

Resolution to Close Frontier High School

Whereas on February 24, 2020, the administration of Elizabeth School District presented a formal written recommendation to the Elizabeth Board of Education at its regular work session regarding the future of Frontier High School and the district property located on Banner Street in the Town of Elizabeth; and

Whereas the February 24th written recommendation stated:

It is the administration's recommendation that the Elizabeth Board of Education,

1. Authorize the closure of Frontier High School after the completion of the current school year,
2. Authorize the Elizabeth High School Principal to review and approve the transfer of credits earned at Frontier High School towards the Elizabeth High School graduation requirements for any current Frontier student who enrolls at Elizabeth High School next school year, and
3. Direct the administration to develop and present for board consideration a proposal for the process to sell the Frontier High School property; and

Whereas the basis for the recommendation stated that the Frontier program is financially unsustainable, and the Frontier building is at the end of its useful life as a school; and

Whereas on March 9, 2020, the administration presented an updated version of the written recommendation and the Board of Education heard public comment on the matter; and

Whereas under C.R.S. 22-32-109, and C.R.S. 22-32-110, the local Board of Education has certain powers and duties regarding its public schools. In particular, C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(l) establishes the Board's power to determine which schools of the district shall be operated and maintained; and

Whereas the District's mission is to provide students with excellent and diverse learning opportunities that inspire passion for learning, develop individual potential and prepare them for a successful future; and

Whereas the Board of Education finds that the substance of the administration's recommendation is sound and is consistent with the District's mission and the goals of the board; and

Whereas the Board of Education believes that if Frontier is closed at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, the students currently enrolled at Frontier High School who choose to attend Elizabeth High School would be best served by establishing a coherent program of instruction within Elizabeth High School for those students; and

Whereas the financial rationale for the original recommendation was compelling, the spread of COVID-19 is unprecedented and has caused an economic slowdown, the Legislative Council has forecasted that Colorado has gone from a projected budgetary surplus of \$832 million and a \$450 million TABOR refund in FY 2020-21, to no TABOR refund and a surplus of only \$27 million, resulting in the very real possibility the Budget Stabilization (also called the Negative Factor) will increase next year and expose the Elizabeth School District to unexpected and uncertain downward pressure on the FY 2020-2021 budget.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Elizabeth School District Board of Education:

1. Authorizes the closure of Frontier High School after the completion of the current school year.
2. Authorizes the Elizabeth High School Principal to review and approve the transfer of credits earned at Frontier High School towards the Elizabeth High School graduation requirements for any current Frontier student who enrolls at Elizabeth High School next school year.
3. Directs the administration to develop and present for board consideration a proposal for the process to sell the Frontier High School property.

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent is directed to work with the Elizabeth High School Principal to create a temporary “alternative program” at Elizabeth High School for at least one year that includes, but is not limited to, the following characteristics:

1. Is open to any current Frontier student who enrolls at Elizabeth High School and requests to participate in the “alternative program”.
2. Is taught by up to four (4) “alterative program” teachers hired, supervised and evaluated by the Elizabeth High School Principal, and where such hiring shall be based on the Frontier Staff Transition section of the written recommendation which does not guarantee employment for any specific person or position.
3. Is staffed by a sufficient number of teachers for the number of current Frontier High School students who enroll at Elizabeth High School for 2020-2021 School Year and request to participate in the “alternative program”.

4. Assigns each “alternative program” teacher to mentor, support, coach and watch out for the best interests of a small group (approximately 4 to 6) of “alternative program” students.
5. Locates the “alternative program” classrooms in close proximity to each other, to the extent possible as determined by the Principal.
6. Does not accept additional students as “alternative program” students, but allows any new, or existing Elizabeth High School students to enroll in any number of courses taught by “alternative program” teachers, upon counselor approval.
7. Allows “alternative program” students to enroll in classes taught by any teacher at Elizabeth High School.
8. Is constituted academically by core curriculum and electives established and supervised by the Elizabeth High School Principal and taught by “alternative program” teachers in either semester or year-long courses, ideally using applicable courses currently offered at Frontier High School.
9. Uses the same schedule as Elizabeth High School.
10. Enables “alternative program” students to earn quarter credits (.25 credits) for semester or year-long courses upon satisfactory completion of course work by the end of each quarter.
11. Caps the enrollment in “alternative program” courses at approximately 15 students per class.
12. Allows for flexibility consistent with that used at Frontier High School for teacher expectations regarding tardiness and absences for “alternative program” students in “alternative program” classes.
13. Requires ‘alternative program” students to abide by the same behavior, health, and safety policies established by the Board of Education and implemented by Elizabeth High School for all students in the school.

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proposed District budget for the 2020-2021 School Year be adjusted to include the costs associated with the staffing requirement of hiring additional teachers and any other reasonable and necessary costs associated with the implementation of the “alternative program”. **The target date for current Frontier High School students to express serious interest in enrolling in an “alternative program” at Elizabeth High School, by scheduling a meeting with a counselor, shall be May 1, 2020.**

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the “alternative program” be allowed to change and evolve as Elizabeth High School redesigns its program to better meet the needs of all its students.

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent, Elizabeth High School Principal, Finance Director and Human Resources Director will provide the Board of Education at least two (2) updates on the “alternative program,” once during the Fall semester and once during the Spring semester. During the Spring update, the future of the program will be re-evaluated.

Adopted and approved this ____ day of _____, 2020.

President, on behalf of
the Elizabeth School District Board of Education

ATTEST:

Secretary, Board of Education