

# Shaping 4J's Future



## Moving forward

Shaping 4J's Future, a district-wide strategic planning process, engaged staff, parents and community members in talking about our schools and how to best serve students in the future. Student enrollment is declining, yet our schools serve students with a wider range of learning needs. Shaping 4J's Future asked the question: How and where should the district provide instructional programs to best serve students in the future?

The school board's instructional goals continue to guide all district planning and decisions. The goals are:

- Increase achievement for all students
- Close the achievement gap
- Provide equal opportunities for all students to succeed
- Ensure high school graduates are prepared to be successful in careers, in college, and as citizens

In March 2008, the school board approved the following strategies.

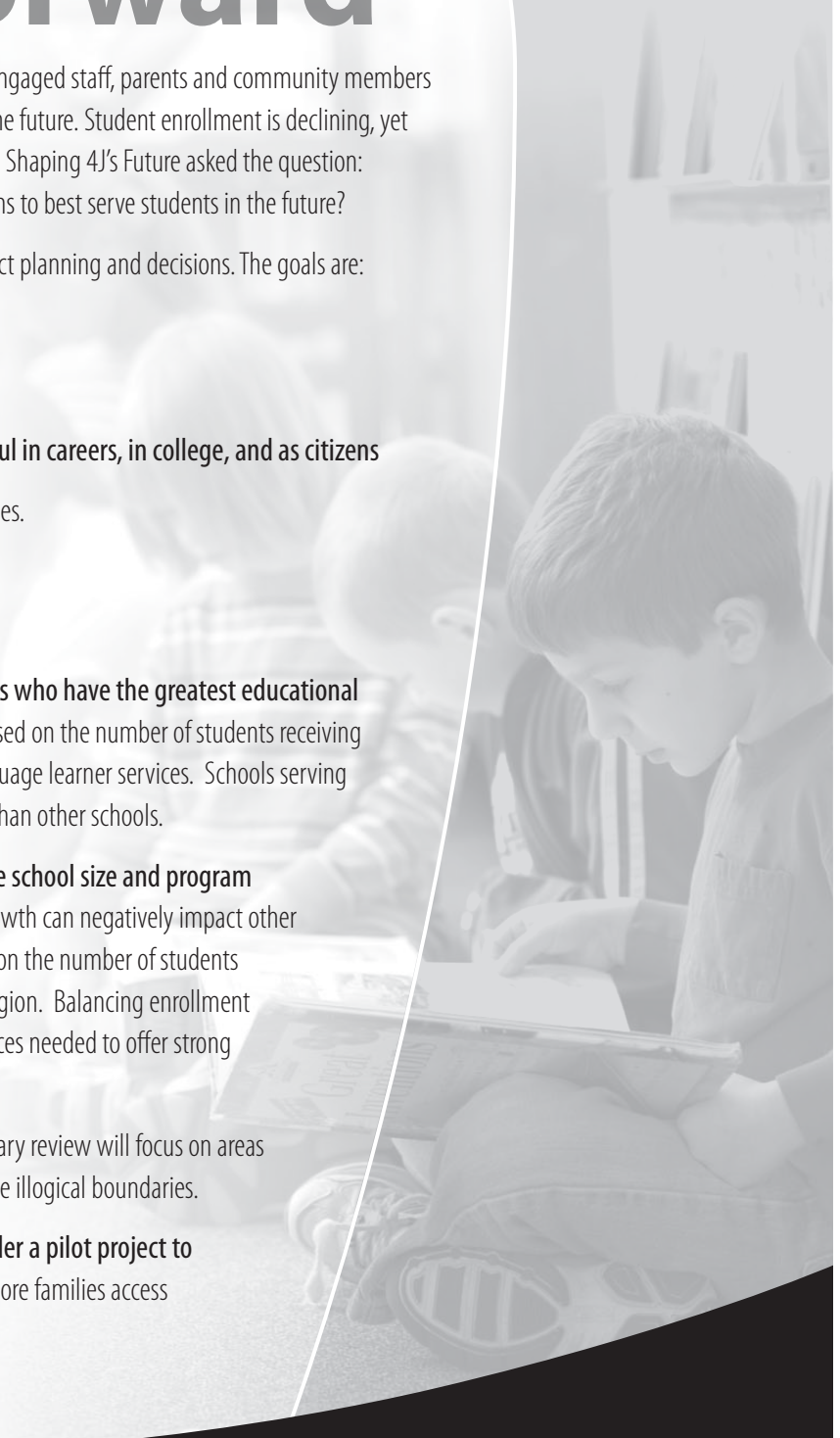
### District-wide strategies

**Allocate more teachers and staff to schools serving students who have the greatest educational needs.** The district will develop a differentiated staffing ratio based on the number of students receiving free or reduced lunch, special education services, or English language learner services. Schools serving higher percentages of these students will receive more staffing than other schools.

**Limit transfers at middle and high schools to better balance school size and program offerings.** As district-wide enrollment declines, one school's growth can negatively impact other schools. School choice will continue. However, limits will be set on the number of students that each middle or high school can accept from outside of its region. Balancing enrollment helps to ensure that all middle and high schools have the resources needed to offer strong academic programs.

**Consider possible school boundary adjustments.** The boundary review will focus on areas where school closures and consolidations may have created some illogical boundaries.

**Study elementary school transportation options and consider a pilot project to expand transportation within each region.** This could give more families access to school choice.



# District trends & challenges

## Declining enrollment

- With fewer school-aged children in the district, enrollment is declining. At 17,200 students, 4J enrollment stands at a 20-year low.
- By 2015, enrollment is expected to drop by another 1,000 students.
- School funding in Oregon is tied to enrollment. With fewer students, 4J will have less money to spend on staff and educational resources.
- Very small schools have difficulty offering classes and programs that serve a wide range of students.

## Diverse learning needs

- 4J students come from a wider array of cultures, family experiences and economic circumstances than ever before.
- About 31 percent of 4J students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Some schools serve a disproportionate number of less-advantaged students.
- A growing number of students now need special education services or English Language Learner services to help them succeed in school.

## Higher academic expectations

- Oregon's graduation requirements are increasing. All students need to complete rigorous courses and demonstrate high-level thinking and problem-solving skills to graduate.

## The achievement gap

- Across the nation and in Eugene, some students from minority groups and low-income families are not as likely to reach academic benchmarks. Increasing achievement and closing the achievement gap are 4J's top instructional goals.



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# What's happening region by region

## Churchill region

**Adams elementary:** Explore new program options that might increase enrollment, including a Spanish dual immersion program or a Chinese immersion program. Survey all parents in the Adams boundary. Alter programs in 2009-10.

**Family School:** Move grades 1-5 to the Jefferson building to share a facility with the Arts and Technology Academy, beginning in 2009-10. Review middle school alternative programs in 2008-09, and then make a decision about moving Family School grades 6-8 from Spencer Butte to the Jefferson building.

## North region

Maintain existing schools and locations.

## Sheldon region

**Coburg elementary:** Work with the City of Coburg to develop a financial agreement to help maintain a viable school program.

**Meadowlark and Buena Vista elementary schools:** Retain Meadowlark at the current site as a small neighborhood school. Move Buena Vista Spanish Immersion school to another site in the Sheldon region by 2012-13.

## South region

**Harris and Eastside elementary schools:** Relocate Eastside Alternative School into the Harris building for the 2008-09 school year. Explore a school consolidation for 2009-10.

**Charlemagne French Immersion elementary:** Close the Fox Hollow building and move the French Immersion School to a more centrally located site for 2010-11 or later.

**Willard:** Decommission the aging Willard building at the end of the 2009-10 school year. The two charter schools now leasing the building (Village School and Ridgeline Montessori) will move. The district intends to retain the site for a future school use.