

MINUTES OF THE STUDY SESSION- SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

The Board of Education of the Timpanogos School District met in a study session on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 4:00 pm. The study session was held at the Alpine School District Special Education Office in Lindon, Utah.

Board Members Present: President Jennifer Lyman, Vice President Sterling Hilton, Guy Fugal, David H. Smith, Grace Rex, Michele Sorensen, and Ada Wilson

Also present: Superintendent Jensen & Business Administrator Sundberg and members of the administrative staff. There were approximately 23 others in attendance.

Board President Jennifer Lyman called the study session to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. BOUNDARY STUDY – SECONDARY BOUNDARY OPTIONS

Superintendent Jensen explained that the Study Session would focus specifically on secondary boundary options, with an additional Study Session scheduled for the following week to address elementary boundaries. Separating the discussions would allow adequate time for Board consideration and provide the public time to review the information before upcoming focus groups and community meetings. He noted that recent focus groups and cluster meetings had provided additional community input to inform the ongoing configuration discussions, as part of the Boundary Study.

Enrollment, Robust Schools, and Financial Considerations

Business Administrator Sundberg reviewed current and projected enrollment for the district's high schools and junior high/middle schools. Projections continued to show declining enrollment, with several secondary schools projected to fall below the enrollment ranges identified in the District's Robust School Criteria. He explained that lower enrollment can make it difficult for schools to provide comprehensive course offerings and programs without additional staffing allocations.

Staff reviewed the additional full-time equivalent (FTE) allocations historically provided by Alpine School District to support smaller schools and programs. Timpanogos-area secondary schools currently receive a disproportionate share of those additional FTEs. Business Administrator Sundberg estimated that bringing secondary schools closer to robust enrollment levels could reduce the need for approximately nine additional FTEs, representing roughly \$1.2 million annually. Closing one junior high/middle school was estimated to reduce duplicated administrative and operational costs by approximately \$2.1 million annually, exclusive of teaching positions that would follow students to their new schools.

Board members emphasized that the Robust School Criteria are intended as a goal for strengthening all District schools rather than as a tool for ranking schools or determining that an individual school is deficient. The discussion emphasized that enrollment could provide the staffing and resources necessary to support stronger programs, collaborative teams, electives, and student opportunities. Members also clarified that a larger school does not necessarily result in larger class sizes; rather, increased enrollment can provide enough students and staff to support additional sections and broader programming.

Secondary Boundary Option A

Business Administrator Sundberg presented **Secondary Option A**, which would make relatively minor changes to existing high school boundaries while creating pure feeder patterns between middle schools and high schools. Under this option, Mountain View High School's boundary would remain essentially

unchanged, while smaller adjustments would be made among Orem, Timpanogos, and Pleasant Grove High Schools to balance enrollment and align middle-school feeders.

Option A contemplated consolidating either **Orem Junior High or Oak Canyon Junior High**, which would be located within the proposed Timpanogos High School feeder area. Canyon View would primarily feed Orem High School, Lake Ridge would feed Mountain View High School, and Pleasant Grove Junior High would feed Pleasant Grove High School. Staff reviewed specific adjustments in Orem, Lindon, and Pleasant Grove and discussed current out-of-boundary attendance patterns that already result in many students choosing the high school associated with their junior high peers.

President Jennifer Lyman noted that geographic proximity should remain an important consideration and referenced portions of Lindon where Pleasant Grove High School is significantly closer than another assigned high school. Staff acknowledged that no boundary configuration could eliminate every situation in which a student lives closer to a school outside the student's assigned boundary.

Secondary Boundary Option B

Staff also presented **Secondary Option B**, which would create pure feeder patterns but require substantially greater changes to existing high school boundaries. Under this option, either **Canyon View Junior High or Oak Canyon Junior High** could be considered for consolidation. The option would realign larger portions of the Timpanogos, Mountain View, and Orem High School boundaries.

Board members discussed the greater disruption associated with Option B, particularly in established high school communities. Members also expressed concern that the proposed changes could create greater socioeconomic differences among the high schools. Staff indicated that Option A appeared to provide a more balanced socioeconomic distribution, although detailed socioeconomic data were not available through the mapping tool being used. Option B did provide somewhat more evenly distributed middle-school enrollment.

Vice President Sterling Hilton observed that both options would require meaningful middle-school boundary changes, but Option B would result in substantially greater disruption to established high school boundaries. He noted that the more balanced socioeconomic distribution under Option A should be considered an advantage of that option.

Pure Feeder Patterns

The Board discussed at length the value of creating pure feeder patterns from middle school to high school.

Board Member Grace Rex described the benefits for students, staff, administration, and school programs when an entire middle school advances together to the same high school.

Board Member Michele Sorensen referenced her previous experience with the Timpanogos-area PTA Council and noted that split feeder patterns had historically created challenges for programs, athletics, and school continuity. She expressed support for pure feeders between middle schools and high schools while noting that pure feeders from elementary to middle school were less critical.

President Lyman discussed the impact split feeders can have on students socially and academically and identified potential benefits for vertical collaboration among teachers and programs. She noted that greater continuity could strengthen collaboration in academics as well as athletics and the arts.

Board Member Ada Wilson noted that aligned middle- and high-school feeders could allow principals and schools to intentionally coordinate culture and shared goals. She also emphasized the importance of maintaining a broader District identity and creating opportunities for students from different schools to interact through academics, athletics, performing arts, and other District activities.

Vice President Hilton stated that he had not initially considered pure feeders particularly important but had come to see significant advantages through the Board's study and listening process.

The Board discussed the importance of balancing feeder alignment with socioeconomic diversity. Staff noted that a potential disadvantage of a pure feeder system could occur if it perpetuated significant socioeconomic isolation; however, the boundaries reflected in Option A appeared to contain a mixture of communities and socioeconomic circumstances.

6–8 and 7–8 Enrollment Considerations

Staff presented projected enrollment under both **6–8 and 7–8 middle-school configurations**. If the District retained a 7–8 model with four middle schools, projected enrollment showed that several schools would remain below the district’s optimal enrollment range and buildings would continue to be underutilized.

Vice President Hilton noted that the projected enrollment itself was an important factor in considering consolidation. He emphasized that his concern regarding closing a junior high was independent of the decision regarding high school configuration; declining enrollment and excess capacity existed regardless of whether ninth grade moved to high schools. He stated that consolidating could provide stronger enrollment and program opportunities for students while reducing underutilized facilities and ongoing supplemental staffing needs.

The Board also reviewed a preliminary scenario involving **three 7–8 middle schools**, which would require the consolidation of two junior highs. Staff explained that this scenario created more complicated feeder patterns, including middle schools splitting among multiple high schools, and would eliminate the pure feeder alignment available under the four-school models. Members discussed financial savings associated with additional consolidation but emphasized that the study was not driven solely by finances. The broader goal remained creating strong, sustainable schools that meet the District’s Robust School Criteria and provide students with comprehensive educational opportunities.

Secondary Boundary Discussion Summary

The Board’s discussion reflected greater interest in an approach that would minimize disruption to established high school boundaries, create stronger middle-to-high-school feeder alignment, provide sustainable enrollment, and maintain socioeconomic balance. No final secondary boundary or school-consolidation decision was made during the Study Session. The boundary study remained ongoing, with additional information, community input, and Board discussion to continue before final action.

2. MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL DISCUSSION

Superintendent Jensen introduced a discussion regarding what a **6–8 middle-school model** could look like if the Board ultimately chose to move sixth grade from elementary schools. He noted that one of the most frequent concerns expressed during focus groups and cluster meetings involved sending sixth graders into the existing junior-high environment. He emphasized that a 6–8 middle school should not simply place sixth graders into the current 7–9 junior-high structure.

Developmentally Appropriate Transition

Vice President **Hilton** stated that a 6–8 model would require a different schedule and structure than the District’s existing junior highs. He supported a gradual transition for sixth graders, potentially involving fewer classroom changes and a schedule specifically designed for their developmental needs rather than immediately placing them into a traditional secondary schedule.

Board Member Rex shared feedback from educators and parents familiar with 6–8 middle schools in Canyons School District. She expressed interest in learning more about successful models and emphasized the importance of providing teachers sufficient notice and professional learning if the District moves forward with the change.

Board Member Sorensen raised the possibility of delaying the sixth-grade transition for a year to allow additional time to develop the middle-school model and reduce the number of simultaneous changes affecting families and employees. Board Member Rex acknowledged that concern but noted that delaying could also create an additional year of boundary changes and transition for students. Members discussed the operational and financial implications of either approach.

President Lyman noted that delaying the sixth-grade transition could also affect facility and portable-classroom needs. Moving sixth grade from elementary schools could free space and potentially allow existing portable classrooms to be relocated rather than requiring the purchase of additional temporary classrooms for high schools.

“Tight and Loose” Middle School Framework

Board Member David H. Smith suggested a “tight and loose” approach to designing the middle-school model. The district could be **tight** around essential expectations—including a soft landing for sixth graders, student care, and developmentally appropriate practices—while allowing individual schools some flexibility in how those expectations are implemented.

President Lyman supported collaboration among the middle-school principals to develop a consistent overall model while allowing schools flexibility to innovate and respond to their individual communities.

Vice President Hilton agreed that flexibility could be valuable but emphasized that areas of flexibility should be accompanied by clear measures and evidence. He suggested that the district identify what data would be collected to determine which practices are successful and use that information to refine and strengthen the model over time.

Interdisciplinary Teams and Student Support

Vice President Hilton identified **interdisciplinary teacher teams** as a potentially important component of the middle-school model. He referenced community feedback describing teams of teachers who share responsibility for a defined cohort of students and collaborate around individual students' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs.

President Lyman noted that this structure could directly address parent concerns that students might become “lost” in a larger middle school by allowing teams of educators to identify and respond to individual student needs.

Superintendent Jensen shared observations from a 6–8 middle school in Canyons School District where sixth-grade students were organized into interdisciplinary teams. Teachers collaborated both around their shared students and around curriculum and instruction. He noted that the school intentionally hired educators with strong sixth-grade experience to help make middle school a bridge between elementary and high school rather than an abrupt transition.

District leadership planned to continue learning from middle-school models in **Canyons, Granite, and Cache** school districts, including districts that transitioned at different times and through different implementation approaches.

Building on Existing Strengths

Board Member Smith emphasized that the district’s existing junior highs are already successfully serving students and that development of a middle-school model should build upon current strengths rather than discard effective practices. He encouraged the district to identify the specific adjustments necessary to provide sixth graders with additional care and support.

Board Member Wilson emphasized the opportunity to intentionally teach skills that contribute to students becoming successful learners, including study skills, organization, focus, self-management, and other habits

that prepare students for high school. She expressed support for cohort structures that would allow teachers to identify and respond to specific student needs.

Exploratory Electives

Board Member **Sorensen** expressed interest in providing sixth graders with **exploratory elective opportunities**, potentially through short rotations that expose students to a variety of subjects. Students could then select areas of greater interest in seventh and eighth grades and enter high school with a better understanding of programs and pathways they may want to pursue.

Student Technology

The Board discussed feedback received during community meetings regarding **one-to-one student technology** at the middle-school level. Members noted interest among some parents and educators in reducing individual device use, particularly during passing periods, lunch, and at home.

Discussion included the possibility of using classroom technology carts rather than issuing a device to every student while maintaining an option for students who need technology access outside of school to check out a device. Members also recognized that some teachers currently use one-to-one technology effectively and that any change would require thoughtful planning.

Dual Language Immersion

Board members discussed how **Dual Language Immersion (DLI)** programs could function within a 6–8 model. President Lyman shared feedback from a Portuguese DLI teacher who indicated that DLI could operate effectively in a middle-school structure and potentially provide opportunities to strengthen the seventh- and eighth-grade language experience. **Vice President Hilton** agreed that the change could provide an opportunity to improve the program for students as they progress through the middle grades.

Middle School Model Discussion Summary

The Board emphasized that a potential 6–8 configuration should represent an intentional **middle-school model rather than simply adding sixth grade to the existing junior-high structure**. Discussion identified several areas for continued development, including a developmentally appropriate sixth-grade transition, interdisciplinary teacher teams, collaborative student support, study and organizational skills, exploratory electives, technology expectations, DLI programming, and meaningful measures for evaluating the effectiveness of different approaches.

Members emphasized building on the strengths already present in District schools while creating a smoother bridge from elementary school to high school. District leadership will continue studying successful middle-school models and working with principals and educators to further develop the framework if the Board chooses a 6–8 configuration.

ADJOURNMENT

President Lyman noted that an additional Study Session would be held the following Wednesday, September 30th at 2:30 p.m. at the same location to continue the boundary study with a focus on elementary boundaries.

With no additional study session business, President Lyman concluded the study session.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:38 PM.