3. What is the current enrollment in each school? What is the predicted enrollment next year as the kindergarten students move to the four District elementary schools?

School	Current Enrollment
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	Current = 187 2024-25 = 185
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	Current = 631 2024-25 = 1-4=312*
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	Current = 168 2024-25 = 147
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	Current = 301 2024-25 = 294
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	Current = 527 2024-25 = 541
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	Current = 619 2024-25 = 563

* DJR's total enrollment will not be able to be predicted until PreK and K registration in the Spring

4. How many Kindergarten students are projected to enroll in SHSD161 in the next 3-5 years?

Based on previous year's enrollment numbers, we would predict between 210-240 kindergarten students each year. This will be verified when enrollment begins in the Spring of 2024. Note: there were 219 Kindergarten students in 2022-2023 and 216 in 2023-2024.

Once the graduating 8th grade class and the Kindergarten class are at an approximate comparable student enrollment number, the overall decline for the District will come to an end. We predict the total student enrollment to be between 2,000 and 2,250 students in the future.

5. What are the options to address next steps? In consideration, is the District looking at closing schools, utilizing grade centers, others? Is it possible to compile scenarios for consolidation for both grade centers and neighborhood schools, along with a variety of options for grouping students?

In considering all available data, information, and thoughts; is the District providing an equitable education to each individual student? If the answer to this question is no, then the next steps would be to identify how to achieve a greater degree of equity. All options are on the table, including neighborhood schools, grade centers, redistricting attendance boundaries, closing schools, redistributing grade levels, and more.

6. Can visuals be provided, for example if 6-8 were at SHJH, 3-5 at Walker, and preK-2 at DJR? Can this be color coded for ease in viewing? What would the benefits be to a model like this? Or, 6-8 at SHJH, 4-5 at Walker, 2-3 at Trail, and preK-1 at DJR? Or, 6-8 at SHJH, 4-5 at Walker, 1-3 at Trail and DJR to keep neighborhood schools, but all preK-K at DJR? Or 7-8 at SHJH, 5-6 at Walker, 3-4 at Trail, and preK-2 at DJR? Or, 7-8 at SHJH, 5-6 at Walker, 1-4 at Trail, and preK, K, and 1-4 at DJR? Please include any other viable scenarios.

These are interesting scenarios to think through, but it may be too early to determine the exact model that might be pursued. Determining education, student, staff, and community priorities of potential changes would be the next step. This will highlight some scenarios as better options and other options will subsequently be dismissed.

7. Does moving to grade centers help keep the District from having to redistrict school boundaries now, or possibly in the future?

We believe the answer to this is yes. Enrollment declines and spikes can be hard to predetermine, but grade centers would help the District absorb student enrollment changes as they come and maintain equal average class sizes within a specific grade.

8. Can there be side by side metrics showing our current state and future state for each scenario?

Yes, once the choices are narrowed, a detailed analysis of the top choice(s) should be identified and shared. The visual is a great suggestion for future discussions.

9. With each scenario, can the buildings be color-coded to determine how classrooms would be designated, how much space would be available in each building depending on which students attend school there, what predicted class size might be, and potential savings?

Again, depending on the specific options explored in the future, a visual showing classrooms being utilized in each building and also remaining capacity available in those same buildings (and across the District) would be beneficial. As for predicted class size, this is determined by the number of students in that particular grade divided by the number of teachers assigned to that same grade level. In the District's current model, this allows for variance across the grade levels (1-4) due to neighborhood school locations. The District is mindful of this and works hard to keep class size averages comparable.

10. Can the District share benefits of implementing grade centers including published, peer-reviewed studies, and real-life case studies (with enough years data to support the research?)

From the article, “Advantages and Disadvantages of Various Grade-Level Organizations,” the grade-level organization of the American school is characterized not by a single uniform pattern but by a variety of grade configurations. Each of these grade configurations has its advantages and disadvantages which have varying weights and influence in local districts because of local circumstances.

For schools districts seeking a definitive answer on “the best” grade-level organization, no definitive answer exists. What exists are various lists of the pros and cons of each grade-level pattern which must be examined and evaluated considering each local district’s needs.

Sourced at:

https://www.educationalimpact.com/resources/msl/pdf/MidSchLead_2A_advantages.pdf

11. With grade center schools, how might this impact community support (parent volunteers, spirit wear, etc.?)

Moving to a grade center model would be a change for our 1-4 students and their families. This option would allow all parents in the District of same aged children to know one another, work together throughout their child’s school experience, and support their schools together.

In total, under the District’s current configuration, children attend 4 schools (preK/K=DJR, 1-4= elementary school, 5-6= Walker, and 7-8= SHJH). Depending on the options explored, the number of schools attended (4) may stay the same.

12. Would it be possible to open a full-day preschool in any of the scenarios?

This is a great question, but not a part of the current process/discussion. With moving from extended day to full day Kindergarten this year, the District definitely sees the advantages of investing in our youngest learners. More to follow on this topic in the future.

13. Can the District compile information about neighboring districts as a comparison and for discussion? (for example, what are their average class sizes, how many do grade centers, how many do neighborhood schools, focusing on the LW feeder districts?)

Specifically for this question, we looked at 1-4 buildings, as preK, Kindergarten, and 5-8 are currently in grade centers already here in SHSD161. As a reminder, class size and class size averages are within the control of the District, so we do not anticipate any significant changes to average class size regardless of what option is pursued. What we do prioritize is a greater degree of equity in average class size. For a comparison, please see below for information regarding SHSD161 and the other LW feeder districts:

Summit Hill 161			
Grade Centers PreK, K, 5-6, and 7-8. Neighborhood Schools 1-4			
Class Averages	K = 21.6		
	1 = 17 / 21.5 / 16.75 / 19.75		
	2 = 21 / 19 / 20.75 / 18.75		
	3 = 26.5 / 16.5 / 17.5 / 20		
	4 = 22.5 / 18.33 / 22.5 / 19.5		
# of students per grade	K = 216 1 = 241 2 = 235	3 = 241 4 = 272 5 = 268	6 = 258 7 = 304 8 = 322

Frankfort 157C			
Grade Centers PreK-2, 3-5, and 6-8.			
Class Averages	K = 20		
	1 = 21		
	2 = 24		
	3 = 25		
	4 = 24		
	5 = 25		
# of students per grade	K = 242 1 = 249 2 = 283	3 = 298 4 = 286 5 = 299	

Manhattan 114			
Grade Centers (in 2024-2025 due to new school being built)- PreK-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8			
Class Averages	K = 22		
	1 = 21		
	2 = 24		
	3 = 25		
	4 = 26		
	5 = 23		
# of students per grade	PreK-1 = 600 2-3 = 430-440 4-5 = 420		

Mokena 159			
Grade Centers, preK-3, 4-5, 6-8			
Class Averages	K = 23		
	1 = 24.1		
	2 = 23.4		
	3 = 24.6		
	4 = 23.4		
	5 = 24.1		
# of students per grade	K = 164 1 = 167 2 = 166	3 = 176 4 = 165 5 = 165	

New Lenox 122			
Grade Centers			
Class Average Targets	K (half day) = 21		
	1 = 23		
	2 = 24		
	3 = 24		
	4 = 25		
	5 = 26		
# of students per grade	K = 386 1 = 486 2 = 528	3 = 513 4 = 573 5 = 570	

14. Are there any other school districts in the state who have gone through something similar to examine their process?

Yes. However, local context plays a large part in determining the process undertaken. There needs to be a compelling reason why a district entertains moving from one model to another.

15. How can the District ensure parents are looped in throughout the process? School blasts, public meetings?

Absolutely! The District understands that sharing the same information with all interested parties is extremely important. This offers the analysis of information from varying perspectives and will help sharpen any potential next steps. Currently, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting video and audio, the slide deck, and the summary page are all posted on the District website. All meetings to discuss this topic will be held in open public meetings.

16. Could a timeline for implementation of any planned changes within the District be shared?

The next step is to determine priorities moving forward in the pursuit of an equitable education for every student. Once these discussions occur, and possible options are identified, thoughtful implementation plans will be developed and widely shared.

17. Can the District predict what the impact on academics might be?
The answer to this question depends on what decisions are made. In the event grade centers are explored and pursued, the District would expect a higher degree of consistency across each grade level as well as a more equitable education provided for each student, regardless of where they live in the District.
18. Can the District protect great teachers and administrators? What might happen to teachers and administrators in each scenario?
Yes. Although future decisions will bring forth change, it is a high priority to ensure stability with our employees and to protect their best interests. Until a specific scenario is chosen, it is difficult to predict where each individual employee may be housed.
19. Can the District protect current class sizes and teacher/admin to student ratios? What are the current class averages by school and by grade? How many teachers would there be for each grade?
In grades 1-4, there is variability from school to school, grade to grade, and year to year in average class size. However, class averages are within the District's ability to control. The number of students in each grade help determine how many sections are needed, and thus average class sizes. For specific information, see the chart listed earlier in the FAQ.
20. Is there research that supports kids learn better in smaller classes?
Smaller class sizes are generally associated with certain advantages, but there are a number of other factors that also contribute to a quality education including teacher quality, instructional methods, resources, and more. Specifically, small class size advantages can include more individualized attention, stronger relationships between teachers and their students, increased student engagement, more timely feedback, reduced distractions, and additional opportunities for peer interaction. See below for additional information:
- a. "Class Size Reduction: A Proven Reform Strategy," NEA Policy Brief, 2015
 - b. "The Effects of Class Size on Student Achievement: New Evidence from Population Variation" <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2586924>
 - c. For additional resources, Florida State University's Regional Educational Laboratory Program collected additional resources for review at https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/aar/u_03-2019.asp
21. How is the District considering the impact on our children, from a mental standpoint, without interfering with their education?
In SHSD161, children always come first! The District's responsibility is to look out for all children, ensuring that every single student who attends a 161 school is provided an outstanding and equitable education. Careful care and consideration will take place in order to support students, families, and employees if changes are determined to be in the best interest of students.

22. Can the District address the positive possibilities, like how this might help the EL population and other specific student groups?

This begins to unravel some of the inequities facing our students. For example, at Indian Trail, we have great EL services, but no Arabic speaking support, whereas at DJR, we have the same great EL services AND bilingual Arabic support. Another example would be in our MTSS model, we serve students below the 25th percentile, layering in support to ensure student academic success. At Frankfort Square, the District can meet the needs of students below the 25th percentile AND include additional students above the 25th percentile if they need support due to staff availability. Meanwhile, at DJR, it is a struggle to see all the many students who fall below the 25th percentile, so some students are not receiving the same support as their peers in other buildings. This becomes more obvious when students are reunited in 5th grade at Hilda Walker.

23. Are students inadvertently becoming test subjects for multiple changes, including COVID-related adaptations, new curriculum, and shifting standards...and now District building changes? What is the long-term outlook for their academic development?

In SHSD161, the District cares deeply for both students and their families. The District has an established curriculum review cycle that draws together a committee of teachers and administrators to review the very best resources available in each curricular area, hear presentations from the curriculum companies, pilot materials, and then determine which materials best fit our students. These resources are standards-aligned. The District also believes in educating the whole child so that students are academically, athletically, extra-curricularly, and socially ready for high school and beyond.

24. Will each school have a TIP program or will TIP and other special education classes stay at one location, like they are at DJR now?

Special education offerings and programs are highly dependent upon student need. With 18% of the SHSD161 student population with a specialized plan, we will continue to offer a full array of programming to meet student needs.

25. Can the District look at the impact on students, teachers, and parents?

Yes. Please see above answers. Also, some of this may be addressed as implementation plans are made through clear and timely communication. Additionally, there will also be matters that arise during and after implementation that will need to be addressed as well.

26. Can the District create a forum where teachers, parents, etc. can voice their thoughts?

Establish a contingency of teachers to offer insights, pros, and cons? Can the District offer parents/community members an opportunity to offer feedback if they do not feel comfortable doing it in an open meeting?

It is very important to the District to ensure everyone has an opportunity to ask questions and voice their thoughts. Thus far, the District has offered a public open Building and Grounds Committee Meeting, discussed this topic at an open Board of Education Meeting, and offered the opportunity to email questions to the Superintendent. Additional opportunities will also be available as the process progresses.

27. What are foreseeable transportation issues that could arise? How long will the bus rides be? Will the District need more buses? Will there be bus cost increases in the scenarios being explored?

Decisions about future plans need to be made before determining future transportation needs. In the event grade centers are explored, buses will need to travel throughout the entire District in order to transport students to grades 1-4. This would be similar to how the preK, K, 5-6, and 7-8 grade students are transported now. Time on buses will be carefully analyzed, and if needed, routes will be split. The District predicts additional buses may be needed, but again, this will be determined in the future.

28. What are the District’s IAR scores over the past 7 years?

Please see the information below (updated 10/31/23):

**Summit Hill School District 161
Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR)
Comparison of Performance Levels 4 and 5
Met or Exceeded Expectations
Spring 2023**

	ELA									Math								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Grade 3	49%	57%	52%	47%	46%	N/A	44%	48%	52%	48%	60%	56%	55%	55%	N/A	49%	58%	63%
Grade 4	45%	51%	55%	52%	56%	N/A	41%	43%	57%	35%	38%	42%	41%	43%	N/A	34%	40%	47%
Grade 5	39%	34%	41%	36%	39%	N/A	28%	45%	49%	31%	36%	36%	37%	41%	N/A	25%	33%	36%
Grade 6	42%	36%	38%	41%	44%	N/A	49%	35%	56%	28%	26%	24%	26%	25%	N/A	38%	20%	33%
Grade 7	43%	45%	42%	51%	52%	N/A	46%	48%	52%	33%	30%	32%	32%	37%	N/A	41%	42%	37%
Grade 8	49%	42%	38%	43%	48%	N/A	41%	47%	60%	37%	35%	28%	31%	33%	N/A	41%	42%	55%
Composite	45%	44%	44%	45%	48%	N/A	42%	44%	54%	36%	37%	36%	36%	39%	N/A	38%	39%	45%
State	38%	36%	37%	37%	38%	N/A	30%	30%	35%	28%	31%	32%	32%	32%	N/A	25%	26%	27%

29. If test scores decrease because of changes, how might this impact the District and our reputation with Lincoln-Way?

SHSD161 test scores had been consistent for many years, as evidenced in the chart provided above. However, the District has seen solid improvements in achievement score composite data over the past two years. SHSD161’s reputation with LW, and all LW feeder districts, is solid and the District frequently articulates with each surrounding district several times throughout each year. In the end, all feeder students feed into one of the LW schools, so all feeder districts need to be on the same page, providing students with the best education possible given our local contexts.

30. What is the appraised value of IT, AH, and FS schools? What is the value of each of these schools if the District were to sell them?

This information is contained within the 2021 Facility Assessment Update from TRIA Architects. The market value of each building would have to be assessed if it is determined to sell. An appraisal of all buildings was previously scheduled to be conducted in June 2024; this may need to be moved up as a result of future District decisions. See the information below on all SHSD161 schools.

School	Estimated building replacement cost/asset value
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	\$14,952,000 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	\$45,957,800 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	\$14,245,000 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	\$20,123,600 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	\$35,161,700 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	\$56,228,200 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Mary Drew Administrative Center	\$6,293,000 (based upon a cost of \$350 per s.f. and does not include land value)
Mary Drew Elementary School	Not included in the report

31. What will the District do if buildings are vacated? Can the District compile ideas of what to do with District buildings?

We do not intend to leave a building vacant that remains under District ownership. In the event a building was sold, the District would use these funds towards the educational needs of students and to ending the cycle of deferring maintenance needs. If an Intergovernmental Agreement were reached, the District would work with community partners to ensure facility usage.

32. What are the ongoing costs to maintain a closed building annually? Is there a solid plan for buildings that may close?

We do not intend to close and maintain a building. The District would entertain selling a building(s) (with an appraisal process through our District Architect and District Attorney) or enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) where maintenance costs would be the responsibility of the other agency.

33. What is the process for selling a building?

In the event a District building is closed, we would work carefully with the District Architect and District Attorney to ensure the correct processes and laws are followed.

34. What are the costs associated with re-opening Mary Drew?
This was not a part of the 2021 Facility Assessment Update by TRIA Architects. In the event this becomes a part of future decisions, TRIA would be asked to come on site and provide an assessment of the Mary Drew Elementary School side of the facility on behalf of the District.
35. How much would be saved with the closing of Arbury? Frankfort Square? Indian Trail?
This would depend greatly on what was done with each building, whether they be sold or if an Intergovernmental Agreement was reached with another public body. Please see #39 for maintenance costs associated with each District building.
36. How is the per pupil expenditure calculated? What is it for each individual schools?
See #2 above for the 2022-2023 per pupil expenditure per building. Per pupil expenditure is an indicator of the amount of local, state, and federal spending on education. Per pupil expenditure is calculated by taking the total expenditures in a school year, usually excluding capital projects (like a cooling tower, etc.) and dividing it by the total number of students enrolled. Site-based reporting allows individual schools per pupil expenditure to be calculated. This information is published on the school report card.
- This can be found at:
<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/district.aspx?districtid=56099161002&source=environment&source2=sber>. Inherently, smaller buildings, smaller class sizes, or specialized programs drive this number upward.
37. How is maximum capacity (occupancy) calculated?
Maximum occupancy is directly related to the size and square footage of a school building. In order to determine student occupancy, student spaces and their uses need to be determined. This is calculated by the District Architect, using the National Life Safety Code, and then approved by the State Fire Marshall (sometimes deferred to the local fire department).
38. What does outplacement mean when referring to students?
Outplacement refers to students with special needs whose needs are greater than the District can meet. SHSD161 is a part of the Lincoln-Way Area Special Education Cooperative 843.

39. Why weren't the costs of the Anticipated Large Capital Improvements Needed (1-5) years added to the spreadsheet?

The 2021 Facility Assessment Update, completed by TRIA Architects, breaks down future costs per building into three time periods. Please see below for an accounting of each building's Operations and Maintenance needs:

School	Estimated building replacement cost/asset value
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	2022-2024 = \$ 255,662.50 2024-2026 = \$ 881,118.00 2026-2030 = \$ 440,737.50
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	2022-2024 = \$ 525,262.50 2024-2026 = \$ 667,170.00 2026-2030 = \$ 362,617.50
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	2022-2024 = \$ 273,031.50 2024-2026 = \$1,090,246.50 2026-2030 = \$1,298,220.00
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	2022-2024 = \$ 157,237.50 2024-2026 = \$ 700,717.50 2026-2030 = \$2,803,185.00
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	2022-2024 = \$ 157,237.50 2024-2026 = \$ 700,717.50 2026-2030 = \$2,803,185.00
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	2022-2024 = \$ 393,960.00 2024-2026 = \$1,071,903.00 2026-2030 = \$ 377,842.50
Summit Hill Administration Center	2022-2024 = \$ 108,727.50 2024-2026 = \$ 854,122.50 2026-2030 = \$ 23,520.00
Mary Drew Elementary School	Not included in the report

40. Can the District share how property taxes are determined?

Property taxes are determined through the levy process. Typically, the District balloon levies at 4.99% above prior year, for both tax dollars from the community and to capture any new growth that exists in our community. The extension, the amount actually received, will be less than what is levied. In an anomaly year, last year the District levied 7.06% over the previous year (to account for the increase in CPI) and received 6.0%.

41. Can the District explain ESSER funds, what they were used for, and if they are still available?

In January 2023, the District presented all ESSER spending at its public Board Workshop. This presentation has been updated and is posted on the District website at www.summithill.org, under District Info, District Dashboard. This offers a complete breakdown of each year of ESSER funds and what the dollars were spent on throughout the COVID years. ESSER funds have been exhausted, with the exception of Digital Equity dollars.

42. Can information on the 23-24 and 24-25 budgets be shared, with a breakdown of how additional funds could be allocated within our District?

See #43 and #46 below.

43. Can the District provide a 10-year projection of costs if everything is left as is, versus making changes for each possible scenario?

The District has developed a 5-year projection, assuming a 5% increase in costs (tied to the Collective Bargaining Agreement) for the next 3 years and then using a placeholder of 3% for the following two years in increasing costs...and a 3% increase in CPI, which determines new revenue into the District. In order to have an excess of revenues over expenditures throughout the 5-year projection, dollars from capital projects would be put on hold, along with an approximate average of \$320,000 per year in cuts to ensure budget stability. This work will be continually updated and will be presented in detail at a future meeting.

44. If cost of operations is a determining factor, can a referendum option be explored to keep all schools open?

Cost of operations is one factor, and certainly one that brings a financial benefit to the District as it reallocates revenues. A referendum would raise taxes for all, while benefitting the smallest schools in the District disproportionately. The District looks back to the priority of providing an equitable education for every student we serve and would therefore avoid asking taxpayers for additional resources under these circumstances.

45. Can the District consider better or different “before and after school care” in light of transportation changes and the impact on working families?

First, the District needs to identify priorities and possible options to ensure priorities are met on behalf of students. Once this is determined, and decisions can be made regarding possible changes, transportation changes would need to be addressed with Safeway, our new transportation company. In the event a hardship on working parents is identified, the District would be open to examining before and after school options on behalf of parents.

46. How will the money saved be reallocated for all students?

Once a decision is made on future plans, the financial benefits can be quantified. The District intends to invest in both our students’ learning and in ensuring each District building provides the optimal learning environment.

47. What could be gained, what could be lost if changes occur?

Again, decisions need to be made prior to being able to develop a complete list of gains and losses, but let's tackle this in the opposite order and considering a model of grade centers. Individual school identity for schools that may close would be lost, along with the small, neighborhood school identity in grades 1-4. Within this comes a familiarity with students, parents, teachers, and administrators that is something special.

What is gained is a more consistent and equitable educational experience for students, access to consistent supports, more consistent average class sizes, more focused professional development, ability to absorb changes more easily in student enrollment, avoiding costly repairs on aging buildings, and a reinvestment/reallocation of dollars to students and maintaining the remaining buildings.

48. How will this benefit students? Schools? District? And...what are the cons?

See #47 above. Additionally, the discussion that is occurring is about looking forward, over the next several decades and ensuring that SHSD161 continues to provide a premier elementary education for all students it serves.

10/20/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED:

49. Will a school or schools be closing? How many schools?

The schools with the largest capacities, including Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School, Walker Intermediate School, and Summit Hill Junior High School are not a part of the current discussions. The three remaining schools, Indian Trail Elementary School, Frankfort Square Elementary School, and Arbury Hills Elementary Schools are a part of the discussion regarding future usage. Depending on the model chosen, one or more schools may be considered for closing.

50. Is there any chance for a Win Back Campaign to try and get students to return to Summit District?

As a public school system, we educate every student who resides within our District boundaries and whose parents enroll them in the school. The declining enrollment is due to graduating classes being larger than the incoming Kindergarten classes. This has occurred over the past 10+ years. Additionally, we did hire a Public Relations Specialist last year to help promote the positive things happening in SHSD161 both internally and to the community.

51. After Covid, did the number of students drop more?

No, we did not see a specific drop in overall student enrollment due to COVID.

52. How will closing a school help our students?

Again, depending on the model chosen, there will be advantages and disadvantages to each scenario. In the event grade centers are pursued, a more consistent equitable school experience for all students will be provided. Small, neighborhood schools can be more personalized and act as a centralized hub for that neighborhood for both students and parents.

53. Will the number of students per classroom increase?

Average class size is something within the District's control. When the number of students in a grade reaches a specific level, to keep the class averages lower, additional staff can be employed.

54. How many teachers will lose their jobs?

The District's goal is to protect our employees. In the event of a reorganization of grades or school boundaries, it will be necessary to move many employees to account for the new District configuration.

55. What will happen to the school(s) that close?

The District would consider selling a property(ies) or entering into an Intergovernmental Agreement so that buildings within our neighborhoods do not sit empty. After assessing the value of each building, the District would utilize the expertise of the District attorney and District architect to help facilitate the process.

56. In the event a school(s) close, can events like open houses, step-up days, etc. be entertained?

Absolutely, yes! A detailed implementation plan needs to be developed once decisions begin to be made. A smooth transition for students, families, and staff would be critical to the success of the reorganization.

57. Is there a chance to close one school and keep 3 neighborhood schools? Is there a chance that Kindergarten students could be assigned to their respective 1-4 schools?

This will be determined in subsequent meetings. Many, many options have been offered to address the student enrollment inequities, determining an outcome that is sustainable for the long term is ideal.

58. If families have students in multiple schools with multiple schedules, will the District consider this for parent teacher conferences, pick-up and drop off, etc.?

Yes! Once this process moves a little further, the District can look specifically at start/end times for schools and how to accommodate families with multiple children in multiple schools.

59. Can the District look at the past 7 years to determine why students are leaving the District? Especially those through parent request. And can the District also look to see if these families re-enrolled their children in 161? The data requested for this question is much more difficult to tease out, as it relies on the paperwork submitted by families at the time of withdrawal. The following graph represents the number of students transferring out of the District over the years listed. It is also important to note that there is a near equal number of students moving in or new to the District for each of the years listed. For example, this year the District has had 115 new students and have had 109 transfer outs thus far. Reasons listed by parents/guardians for withdrawal from the District since 2017 includes transfer to homeschool (17 students), transfer to private schools (25 students), moved out of the U.S. (12 students), moving to another public school or district in Illinois (approximately 700 students), and students moving out of state (approximately 200 students). This includes all ages and grades of individual students preK-8 and the count is made per student. If a family moves, each child in the household is counted separately.

School Year	Students
2016-2017	102
2017-2018	134
2018-2019	129
2019-2020	151
2020-2021	56
2021-2022	166
2022-2023	136
2023-2024 (so far)	109

10/23/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED:

60. What is the research-based positives of keeping or supporting neighborhood schools?
Please see #10 on the original FAQ questions posed. Additionally, some reports offer that small, neighborhood schools will see improved academic performance, increased family engagement, enhanced social connections, lower transportation costs, and an increased community involvement and cohesion.

61. What is the research-based positives of keeping or supporting grade center schools?
Please see #10 on the original FAQ questions posed. Additionally, some reports offer that grade centers offer greater access to specialized programming, increased diversity and exposure to different perspectives, greater resource allocation, and enhanced educational opportunities.

10/31/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED:

- 62. How many teachers/administrators will be let go? How many are willing to move to grade center schools? How will you decide who to keep and who to let go?
 Is it too early to determine precise staffing needs, please see #54 above, as this will be determined as decisions are being made at a later date. Our goal is to protect employees and the quality of education/work they provide students, their families, and the District. The District highly values each individual employee on the team and the strengths they bring to their positions.
- 63. Do we have an estimate on transportation costs? How long will bus routes be? Please see #27 above.
- 64. Is there going to be a student limit set on the size of classes?
 Please see #19 above.
- 65. Where will the open schools be at on capacity with three less schools?
 It is imperative to have room for growth, should growth in student enrollment occur in the future. The District would not want to use all current available capacity based on current enrollment or projections, in the decisions being made now. The more precise number of students in each location would be determined by future decisions.
- 66. What kind of timeline are we looking at before a decision is made?
 This will be determined in the on-going discussions. It will take time and coordination to implement any potential changes successfully.
- 67. Can you please provide the numbers of non-English speaking students in each of the below schools? Specifically, also, how many Arabic race/ethnicity numbers in each of the school in the district?

	Multilingual Students by School	Language: Arabic	
AH	25	12	
DJR	65	33	
FS	9	0	
IT	19	4	
HW	42	17	
SHJH	25	12	
	185	78	42%

68. Should we see a decrease in our property taxes? Or where will this extra money be spent?
No, there would not be a decrease in property taxes as a result of these discussions. 161 is just one of many taxing bodies that impact property taxes and this is calculated by the levy, then tax extension for 161, run through the Will County Assessor's Office, based on inflation, CPI, and many other factors. From a financial standpoint, the District would be spared making costly repairs on aging buildings, and this is further referenced in questions #39 and #47 above.

69. How will our property values be impacted?
There are many factors that influence a home value including neighborhood comps, location, home size and usable space, age and condition, upgrades and updates, the local market, economic indicators, and interest rates. Highly regarded school districts tend to attract more buyers and SHSD161 is a great school District feeding into one of the best high schools in the state, Lincoln-Way East.

11/8/2023

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED:

70. May I ask if you all may have an estimated date of a decision in the matter at hand on possible school closures? Also when that decision comes do you know how in advanced it would be for parents to make decisions for their students? Like a month, few months, or summer breaks? Would 6th graders have the opportunity to tryout for SHJH sport if by chance they were put into SHJH?

The District has not set a timeline for making a decision on possible school closures. We have several meetings scheduled over the next two months to continue to dialogue, ask questions, answer questions, and provide information to the community. Once scenarios have been presented and thoroughly discussed, implementation plans will be developed and discussed. As for athletics, within our conference, there are separate 6th grade teams that compete in a variety of sports.

71. Will residents who currently live in Tinley Park or Mokena Summit Hill district be redistricted to the surrounding areas if closures occur?

No, residents of SHSD161 will remain with SHSD161 and attend SHSD161 schools. Changes in schools that might occur will be carefully and thoughtfully implemented and communicated to families when that information is available.

72. Are the current staff members at the current schools be guaranteed their positions in their current roles or will the school(s) that do close be given an opportunity to earn a spot?

An implementation plan for changes must be in alignment with Policy and the Teacher's Contract. Depending on the scenario chosen, this will determine which teachers and staff may need to be moved to another location.

73. With the growing number of students for individuals schools, will there be a need for two principals?

Depending on the number of students in each building, there may be a need for more than one administrator in a building. We currently employ 6 principals, 1 Associate Principal, and 3 Assistant Principals. Administrative reassignments may be necessary.

74. While I understand tenure is a thing for teachers, should their jobs be based on performance reviews ensuring our district has the best teachers possible?

This speaks to the PERA laws governing the grouping of teachers into Excellent, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory categories. Teachers with higher ratings are grouped above those with lower ratings, regardless of seniority. In the event ratings are equal, seniority and certifications are considered if a reduction in force is needed. At this time, the District does not anticipate the need to reduce teachers, the District plans to use natural attrition (when employees leave for other reasons, retire, etc.) to slowly reduce staff while keeping low class sizes a priority.

75. Last night you mentioned that no teacher will lose their job, how can you guarantee this without knowing if and what schools are closing?

Much of the staffing in the District depends on class size, class offerings, special education requirements in IEP's, etc. Over time, there will need to be reductions in total number of employees, but the District feels this can be done through retirements or changes in life situations that employees might experience. When these opportunities arise, if possible, employee numbers may be reduced without reducing the District's workforce through RIF's or non-renewals.

76. Why can the closures not occur in phases, if this is the end result?

This is an option that the Board may consider as discussions continue.

77. If the schools do close, can they be repurposed into something for the kids? Big playground or baseball/soccer/football fields?

The District does not want to see school buildings sit empty and will work to attract suitable parties to purchase or occupy the buildings.

78. Would it ever be thought of to allow the current students to finish out their years at their schools prior to moving them and disrupting their lives, these younger students already endured a pandemic of craziness and asking them to do another change does not seem fair, mentally.

This is an option that the Board may consider as discussions continue.

79. Can a survey be done to account for future enrollment trends of residents who have young children not yet enrolled in kindergarten, and survey families if they plan to enroll in the district?

It will be difficult to predict an accurate number of non-school aged children living in our community who may attend the District in the future. However, we can look at the 9 groups of students currently enrolled. The grade level enrollment breakdown as of 10/24/23, the last time a full current enrollment pull was conducted from PowerSchool, is as follows:

Grade 8= 314 students

Grade 7= 294 students

Grade 6= 260 students

Grade 5= 269 students

Grade 4= 268 students

Grade 3= 227 students

Grade 2= 230 students

Grade 1= 230 students (There were 219 K students last year, just an FYI)

Grade K= 214 students

Based on today's numbers, enrollment would decline next year, District-wide, by approximately 100 students. The District anticipates having a few more students enroll for first grade (see note above about the increase from K to 1st last year). As the number of graduates and the number of kindergarteners get closer together, the District will see a much smaller decline in overall attendance. If each grade has 230 students, that would give the District a total of 2070 total students in grades K-8.

11/12/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED/QUESTIONS NEEDING ADDITIONAL RESEARCH:

80. What mental health resources will be available for students?

The District offers a full cadre of services for students including the support of our administrators, teachers, social workers, psychologists, counselors, and more. Part of any successful transition will be effective and timely communication, as well as a series of coordinated events welcoming students and their families to school. This can include open houses, walkthroughs, and more. Much of this will be planned once discussions continue and possible scenarios are selected.

81. If the closures occur, can the students be put into classroom of students within their neighborhood to keep the neighborhood community feel for the first year to acclimate better to new changes?

Groupings of students into classes will be determined in the future, based on possible configurations of District schools. Once this is determined, implementation plans will carefully be developed to help ensure the success of every student, their families, and all SHSD161 employees.

82. If we sell, what are we considering/allowing to buy ? These schools are in our neighborhoods and possible sales could negatively affect them. If our children are our priority, we can't just sell to anyone.

Agreed, and school buildings are uniquely set up with classrooms, offices, gyms, and cafeterias. The buildings and grounds of a school are unique, so looking for a suitable partner lends itself to other government entities or schools. It is important to the District that buildings are repurposed for community benefit and service, if possible. If buildings are identified for possible closure, the District will work with the Board attorney and architect to begin the process of assessing the value of the chosen building(s), marketing the property, and proceeding with an agreement. The community will be communicated throughout the process in public meetings.

83. If we want to have enrollment increase or gain back students lost to private/homeschooling, do we think school closures are appealing? Are we gaining back trust to the students we are losing ?

Please see Question 59 of the FAQ, identifying the number of students leaving the District for a variety of differing reasons. In the data provided, 17 students' parents have identified the reason for leaving as homeschool since 2017 and another 25 students since 2017 were identified as attending a private school. We would prefer to have all District students enrolled in SHSD161 schools, but these numbers represent a small fraction of the 1000+ students decline in overall enrollment over the past 10+ years and we respect any decision that a parent makes on behalf of their children.

84. Will a Winter Program even be offered at the new grade center for 4th graders? The 4th graders currently have an end of the year celebration and promotion ceremony. Will this still be offered at a grade center? Holiday parties are still an integral part of the educational development and connection of the school wide community, will these opportunities be available at grade centers since parties are currently not offered at Hilda Walker.

The specific programming at possible future school configurations have yet to be determined, but the District also sees the benefit of programming that supports the well-rounded development of all students.

85. Specific data by school was requested, with number of teachers per grade and number of students in those same grades, per elementary school.

Please see below for the information requested.

School	Number of Classes/Count of teachers by grade
Rogus	
K	10 (214 students)
1	4 (77 students)
2	4 (75 students)
3	4 (78 students)
4	4 (80 students)
Arbury	
1	3 (46 students)
2	2 (42 students)
3	2 (48 students)
4	2 (43 students)
Indian Trail	
1	4 (65 students)
2	4 (76 students)
3	4 (70 students)
4	4 (89 students)
Frankfort Square	
1	2 (42 students)
2	2 (37 students)
3	2 (31 students)
4	2 (56 students)

86. Can you remind me how many current classrooms we have at Mary Drew?
Mary Drew Elementary School has 23 classrooms, a gymnasium, cafeteria, library, 11 office spaces, and several peripheral spaces. Additional information and details can be found on the Summary Spreadsheet posted at www.summithill.org.
87. What is your idea of ideal class size? Does that change as students get into Jr High, or would you like to see if it is consistent district wide? Obviously this is keeping in mind there can be fluctuation depending on enrollment. What would you envision in a perfect scenario?
Please see question #14 of the FAQ document for comparisons in class size across the Lincoln-Way area. The District does not have a set number for class averages per grade level, as that can become prohibitive as students move in and out of the District, especially during the school year. However, the lowest class sizes should be with the youngest students and increase as the students get older.
88. What is the Per Pupil Expenditure statewide?
In 2022, for elementary districts, ISBE reports a total Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP) of \$16,801.61. This information was sourced at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Operating-Expense-Per-Pupil.aspx>.
89. Have any parties shown interest in any of our buildings in terms of purchasing or rent?
Yes, we have had several different parties express interest in the District's buildings. Once the District has a more definitive path forward, these conversations will intensify and include the District's architect and attorney.
90. There is interest in the possibility of moving EC and pre-school to Mary Drew, which could allow the district to expand this program. This is wonderful and would help establish more opportunities for our youngest students. Is there a cost associated with adapting Mary Drew for this purpose, or is it just a matter of emptying clutter from the classrooms?
Mary Drew would need to be adapted for our youngest learners in a variety of areas (think smaller toilet fixtures, etc.). Additionally, since the closing of Mary Drew Elementary School, scores of outdated, unused, broken equipment/seating/supplies/and more have been stored throughout the facility. It will be a large task to prepare Mary Drew, if this is the direction the District takes.

91. Will the District continue to offer an opportunity for the community to participate in public comments, emailing the District, and allowing the voice of many to be a part of the process?

Yes, each Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting and each Board of Education Meeting will have a time for the public to offer comments. Additionally, as evidenced by this growing FAQ document, many questions have been sent into the District so that accurate information can be shared with all interested parties. It is important to note that thoughts and opinions regarding this topic vary greatly throughout the SHSD161 community. Offering opportunities for both public comment and direct email contact have allowed for people to ask questions and receive answers in a manner that is comfortable for each individual.

92. Can a survey be done to account for future enrollment trends of residents who have young children not yet enrolled in kindergarten, and survey families if they plan to enroll in the district?

Please see #79 in the FAQ for additional information regarding this topic.

93. Personally, I think the most compelling argument Mr. Martin made for closing some schools was when he compared 161 to 157c. We have a similar number of students, but they operate 3 schools, while we have 7. Do we want to spend money on maintaining buildings, or do we want to spend money on educating students? I definitely want to spend money on teachers and students, not boilers and roofs! Can you provide a wish list of items that you would spend the savings on so parents and community members can see how our students will benefit from the school closures?

The District was recently denied a \$500,000 COPS Grant for school safety and security items, so this would be on the wish list as well, along with ending the cycle of deferred maintenance. Each building in the District has repairs listed in the 2021 Facility Assessment Update performed by TRIA Architects. Modernizing District learning spaces and technologies would be additional items to consider also. Equally important to the District is the retention of our valued staff. Our employees are integral to maximizing the learning of students.

94. The District, in the past, had an equity audit conducted, and a Board Goal is to create culture committees. What is going on with this in light of the discussions about buildings and grounds?

This is a great question, one that ties together many initiatives, past, present, and future. The District conducted an Equity Audit, with a report issued in the Spring/Summer of 2022. The Board of Education has a goal for the Superintendent to establish Culture Committees in each building to talk about building specific issue related to climate and culture which was issued in the Fall of 2023. As the District continues with the buildings and grounds discussion, possibly making decisions about closing a school building(s), once these decisions are made, committees in each newly configured school will be established to discuss equity on a larger scale and how to ensure a healthy and positive climate and culture in each building for staff, students, and their families. This will allow for clearer staff, student, and parent input at each District school.

95. Please explain what will happen if schools close and how this will benefit anyone. Loss of jobs, loss of schools that provide smaller classrooms for kids that are able to receive instruction and more individualized learning. We closed North and still pay taxes on it and crammed more kids into less schools, why are we looking to do the same here? We loved Frankfort Square school all four years and it would be a real shame to have that school closed where kids are comfortable and able to slowly work their way through elementary school in a smaller school where they are getting used to everything before moving into the higher-level grades. Larger classrooms, more busses (which I cannot imagine), taxpayer dollars - where is the breakdown of the budget?

The District has changed in the past 10+ years, most notably in a decline of enrollment of over 1000 students. The discussion taking place looks to address this for the betterment of all students and the entire SHSD161 community. Also, the District does not anticipate laying off teachers in a dramatic fashion, rather, using natural retirement attrition, or when employee's leave for differing life situations, to slowly make reductions to match our current student enrollment. The District staff is highly valued and assurances have been made to protect jobs. As mentioned earlier in the FAQ, average class sizes are within the control of the District, allowing for the addition of staff/movement of staff if needed based on enrollment changes. The proposed budget is posted online on the District website for public viewing.

96. Do you have a timeline on the phases?

This question could be viewed in two different ways. If in phases, the question references the process of determining what the next steps are for the buildings and ground discussion; no, there is not a timeline being applied to the discussion. Minimally, there are two additional meetings scheduled, a Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting on November 29th at 6:30pm and a Board of Education Meeting scheduled for December 20, 2023 at 7:00pm. The discussion and progress towards consensus will drive the timelines. Or, if by phases, the question is about phases of operations and maintenance work as referenced in the 2021 Facility Assessment, repairs are listed in groups of 2022-2024, 2024-2026, and 2026-2030 for each building assessed by TRIA Architects.

97. The Dance Company was recently mentioned – is there an intergovernmental agreement with the park district? Do they pay to use Mary Drew? Do they make contributions to SHSD161?

In February of 2021, a 10-year Intergovernmental Agreement was signed between Summit Hill School District 161 and The Frankfort Square Park District. This agreement runs from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2031 and is mutually beneficial for both SHSD161 and the Park District, both of whom serve the same students, families, and community. In exchange for the use of District facilities, the Park District maintains portions of District property (i.e. District playgrounds), allows the District's Golf Intramurals and team to use Square Links free of charge, and more. A copy of the entire agreement has been posted on the District's website for public viewing. The Park District does not pay to use Mary Drew Elementary School.

98. It seems that transportation is one of the biggest concerns that may follow this decision. As stated, is the District being billed per bus or per route? The bill that was unexpected could have been astronomically higher if all students were on buses. Getting proposals on busing costs is not something that should wait till a decision is made. We need to see these numbers and the cost savings of transportation vs. buildings. Parents also need to know how long bus route will be and whether we will operate like East with an A, B route. I know the bus company is already struggling to get students to sporting events on time. We need to know as parents of little kids that our kids will not be sitting on a bus for an hour or in a gym until their B bus comes.

The District has no intention of running A and B transportation routes, as this presents time delays for students and their families, and supervision responsibilities for staff at each building based on the age of elementary students. The decision to move away from LW210 transportation has allowed for improvements in transporting students to events, fieldtrips, and the removal of blackout dates. In the event we need additional buses, Safeway has been a great partner and has availability to pick up these routes. Once a decision is made regarding which buildings will be used and which students will be housed there, transportation costs can be accurately predicted.

99. Can you provide the cost to run each school along with the revenue/ tax basis associated with each school in the District?

In order to pull these numbers, tying them back to our site-based reporting information, the information requested is as follows:

- Arbury Hills Elementary School \$3,221,259.09
- Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary Schools \$10,052,352.15
- Frankfort Square Elementary School \$3,023,855.86
- Indian Trail Elementary School \$4,663,815.42
- Walker Intermediate School \$8,724,433.36
- Summit Hill Junior High School \$9,989,578.17
- District Outplacements \$1,288,876.80

The revenues the District collects covers the costs associated.

11/28/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED/QUESTIONS NEEDING ADDITIONAL RESEARCH:

100. Can you elaborate on the statement that more than 75% of homeowners do not have children in our schools? Where does this number come from?
The District pulled information from our student management system to identify 1532 unique home addresses for our preK-8th grade students. This took into account that many of our families have more than one child in SHSD161. When the District mails the Engage161 Newsletter, excluding businesses, approximately 13,500 newsletters are sent. This information was provided by Liberty Graphics, the producer and mailer of the Engage161 Newsletter. Utilizing these numbers, approximately 11.4% of our community homes have students residing in them.

101. Can you provide a 5-10 year projection of our budget.
Please listen to the livestream of the 11/28/23 Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting, as well as the accompanying slides.

12/7/23

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS POSED/QUESTIONS NEEDING ADDITIONAL RESEARCH:

102. How much money does the District currently have in "reserves," if any, and what percentage of the budget is that amount.

As of 6/30/2023 AFR the District had a working cash balance of the working cash fund of \$8,335,891 or 27% of the cash balance, excluding activity accounts.

When calculating the total amount of days cash on hand, this combines funds 10, 20, 40, and 70 and as of 6/30/2023 the days cash on hand totals to 216.04 days per the 2023 AFR. It is important to note that the number of days cash on hand decreased from 2022's AFR to 2023's AFR. The 2022 AFR lists 231.21 days cash on hand.

103. How does increased enrollment change the budget? Whether you have three kids, one kid or zero in the school, you pay taxes. So, if enrollment were increasing, how would we budget these repairs/maintenance?

Increased enrollment results in a corresponding increase in Evidenced Based Funding (EBF) revenue from the state. Average student enrollment is a major part of the EBF funding formula. The District received \$3,039,664 in FY2023 for EBF.

In the event enrollment increases, the District would distribute funds differently amongst students, staff, and buildings.

104. How much are we expected to save annually under each situation if we do not sell a closed building ? What do we expect to make to put towards the budget if we do sell a closed building? How can we just close and assume a sale/sale price to help fund repairs on a building left in place?

Please see the financial information provided on the District website at www.summithill.org. Depending on the scenario examined, the District would avoid costly repairs and annual operational costs. Again, the District is not looking to "save" money, but to more equally distribute the dollars it receives.

105. If our repair costs are so significant, would this mean that most of the potential savings from a change would go predominately to building repairs?

With 7 buildings, the District utilizes the 2021 Facilities Audit, determines priorities, and then expends on needed repairs. With less buildings to operate and maintain, monies could be redistributed. Also, transparently, as enrollment continues to decline, over time through retirement attrition and when employees leave for other reasons, the District will slowly decrease staff to match the student population served, all the while being mindful of the importance of low class sizes.

106. Some community members have mentioned a town hall. Is that something we would consider why or why not?

The District has received phone calls and emails pertaining to this topic, communicated through the news media, and hosted several public meetings where community members

have had the opportunity to address the BOE, gather information, and participate in the conversation. At this time, a town hall is not being planned.

107. The community wants an accessible PDF of the budget with a clearer breakdown of expenses, i.e., Nurse expenses for \$119,000 is not good enough. (referring to ESSER funds).
Budget information is available on the District website. For specific budget, revenue, or expenditure questions, please contact the District's Director of Business Services, Mrs. Julie Stearns, at jstearns@summithill.org.
108. What feedback have we received from community members that they feel their students are getting an inequitable education at one school versus another?
Areas of concern include expending \$4000+ more per pupil, per year on students who attend smaller schools in comparison to the larger schools. Also noted were some families have never had the opportunity to walk their children to school, as they live too far away from any of the SHSD161 schools regardless of the school in question. Lastly, equity and access to similar staff, programs, fieldtrips, and school experiences have been noted.
109. Do any of the schools have classrooms that are not being utilized?
Yes, there is available classroom space at each District facility. The District is also using available classroom space for specials, specialists, therapy rooms, storage, office space, and more.
110. What are the current costs to maintain Mary Drew?
Please see the financial documents provided on the District website for a breakdown of annual costs and maintenance costs for each District facility.
111. Roofing costs and the costs listed in phases are exclusive of one another correct? Correct.
Both are included in the 2021 Facilities Audit performed by TRIA Architects.
112. Has the district consulted with any real estate partners to determine the ability to sell the buildings in as-is condition?
The District has approached the Board attorney, Mallory Milluzzi from Klein Thorpe and Jenkins, to commence this part of the process, identifying Frankfort Square Elementary School and/or Arbury Hills Elementary School as possible buildings for closure.
113. If the board votes (with community input) and agrees that closing neighborhood schools is the best option what are you going to do to keep young kids together and anxiety levels down. Having 12 different classes for each grade leaves very little room for children to make friendships. Each year they will be thrown into a classroom with little or no familiar faces. Can cohorts be created based on where children live? How will we help students adjust to these changes as the process occurs?
Students, their families, and the District staff are of utmost concern, especially in the event the District determines to close a school(s). Careful attention will be paid to the change this would bring and the stress accompanying it. In the event grade centers were

selected, cohorting students, or making a school within a school, would be one strategy to ensure students see familiar faces and build relationships at school. Much more will be determined as this conversation continues.

114. I think a great starting point would be to sell Mary Drew. I believe many in the community agree with this. It would be a great opportunity to prove there is buyers that are interested in our schools and they can be sold and not left to deteriorate. If in all honestly, the thought is, the schools are going to demolished, please say this. Selling Mary Drew is an option that the District is considering and one of the 5 scenarios the Board directed the Superintendent to gather information regarding. Once a relator is secured and the District attorney has the opportunity to outline the process of selling or IGA'ing a building, more information can be shared with the community. The District has not discussed demolishing a building. It is also important to note that Mary Drew has more classroom space than either Frankfort Square or Arbury Hills Elementary School, more office spaces, and was dedicated after a remodeling in 2008. Additionally, the 17,000 square foot District Office Space would need to be moved, incurring costs to do so and if moved into another building, would permanently take classroom space away from students. There are no students currently attending Mary Drew, so the equity piece, disproportionate per pupil expenditure, and more would not be addressed in this scenario.
115. For many, the concern about grade-level centers stems from having children change schools every other year and having a large group of 200 students in their cohort. My kindergartener could possibly attend 4 schools in 8 years. And I worry about her having to make all new friends every year with the classes being mixed up every year. Is there room for a compromise by splitting K-3 at DJR (maybe 60% of the population) and IT (maybe 40% of the population), 4 and 5 at HW and 6, 7, and 8 at SH? The large cohort at the younger ages is what concerns many people. Many scenarios are being considered and are a part of the discussions being held during the public meetings. These livestreams are also available on the District website. Currently, with K at DJR, then a 1-4 school, then Walker, then SHJH; students are in 4 District buildings during their SHSD161 education. Agreed, in the event grade centers are chosen, much effort will be placed in making sure students feel connected to their peers, teachers, administrators, and school buildings.
116. Will the community vote on a proposal or scenario?
The community's input is very valuable and has been considered in each step of the process. According to the Will County ROE, this is a local decision and a Board vote will be taken when the members feel as if they have ample information to make a vote on.
117. Please take your time to consider all options, including only 1-2 school closures to leave room for future possibilities. Another consideration could be to have 2 schools that house K-2, then 3-5 at walker and 6-8 at summit.
The District genuinely appreciates the input received, as this has shaped the conversation, the questions asked, and the information gathered to make sure everyone interested has access to the same, reliable information. At this time, Indian Trail Elementary School has been removed from consideration for closing. Additional scenarios are still be researched.

118. There is confusion over how if the District has approved curriculum and then that the students are receiving different experiences.
The Illinois Learning Standards are the bedrock of what is being taught in SHSD161, delivered through admin/teacher/committee/board approved curriculum. The curriculum is a vehicle, a resource, to help deliver the content and learning. Each group of learners are different, each teacher has their own style, and each building administrator works to improve the performance of their respective staff members. There will be variances regardless of whether the District stays in their current model, reduces 1-4 buildings, or moves to grade centers. However, better pacing, adherence to common assessments, and collaboration throughout a whole grade level would be possible if grade centers are chosen.
119. Would redistricting offer time in the right now to address some of these problems?
Redistricting would be a short-term solution to a long-overdue problem. Mary Drew was closed over a decade ago...and discussions about having too many buildings occurred prior to COVID. As the community grows, or shrinks, inequitable attendance numbers would surface again if the District simply redistricts.
120. Is school capacity building capacity, or classroom capacity? For example, is it safe to say at Arbury there is capacity for 456 students with 19 classrooms, therefore you could fit no more than 24 students per classroom?
Please see #37 above on the FAQ.
121. In the slides with the various school closure scenarios, the enrollment is listed next to each school. Can you also add the number of classrooms and what an average class size would look like in that scenario? A lot of parents and teachers are concerned that class sizes will increase and this may allay fears.
Please refer to both the FAQ and the Summary Sheet provided on the District website for more detailed information. The District has stated publicly that jobs would be protected so that great employees were not lost. In doing so, class sizes will remain as is, and may see adjustments based on a model chosen in the future.

122. What percent of students ride buses to school?

Below are the November numbers for students who are currently taking the bus from each District location. Of the students who are listed as Walkers/No Bus service, many of these student’s parents have declined bus service.

Here is the final data count:

Location	Enrollment	Bus Riders	Walkers/No Bus Service Parent Pick Up	Eligible for Bus Service
AH	179	71	108	5
FS	169	69	100	5
IT	299	179	120	21
DJR-K	215	160	55	55
DJR-1-4	310	249	61	61
HW	533	456	77	21
SHJH	608	524	84	10

123. Compare year to year on AFR using May to May numbers before the new tax money comes in in June. What is the low point of District funds?

Please see the chart listed below. The last box, titled “Cash and Investments in Working Cash Fund” is already included in the Total cash balance amounts. The District separated this fund out for transparency in how the total cash balance was determined.

Summit Hill School District #161										
Cash Balances and Cash Balance in the Working Cash Fund as of May 30th										
Bank Accounts		Old Plank Trail acc	Activity accts	SCO & Booster Clubs	PMA & IL Funds accounts:		Total cash balance	Cash and Investments in Working Cash Fund		
		General			Liquid ISDLAF					
		Payroll			Liquid MAX					
		Imprest			Investments					
		Debit card			Illinois Funds (IPTIP)					
5/31/2023	Balance	\$ 5,416,769.44	111,647.70	64,769.42	10,315,592.25	\$ 15,908,778.81		5/31/2023	Balance	\$ 8,187,591.93
5/31/2022	Balance	\$ 2,620,985.37	89,650.93	*	11,358,443.09	\$ 14,069,079.39		5/31/2022	Balance	\$ 7,604,950.91
5/31/2021	Balance	\$ 1,147,768.94	*	*	\$ 9,866,363.22	\$ 11,014,132.16		5/31/2021	Balance	\$ 7,243,575.92
5/31/2020	Balance	\$ 721,397.47	*	*	\$ 12,921,268.65	\$ 13,642,666.12		5/31/2020	Balance	\$ 6,841,309.11

124. Where do we see a downturn in our data, between what grades? 4th to 5th...are there more, and is this a reason for more equity? Should we look into a task force between feeder districts to discuss this? While there seems to be a drop in ELA for most years between 4th and 5th grade, it is not as dramatic as the dip in math between 3rd and 4th grade while students are moving grades within the same school. This seems to be a big trend. Any thoughts on this?

Please see #28 of the FAQ for a brief look at the District's historical IAR scores. This will allow for comparison of cohort groups (moving diagonally across the cells), by grade, in Math and/or ELA. SHSD161 currently participates in a Lincoln-Way Area Curriculum Council, discussing the education of all LW area students with all feeder districts and LW210. As for the drop in 3rd to 4th grade math scores, we have identified the same data as a concern. In part, this will be addressed by the District's new math curriculum and by the District Curriculum Department.

125. Should we save money, where is this going to go? Is money going to repairs and not students?

Operations and Maintenance dollars would be directed towards upkeep and repairs at each of the remaining schools. Additionally, the District would look at investing dollars into each school to help make them increasingly more clean, safe, and state of the art. Redistributed education fund dollars would be aimed at ensuring all students have access to the supports they need, regardless of what school they attend.

126. How is the closing and potential sale/intergovernmental agreement of Summit Hill 161 buildings different from the closing and potential sale/intergovernmental agreement for LW210? Do we own these buildings outright? Are we still paying for these buildings? Are there any Bond restrictions on the sale of any of these buildings? What kinds of zoning does this land currently reside in? Residential/commercial? Is the land more valuable than the land with a building on it? Based on the above answers if applicable Is the Board open to Out of the Box ideas so we no longer must maintain the building(s)? LW North is a much larger facility with a pool, auditorium, football stadium, larger square footage, and more. This could be considered a school and campus, whereas the District's schools up for consideration are much smaller in size and scale. As mentioned in several of the public meetings, the District has had contact with parties interested in both Frankfort Square Elementary School and Arbury Hills Elementary School. The District currently has building bond debt, set to be paid off during the 2027-28 school year. Both the land and building hold value and the District will have more precise numbers once the District attorney helps direct next steps with a relator. Yes, the District is open to ideas about the utilization of the buildings, but would explore more traditional options first. The District's desire would not be to rezone property, but to utilize the schools as is.

127. Can we get a breakout of the PPE at each school? Teacher salaries, building maintenance costs, etc.

To begin, please see #36 above. Programs running inside each school, teacher experience/seniority, and more help determine the per pupil expenditure. These numbers can also be viewed on the Illinois State Report Card at <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>. Please see the chart below for a high-level summary as of 6/30/2023:

School	Salary/Benefits	Supplies	Purchased Services	Other	Capital Outlay	Non-Cap Equip.
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	\$1,977,838/ \$328,853	\$117,789	\$125,289	\$28,943	\$64,999	\$2,220
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	\$5,867,484/ \$1,009,762	\$339,104	\$275,113	\$31,242	\$52,952	\$13,875
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	\$1,824,133/ \$300,028	\$119,989	\$177,736	\$8,099	\$15,171	\$2,220
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	\$2,713,384/ \$467,371	\$195,557	\$151,992	\$15,269	\$108,782	\$2,775
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	\$5,385,012/ \$888,543	\$247,656	\$225,359	\$31,235	\$532,193	\$11,100
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	\$5,976,755/ \$990,461	\$471,877	\$525,604	\$164,465	\$479,170	\$5,550
SDS Total	\$23,744,606/ \$3,985,018	\$1,491,972	\$1,481,093	\$279,253	\$1,253,267	\$37,740
Non-location coded	\$2,479,462/ \$618,884	\$1,237,762	\$4,377,052	\$7,710,626	\$154,094	\$0
AFR Total Expenses	\$26,224,068/ \$4,603,901	\$2,729,734	\$5,858,145	\$7,989,874	\$1,407,361	\$37,740

128. Can historical data on per pupil expenditures be shared as well?

Please see the chart below:

School	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Arbury Hills Elementary School (1-4)	\$19,347	\$17,875	\$17,579	\$14,773	\$14,897
Dr. Julian Rogus Elementary School (PreK, K, and 1-4)	\$16,529	\$15,542	\$14,706	\$13,830	\$12,436
Frankfort Square Elementary School (1-4)	\$18,470	\$15,911	\$15,198	\$15,122	\$14,194
Indian Trail Elementary School (1-4)	\$14,597	\$14,621	\$13,747	\$12,650	\$11,458
Hilda Walker Intermediate School (5-6)	\$16,008	\$14,339	\$14,083	\$12,184	\$10,598
Summit Hill Junior High School (7-8)	\$15,670	\$14,395	\$13,497	\$13,161	\$11,500

DEFINITIONS:

- Equity- ensuring each student is afforded a fair and equal education. For example, all 4th grade students across the District should have access to a similar education regardless of where they reside within the District.
- Neighborhood Schools- Grouping students by the area they reside rather than by grade spans.
- Grade Centers- Grouping students by grade spans rather than by the area they reside.