

Frequently Asked Questions about Strategic Planning and Reorganization

1) Is Hawthorn 73 required to do reorganization plans because of not making Adequate Yearly Progress?

Yes, the district is required to make restructuring plans for Title I schools that have not made AYP for 5 years, and to implement the plan after not making AYP for 6 years. Elementary North is in “Restructuring Planning” status this year and will be in “Restructuring Implementation” status next year, regardless of whether they make AYP based on the 2014 ISAT tests. Elementary South will be in “Restructuring Planning” status next year, regardless of whether they make AYP based on the 2014 ISAT tests. According to NCLB, a school must make AYP for 2 consecutive years in order to be out of AYP status.

A brief history of testing status by school

The Federal Improvement Status and required actions of “Choice,” “SES” (Supplemental Educational Services), and “Restructuring” are for Title I schools only.

1st year – no required actions

2nd Year – no required actions

3rd Year – Academic Early Warning Status – School must offer AYP choice (students can choose to attend another school in the district that is making AYP) and create a School Improvement Plan (SIP).

4th Year – Academic Watch Status– AYP school choice required and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) required. Use an outside consultant to help with SIP.

5th Year – Academic Watch Status Year 2– Corrective Action required – Restructuring Planning Required

6th Year - Academic Watch Status Year 3 – Restructuring Implementation

Elementary North (Title I)

Years not making AYP

2008-2009 – 1st year

2009-2010 – 2nd Year

2010-2011 – Academic Early Warning Status – The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and create a School Improvement Plan

2011-2012 – Academic Watch Status– The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and Supplemental Educational Services required

2012-2013 – Academic Watch Status Year 2– Corrective Action required – The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and use an outside consultant from the Regional Office of Education to help with the School Improvement Planning

2013-2014 – Academic Watch Status Year 3 – Restructuring Planning

School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP

Elementary South (Title I)

Years not making AYP

2009-2010 – 1st Year

2010-2011 – 2nd Year

2011-2012 - Academic Early Warning Status – The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and create a School Improvement Plan

2012-2013 – Academic Watch Status– The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and Supplemental Educational Services required

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2013-2014 – Academic Watch Status Year 2– Corrective Action required – The School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP and use an outside consultant from the ROE to help with the School Improvement Planning

2014-2015 – Academic Watch Status Year 3 – Restructuring Planning

School District must offer AYP choice to students attending the Title I school not making AYP

Dual Language (non Title I) No sanctions or status required by federal law.

2011-2012 -1st year

2012-2013 – 2nd year

2013-2014 - ?

Aspen/Townline (non Title I) No sanctions or status required by federal law.

Both schools have not had consecutive years of not passing. A school must have consecutive years not passing to get into status and be Title I.

MSS/MSN – Both are on the same time frame. (Both are non Title I) No sanctions or status required by federal law.

There is potential that MSN could be Title I in the future.

2011-2012 -1st year

2012-2013 – 2nd year

2013-2014 -

2) What are the issues the Reorganization Committee is trying to resolve?

The unfortunate state testing situation in our district was the catalyst for the AYP committee to come together to make a recommendation about what the district should do about restructuring planning needed at Elementary North. That committee recommended that the district reorganize but did not detail what that reorganization should look like. The Board of Education supported the Superintendent’s recommendation to form a new committee, the Reorganization Committee, to determine how the district should reorganize in order to address the restructuring need. They were also directed to specifically discuss what role, if any, school choice should have in any reorganization plan.

As this committee has worked to determine possible reorganization plans, it has become evident that there are more issues in the district which need to be addressed through potential reorganization plans. One example of an issue being investigated through the reorganization plans is:

Building Capacity vs. Usage: The reorganization Committee has worked with Legat Architects to evaluate the enrollment patterns and capacities of the buildings within the district. Legat explained to the committee the different capacity definitions that architects use to determine how “full” a building is:

Code Capacity / IBC addresses safety. It considers the number of students against the size of the classroom in order to allow for safe exiting and appropriate sizing of exit ways, stairs and doors.

Educational Adequacy addresses functional class size. It considers the number of students against the size of the classroom in order to allow for appropriate learning activities. This is a generic formula applied non inclusive of the specific program or the specific student needs. It reflects the Design Capacity of the building.

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Program Capacity also addresses functional class size. It considers the number of students against the size of the classroom in order to allow for appropriate learning activities. But it considers the specific student needs and the specific program to be assigned to this room at the current time.

We have found that the program capacity of each of the buildings is significantly different from one to the next and has an impact on programs which can be offered. These differences have been occurring for several years and are not a direct result of the AYP issues.

Townline/The School of Dual Language	99% full
Aspen Elementary	97% full
Elementary South	93% full
Elementary North	80% full

The District clearly needs to find a way to capture the available space at Elementary North to ensure that the space in all of our facilities is maximized.

Some of the usage differences have been the result of certain programs which the district has had to increase over the years. Bilingual and ELL programming, Special Education programs and Early Childhood programming have all required additional space.

The usage differences by building have also caused inconsistent programming for optional programs that we've tried to offer for our students. For example, not all buildings have extended day kindergarten or full day kindergarten opportunities due to lack of space.

Using buildings beyond their recommended capacity has also caused the district to renovate or add on to buildings in the past few years. For example, Elementary North and South have both had major additions in the last 10 years in order to address growing populations of students.

Space issues have also led to differences in class sizes within the district and a reorganization plan may be able to alleviate some of these issues, as well.

3) Are there other issues/reasons the district needs to reorganize?

- Inequitable distribution of students has the potential to cause inequalities in educational opportunities.
- Current organizational practices may be costing the district money in terms of transportation and staff expenses. The unpredictable distribution of students (due to our school choice process) has impacted the District's ability to efficiently staff buildings and run programs.

The committee's work is to analyze the current design of the district and work to align our resources to best meet the needs of our students and address the issues listed above, as well as address other issues that may come to their attention through the process.

4) Will there be an opportunity for me to share my ideas on potential plans for reorganization?

The committee will be inviting public input through surveys and public meetings before recommendations are made to the Board. Community members should look for these ongoing opportunities throughout the rest of this school year. Please also check back on this website (www.hawthorn73.org) for updates as work progresses.

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5) Is this an issue dealing with just Aspen Elementary?

No. The issue impacts the entire school district and all schools. You can find information about how this issue has progressed by reviewing some of the archival information that outlines the work of the previous AYP Committee, which you will find under the “Background” section of this webpage.

6) What is the makeup of the Reorganization Committee?

The committee consists of two parents per building, one teacher per building, two board members, one middle school administrator, one elementary school administrator, and one facilitator.

7) How were the committee members selected?

Last year, there was a request for volunteers to be part of this committee. More than 80 people offered to be part of the effort. Names were then pulled to fill the spots for the committee as outlined in the previous question. The elementary parents were put into two groups by school. The groups were parents of primary students (K-2) and intermediate parents (3-5) in an effort to have a balance representing both levels of elementary experiences.

8) I have heard Board members are on the committee. Is this a normal practice?

The inclusion of board members on committees is not a new practice for the school district. Board members have served on committees in the past (Future Search, World Language Task Force, Financial Advisory Task Force, etc.) and it has not been an issue. It is a common practice for many school districts to include Board members on these types of committees.

9) I heard a rumor that the decision has already been made about reorganizing the district. Is this true?

That is an incorrect rumor. There have been no recommendations made to the Board or any decision made about the organization of the school district. The committee is in the process of analyzing data about the district.

10) I have heard a rumor that The School of Dual Language is being closed?

This is a false rumor. Please see the direction the school board provided to the reorganization committee.