

Recommendation for a Decision Making Process:

A Response to the Organizational Study Report

A Proposal to the School Board of Moorhead Area Public Schools on a Recommendation to Proactively Address Primary Focus Areas Which Will Enhance the Educational Effectiveness, Economic Efficiency, and Future Position of Moorhead Public Schools Through Research-Based Decision Making, Community Collaboration, and Consensus Building.

Prepared and Presented

by

Dr. Larry P. Nybladh

Superintendent of Schools

Moorhead Area Public Schools
Independent School District #152
Moorhead, Minnesota

April 23, 2001

Additional copies of this document are available at the Office of the Superintendent, 810 4th Ave. S., Moorhead, or on the district Web site at www.moorhead.k12.mn.us.

Comments or suggestions regarding this process may be e-mailed to superintendent@moorhead.k12.mn.us.



*The mission of the
Moorhead Area
Public Schools is to
develop the maximum
potential of every
learner to thrive
in a changing world.*



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George Washington kindergartners scoop pasta into bags as part of a service-learning project at the Great Plains Food Bank.

The mission of the Moorhead Public Schools is to develop the maximum potential of every learner to thrive in a changing world.



Statement of Philosophy

Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent of Schools

Times of austerity and change naturally cause us to reconsider the status quo. Our school district is no different. Macro level shifts in population demographics, economic forces, and political policy toward public education are causing local level consequences to occur.

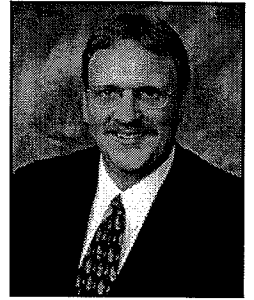
Declining student enrollment, ever-escalating costs of education, and seemingly diminished levels of political support for public education are all impacting our district's ability to maintain the high level of educational quality and opportunity to which the Moorhead community has become accustomed. At the same time a demanding public expects more from its public schools, and the unique and increasing needs of individual students make the challenge even greater.

In addition to confronting the challenges of today, we must also be vigilant about considering the long-term future of our district and the Moorhead community. We need to more fully understand and consider the symbiotic relationship between the school district's infrastructure, including facilities, programs, and services, and the health and vitality of the larger community. It is quite evident, as one considers the demographic and economic trends of our region, that school districts and communities that have a positive future are those that are working toward a model of growth and redevelopment. These are places that are anticipating the future and investing in it.

Our goal, in an effort to reverse the downward spiral of decline, must be to maximize both educational effectiveness and economic efficiency. We need to "leap frog" our current predicament and envision and develop a future which is both positive and sustainable. We must make our district's schools and our community "Magnets of Excellence," places of irresistible attraction to all, but especially to those who will spend most of their lives living in the future.

As we approach the development of our future, we must be visionary, rational, and methodical. Research-based and data-driven decisions, sensitive to community values, will best serve our effort. Our entire community must become involved in a collaborative, consensus building process. We must seek first to create a common understanding about our predicament, and then to listen and consider all perspectives and options. Finally, we must build a community consensus for the most appropriate change which will set us upon our desired future course.

We must look beyond yesterday and today. We must address our problems, but more importantly, we must seek to find the opportunities of tomorrow. We must be future-focused. I have held the belief for some time that the best way to predict the future is to invent it.



*"We must make our district's schools and our community 'Magnets of Excellence,' places of irresistible attraction to all, but especially to those who will spend most of their lives living in the future."
– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



A Moorhead High student performs with Apollo Strings. Moorhead High School was named a Grammy Signature School last year for its commitment to music education.



Background on the Organizational Study

Enrollment Decline and Financial Situation

In 1989-90, the Moorhead School District enrolled an average daily membership of 5,269 students. Beginning with the base year of 1989-90, the district experienced five consecutive years of student enrollment growth peaking in 1994-95 with 6,114 students enrolled in grades K-12.

Information from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning and the Moorhead School District's Office of Teaching and Learning indicates that since 1995-96 the district has experienced five consecutive years of student enrollment decline. It is projected that school enrollment will continue to decline by an average of 103 students each year for the next five years.

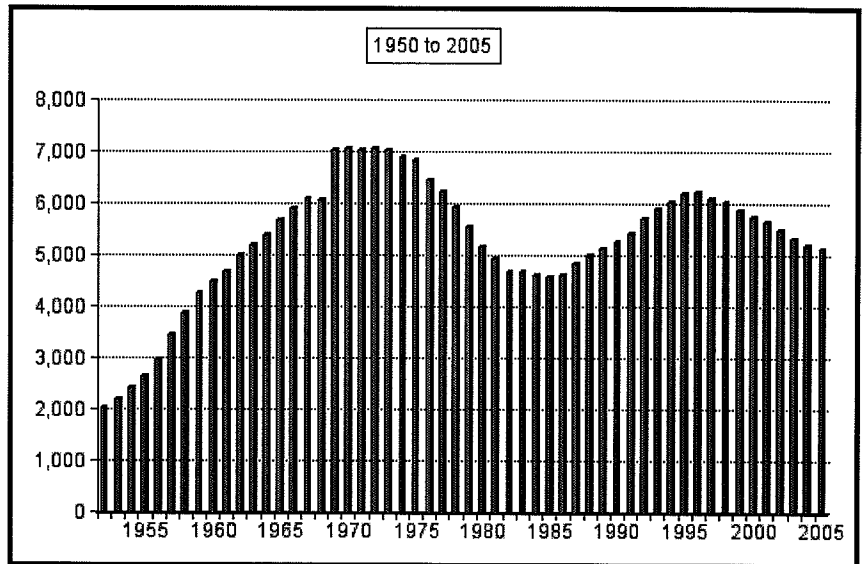
The enrollment decline resulted in a decline in General Fund revenue. During 1996-97 and 1997-98, the district's General Fund revenues and expenditures were moderately balanced, resulting in a stable General Fund balance.

However, by 1998-99 and 1999-00, the district's General Fund revenues and expenditures were extraordinarily imbalanced, resulting in large decreases in the General Fund balance and a large-scale General Fund budget reduction in 1999-2000 for the 2000-01 school year.

At the conclusion of the 1999-00 school year, Moorhead School District's General Fund balance of \$1,207,075 amounted to 2.8% of the district's General Fund expenditure budget of \$43,600,427. In order to meet cash flow needs the school district should maintain a ratio of 10 to 15 percent of expenditures.

Mid-way through the 1999-00 school year, the School Board selected Dr. Larry P. Nybladh as its new Superintendent of Schools. Within months, Dr. Nybladh found it necessary to implement a collaborative budget-planning process which led to a \$1.9 million budget reduction for the 2000-01 school year.

Following the budget reduction, Dr. Nybladh



indicated that, unless measures were taken, the district would face an annual cycle of future General Fund budget reductions.

Future-Focused Initiatives

In presentations to the School Board and district staff in August 2000, Dr. Nybladh outlined the five initiatives that were developed as proactive responses to the current condition of declining student enrollment and the associated budget problems facing the district.

The five future-focused initiatives are to conduct an enrollment study, conduct an organizational study, analyze the district's organizational culture and climate, review the district funding sources, and create a strong partnership between the district and community.

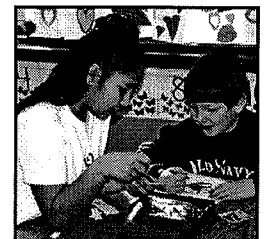
Conduct an enrollment study

The district needs to conduct a comprehensive study of the enrollment patterns to understand the enrollment decline and develop a response plan. The study must focus on both the demographic trends impacting enrollment and on the increasing number of competitive forces eroding the district's enrollment.

Review the school's programs, grade configuration and facility use

The district must review the programs, grade

Enrollment Cycle
Since 1995-96 the district has experienced five consecutive years of student enrollment decline. It is projected that school enrollment will continue to decline for the next five years.



A Moorhead High student helps a kindergartner in the Spanish Immersion Program make Valentines.



configuration, and facility usage to ensure the district is maximizing educational effectiveness and economic efficiency.

Analyze the organizational culture and climate

The district needs to analyze its organizational culture and climate and create a system where teachers, staff and administrators work together to collaborate on projects and solutions.

Review the district's funding sources

To maintain its quality programs, the district must seek more outside revenue and additional state funding. The district needs to further educate the state legislature on the demographic trends causing the enrollment decline and assist the legislature in creating options that might provide necessary support.

Create a strong partnership between the district and the community

As the city's largest employer, the district must further develop the partnership between the district and the community. The district needs to examine how the schools, students, and district employees can promote the growth and development of the Moorhead community.

Need for the Organizational Study

Superintendent Nybladh and the School Board determined it was appropriate and necessary to commission an Organizational Analysis Study to gather and analyze school district data, present findings, draw conclusions, identify alternatives, and prepare recommendations that would lead to decisions about the future of the school district's programs, services, staffing, grade level configuration, facilities, and other operational characteristics to ensure the delivery of quality teaching/learning, community, social, and recreational opportunities for the school district's pre-school, school-aged, and adult populations.

In September 2000, following Dr. Nybladh's recommendation, the School Board selected Roger Worner Associates, Educational Systems' Consultants, Sartell, Minnesota, to serve as the school district's independent third party neutral

to design and conduct the Organizational Analysis Study. Dr. Roger Worner, who worked in various superintendent and assistant superintendent positions for over 20 years before going into consulting, served as the Project Consultant for the study. Dr. Worner has completed over 400 organizational studies in a five-state area.

Organizational Study Methodology

Roger Worner Associates, Sartell, Minnesota, was selected to serve as the school district's independent third party neutral to design and conduct the Organizational Analysis Study. The study was conducted over a five-month period of time, from October 2000 to February 2001.

The specific questions prepared to aid in investigating the purpose of the study, guide the Project Consultant, and furnish substantial content for the Organizational Analysis Study document were as follows:

- What is the current status of the school district's enrollment, enrollment trends, finances, programs, services, staffing, organizational configuration, facilities, and related issues?
- What conclusions may be drawn about the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the district's operations?
- What alternatives are plausible for increasing the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the school district's operations?
- What recommendations does the Project Consultant suggest may be employed to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the school district's operations?

During October, Dr. Worner collected data related to budgets, programs, staffing, and facilities. In November, Dr. Worner met with the principals at Robert Asp, Moorhead Junior High, and Moorhead High School. He also met with Moorhead High School faculty and interviewed the School Board members. In December 2000, Dr. Worner, met with administration and staff at other school sites and visited with parents and

"We must look to the future and invest in the infrastructure of our school district if we are to maintain our commitment to excellence. Restructuring the way we utilize facilities and configure grades and reforming instructional delivery systems will allow us to 'do more with less.'"

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent of Schools*



A Moorhead Junior High student performs with the jazz band during last year's Celebration of Success talent showcase and volunteer recognition event.



community leaders to explain the process for the study, answer questions, and receive input. Parents and community members were invited to attend one of the five Special Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) meetings scheduled for December.

Parents or community members who were unable to attend one of the five scheduled meetings were able to provide input and participate in the organizational study by sending Dr. Worner e-mail.

Following the collection of data about the district, Dr. Worner analyzed data which would permit the development of findings, conclusions, alternatives, and recommendations for review and consideration by the School Board, superintendent, staff, parents and public.

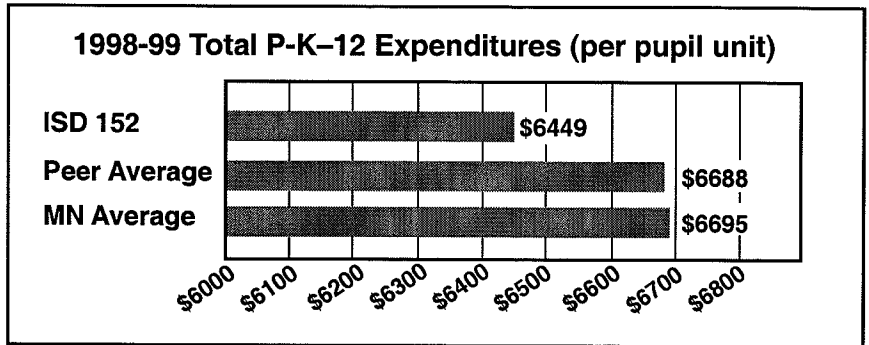
He presented his findings and recommendations to the School Board on Feb. 26 and at a public information meeting on Feb. 27, 2001. Dr. Worner's full report and related materials are available on the district's Web site at www.moorhead.k12.mn.us. In an effort to seek parental and staff input regarding Dr. Worner's report, School Board and administrative representatives attended March Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) meetings.

Dr. Worner's Conclusions

Based on data gathered and analyzed in his report, Dr. Worner offered a number of conclusions to Superintendent Nybladh and the School Board of Moorhead Public Schools.

District Size and Enrollment Trends

The Project Consultant found that, while the Moorhead School District would be classified as a large critical student mass school district, the organization's student enrollment has declined for six consecutive years, and, furthermore, the school district is losing a considerable number of resident students through the Minnesota Open Enrollment Options' Program, non-public school attendance, home school participation, and alternative learning program opportunities. In virtually no instances are departing students receiving higher quality instructional



programs and services than are available in the school district.

The school district's student enrollment is projected to decline in the future and, unless intervening variables modify that trend, the loss of students will be accompanied by diminishing programs, services, staffing, and, likely, facilities.

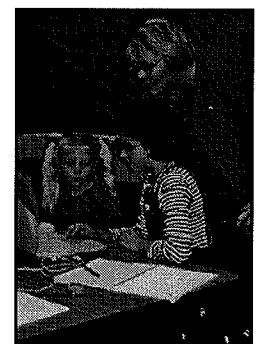
Finances

In recent years, the school district has operated imbalanced General Fund budgets, severely reduced its General Fund reserves, and exacted a significant General Fund budget reduction for the 2000-01 school year. At the conclusion of the 1999-00 school year, the school district's General Fund balance of \$1,207,075 amounted to only 2.8% of the school district's General Fund expenditure budget of \$43,600,427.

The school district expends funds for total P-K-12 operations at a lower rate than is found in the average of all like-sized school districts in Minnesota and in the average of all school districts in Minnesota.

Between 1988-89 and 1998-99, the school district trailed the average of all like-sized school districts in Minnesota and the average of all Minnesota school districts in the following expenditure categories: district and school administration; district support services; regular instruction; vocational instruction; instructional support services; pupil support services; operations and maintenance; food services; and transportation. Yet, the school district significantly exceeded exceptional instruction spending for the average of all like-sized school districts in Minnesota and the average of all Minnesota school districts.

District Expenditures
In 1998-99, the Moorhead School District was below both the average of all like-sized school districts in Minnesota and the average of all Minnesota school districts in total per pupil expenditures.



Probstfield fourth-graders work with kindergartners on a writing project using wireless laptop computers.



Educational Programs, Services, and Staffing

The Moorhead School District operates highly cost-effective elementary, junior high school, and senior high school class section sizes; offers an excellent, broad array of course offerings; has made extraordinary progress in implementing the state's Graduation Standards; and furnishes a broad and comprehensive array of instructional and support services. The organization's technology and community education programs/services are outstanding.

Alternately, the school district's pupil/professional staff ratio has been cost-ineffectively low. The school district continued to increase the number of professional staff members in recent years — despite the fact that student enrollment was declining.

The school district would benefit from encouraging the administration and staff of Moorhead Senior High School to implement methodologies and delivery systems (including advisor-advisee programming, block scheduling, academy concept, school-within-a-school concept, others) to enhance the personalizing of students' academic, social, emotional, and physical experiences in the school. Numerous parents, patrons, staff, and students expressed that student out-migration has occurred (and continues to occur) as a result of many students feeling "unconnected" to other students, staff, or the school (as a preferred environment in which to be).

School Facilities

The school district has insufficiently invested in the remodeling and renovation of its schools over the past three to four decades. The school district's teaching/learning facilities, while well maintained, are quite aged (40-50 years), not modern-day, not attractive, and not particularly accommodating to modern-day teaching methodologies and delivery systems. The organization's junior high school design, particularly, is not conducive to the delivery of modern-day middle-level programming. Large numbers of parents, patrons, and staff expressed a desire to see the school district implement a "true middle school" concept.

Additionally, the Moorhead School District operates two cost-ineffectively-sized elementary school facilities (Riverside and Lincoln) and a cost-ineffectively small and non-modern day facility (Voyager).

The school district's administration is burdened with the responsibility of leasing select (and aged) school facilities, a practice which should be discontinued. The school district annually leases \$347,423 worth of properties to house or accommodate curricular and extracurricular programs operated by the school district.

Dr. Worner's Recommendations

For a complete synopsis of the fifteen recommendations offered by Dr. Worner, see Appendix A.

Response to Dr. Worner's Report

At its meeting on Feb. 26, 2001, the School Board voted to receive the Organizational Study Analysis Report completed by Dr. Worner and refer the report to administration for consideration. Superintendent Nybladh indicated that a likely response to Dr. Worner's study would be the creation of multiple task forces to study and consider the recommendations and that an administrative recommendation for the decision making process would be presented at the School Board meeting on April 9, 2001.

This report houses Superintendent Nybladh's recommendations for a decision making process as a response to Dr. Worner's Organizational Study Report.

District Facilities

*Riverside Elementary
Built in 1951; serves
students in grades K-5*

*Edison Elementary
Built in 1953; serves
students in grades K-5*

*Washington Elementary
Built in 1951; serves
students in grades K-4*

*Probstfield Elementary
Built in 1965; serves
students in grades K-4*

*Robert Asp
Built in 1958; serves
students in grades 5-6*

*Moorhead Junior High
Built in 1958; serves
students in grades 7-8*

*Moorhead Senior High
Built in 1966; serves
students in grades 9-12*

*Lincoln
Built in 1971; houses
Early Childhood
Family Education*

*Voyager
Built in 1956; houses
Adult Basic Education
program; additional
space leased to tenants*

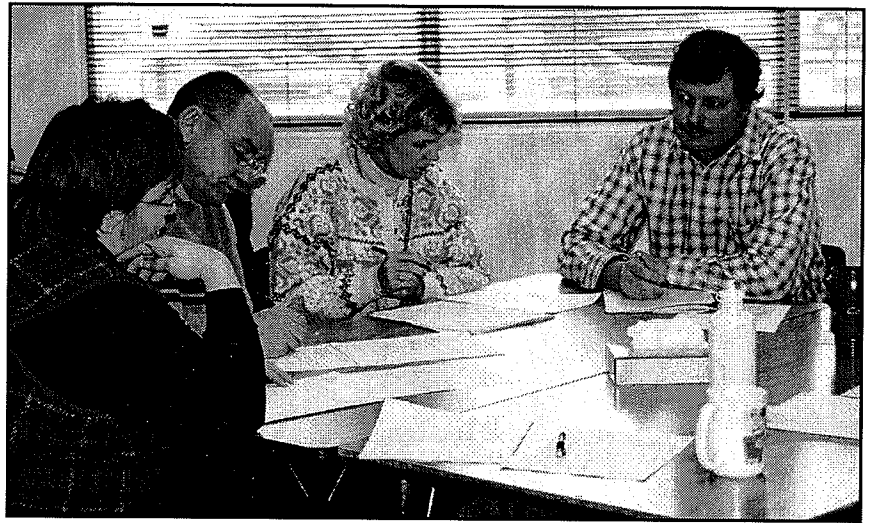
*Townsite Centre
Built in 1921; houses
district administration
(24%) and Community
Education (2.4%);
additional space leased
to tenants (73.6%)*



Decision Making Process

Decision making is widely recognized as being at the heart of any organization. An organization's success rises or falls based upon the decisions made, as well as on how they are made. Good decisions require good information and quality data. Good decisions are normally made based upon a thorough examination of all options and alternatives. Good decision makers consider the context of the decision, including the time, the place, the person(s) affected, and the support required for implementation of the decision. Good decisions are sensitive to the values of the decision makers and to those who are affected by the decisions within the organization and the community.

The decision making process in this recommendation is based upon a rational model. This approach requires research-based and data-driven decision making. It requires both appropriate expertise and perspective from those participating in decision making. This recommendation is also based upon a philosophical premise that collaborative decision making is more appropriate in this context. Collaboration requires trust, honesty, open dialogue, and mutual respect for individual perspectives. Collaboration is the best approach for facilitating consensus building. Consensus is a necessity due to the complexity of the Primary Focus Areas and the reliance on broad based community support for any



change initiatives which may emerge from these processes.

This recommendation provides for eight Primary Focus Areas (See Appendix B). Each of these Primary Focus Areas is associated with one or more of the recommendations offered by Dr. Worner in the Organizational Study Report. The Primary Focus Areas are each addressed by one or more approaches. These approaches include: Administrative Project, Research Study Group, and Community Task Force.

The timeline for this decision making process begins immediately upon approval by the Moorhead School Board on April 23, 2001. Each approach within the Primary Focus Areas has an assigned date for commencement of their process and a target date for completion of their work (See Appendix C).

Principals, district administrators, and representatives from the Building Leadership Teams collaborate on generating recommendations for budget reductions for the 2001-02 Annual Operational Plan.

An Open and Public Process

The work being completed through the Administrative Projects, Research Study Groups, and Community Task Forces will be conducted through an open and public process. Any scheduled meetings are open to the public, press and media.

The times, dates and locations of meetings will be posted on the district's Web site at www.moorhead.k12.mn.us. Meeting minutes and reports will be available on the Web site. The information will also be available from the Office of the Superintendent, 810 4th Ave. S., Moorhead. Telephone: (218) 284-3330.

"Good decisions require good information and quality data. Good decisions are normally made based upon a thorough examination of all options and alternatives."

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



Definition of Approaches

This recommendation for a decision making process involves eight Primary Focus Areas. Each of one of these eight areas represents a complex and challenging subject. Successful decision making within each of these areas will require additional inquiry and research, as well as significant communication, dialogue, and deliberation.

The approach to addressing individual areas is dependent upon the status of previous work, the timeline for decision making, the complexity of the task, or the need for community collaboration. Accordingly, three approaches to addressing the eight primary focus areas are recommended: 1) Administrative Project; 2) Research Study Group, and 3) Community Task Force (see Appendix B).

Some of the Primary Focus Areas will be assigned one approach, while others may have multiple approaches suggested. It should be noticed that all of the Primary Focus Areas have some relationship to each other, and, in fact, some areas, in reality, are heavily intertwined. Accordingly, there will need to be some interface between the individuals and groups working on the Administrative Projects, Research Study Groups, or Community Task Forces.

Following is a brief description of each of the approaches offered for addressing each of the Primary Focus Areas:

Administrative Project

The Administrative Project approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas in those areas that the district has sufficient administrative resources to adequately research the primary focus area and provide recommendations. This approach is reliant on the positional and professional expertise of specific administrators. This approach is also desirable when there is a need to move rapidly on the project and to also readily communicate with internal and external persons or agencies.

The administrator(s) involved in the Administrative Project will provide a report and recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools. These reports and recommendations will be presented to the applicable Research Study Group and Community Task Forces.

Research Study Group

The Research Study Group approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas where relatively significant amounts of additional research is needed for informal decision making. The Research Study Group will be directed to conduct sufficient research in the topic area so that data-based and research-based recommendations can be developed. Those persons within the district who possess the most appropriate positional and/or professional expertise will be asked to serve on the respective Research Study Groups.

The Research Study Groups will be asked to provide reports and recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools and applicable Community Task Forces.

Community Task Force

The Community Task Force approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas which require significant community collaboration and consensus building for decision making. The Community Task Forces will be asked to consider information and data developed and presented to them by the Administrative Projects and the Research Study Groups, as well as to conduct additional research as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Members of the Community Task Forces will be sought out and selected based upon the perspective they represent and/or the expertise they may bring to the process.

While the Community Task Forces will be representatives of the district and community, they will also be asked to develop communication and deliberation processes to involve and engage the larger community.

The Community Task Forces will be asked to provide a report and recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools.

“Successful decision making within each of the primary focus areas will require additional inquiry and research, as well as significant communication, dialogue, and deliberation.”

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



Robert Asp sixth-graders worked together in small groups to research and develop lessons for the Riverside second-graders who attended the living history event at Probst-field Farm.



Primary Focus Area One: Student Demographics

Administrative Project

Purpose:

This Administrative Project will involve the further research and analysis of data related to the past, present, and future student enrollment of Moorhead Public Schools. This inquiry should focus on both demographic trends and competitive forces which may be impacting the district's enrollment.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Complete a comprehensive research study, using both quantitative and qualitative research methodology.
- Prepare a report of the study.
- Submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and review the report with the Student Demographics Community Task Force and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The final report shall be completed on or before July 1, 2001.

Lead Administrators:

Ms. Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Larry P. Nybladh,
Superintendent of Schools

Community Task Force

Purpose:

The primary purpose of the Student Demographics Community Task Force will be to consider research evidence regarding declining student enrollment within Moorhead Public Schools and to develop a recommendation for a response plan to limit or reverse this decline.

Specific Responsibilities:

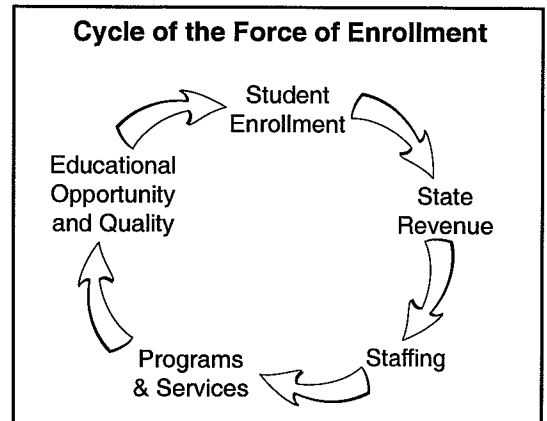
- Study and consider the report submitted by the Student Demographics Administrative Project administrators.
- Conduct or consider additional research as deemed appropriate.
- Develop a response plan which addresses student enrollment decline and offers solutions to reverse this decline.
- Recommend the response plan to the Superintendent of Schools.

Time Frame:

- The Student Demographics Community Task Force shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately August 15, 2001.
- Preferably, the response plan shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools on or before October 31, 2001.

Community Task Force Membership:

The Community Task Force membership will be determined by the Community Task Force Membership Selection Committee. Membership shall include approximately 10-12 members.



Cycle of the Force of Enrollment
When student enrollment is declining, state revenue declines. This leads to reductions in staffing and programs and services. These reductions lead to a perception of decreased educational opportunities and quality, which can cause further decreases in student enrollment.

“This decline of about 100 students a year has a dramatic impact on the revenue the district generates to provide its programs and services. The loss of each student equates to about a \$5,000 loss in revenue.”

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



Primary Focus Area Two: Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model

Community Task Force

Purpose:

The primary purpose of the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force will be to research, examine, and consider alternative options to Moorhead Public Schools' use of facilities and grade level configuration. The goals of this effort are to maximize educational effectiveness and economic efficiencies, as well as to position the district for a positive future.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Study and consider the findings and recommendations on the subject as made by Dr. Worner in the Organizational Study Report.
- Research, examine, and consider other alternatives and options for school facilities and grade level configuration.
- Receive and consider reports from:
 - A. Student Demographics Community Task Force
 - B. Administrative Project on Current/Future Facility Analysis
 - C. Middle School Model Research Study Group and Community Task Force
 - D. High School Enhancement Research Study Group and Community Task Force
 - E. Alternative Education Delivery Model Administrative Project and Community Task Force

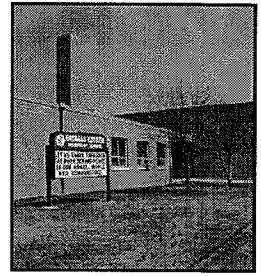
- Prepare a report, complete with findings and recommendations, regarding the most appropriate facility and grade level configuration model for the future of Moorhead Public Schools.
- Submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools.

Time Frame:

- The Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately August 15, 2001.
- Preferably, the recommendation report shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools on or before December 15, 2001.

Community Task Force Membership:

The Community Task Force membership will be determined by the Community Task Force Membership Selection Committee. Membership shall include approximately 12-15 members.



Edison Elementary, which was built in 1953, currently serves students in grades K-5.

"The vast majority of the programs and services offered today are programs and services that have been created, instituted, and placed in school buildings since those buildings were designed. The buildings were constructed prior to the fact that approximately 75 percent of these programs and services existed. These particular opportunities are provided in facilities that were not designed to house them."

*– Dr. Roger Worner
during the Feb. 27, 2001,
Public Information Meeting*



Primary Focus Area Three: Current / Future Facility Analysis

Administrative Project

Purpose:

This Administrative Project will involve the examination and recommendation of options for further professional analysis of current and potential future school district facilities.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Explore options for professional analysis of current and potential future school district facilities.
- Work to secure revenue for funding any authorized professional study and analysis.
- Provide adequate analysis of alternatives involving existing facilities.
- Provide complete analysis of alternatives which may require new construction of school facilities.
- Report and recommend to the Superintendent of Schools an external, professional process for facility analysis.
- Provide and interpret the facility analysis report to the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force and the Middle School Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

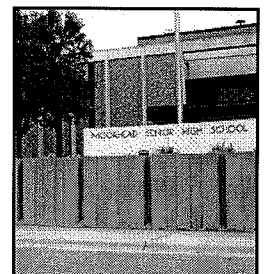
- The process recommendation shall be completed and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools by May 15, 2001.
- The facility analysis report shall be prepared for submission to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force by August 15, 2001.

Lead Administrator:

Mr. Mark Weston, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

“The school district underspends and has underspent on its facilities for a number of years. This expenditure level is illustrative of the fact that Moorhead School District’s facilities are indeed old. They average 43.6 years old on original construction.”

*– Dr. Roger Worner
during the Feb. 27, 2001,
Public Information Meeting*



Moorhead High School, which was built 34 years ago, is the newest of the district’s schools.



Primary Focus Area Four: Middle School Model

Research Study Group

Purpose:

This Research Study Group shall focus on research and study of the middle school model for instructional delivery. Consideration for the resources necessary for and the consequences to the implementation of this model within Moorhead Public Schools shall be made.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Conduct a comprehensive research study of the middle school model.
- Consider the various variations of the middle school model and determine the one most appropriate, if any, for possible implementation within Moorhead Public Schools.
- Determine student, staff and parental interest in this model.
- Consider implications to the district: facilities, budgets, staffing, scheduling, programs, and services.
- Prepare reports of the research study.
- Submit the reports to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the reports to the Middle School Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- Complete and submit a report regarding the conceptual validity of the middle school model to the Superintendent of Schools and Middle School Model Community Task Force by August 15, 2001.
- Complete and submit a report regarding the implementation issues related to the middle school model to the Superintendent of Schools and Middle School Model Community Task Force by October 1, 2001.

Lead Administrator:

Ms. Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Ms. Colleen Tupper, Principal,
Moorhead Junior High School

Dr. Betty Myers, Principal,
Robert Asp Elementary School

Research Study Group Membership:

This Research Study Group will include members of the district's professional staff (specifically grades 6-8 educators/staff) and outside experts as deemed most appropriate by the lead administrators assigned to the Research Study Group.

Community Task Force

Purpose:

The Middle School Model Community Task Force will hear and consider the research report made by the Middle School Model Research Study Group and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Specific Responsibilities:

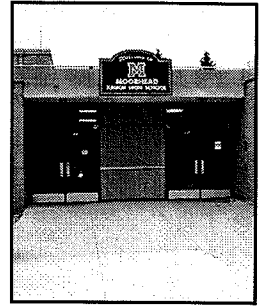
- Study and consider the reports submitted by the Middle School Model Research Study Group.
- Determine appropriate methods to inform and involve the larger community in understanding the middle school model.
- Determine student, staff, and parental interest in this model.
- Provide a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The Middle School Model Community Task Force shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately August 15, 2001.
- The Middle School Model Community Task Force shall submit a report to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force by October 15, 2001.

Community Task Force Membership:

The Community Task Force membership will be determined by the Community Task Force Membership Selection Committee. Membership shall include approximately 10-12 members.



Moorhead Junior High, which was built in 1958, currently serves students in grades 7-8.

"Middle school design is largely focused on providing a closer knit delivery system for staff members to work with staff members and staff members to work with students during the tumultuous years that students are going through the preadolescence to adolescence transition."

*— Dr. Roger Worner
during the Feb. 27, 2001,
Public Information Meeting*



Primary Focus Area Five: High School Enhancement

Research Study Group

Purpose:

This Research Study Group will focus on research and study of approaches or methods to enhance the quality of the educational experience at Moorhead Senior High School.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Provide a comprehensive examination of such concepts as: advisor-advisee program, school transition programs, school-within-a-school concept, academy concept, course scheduling options, and other concepts which could create a “user-friendly” environment for student learners.
- Consider implications to the high school facilities (remodeling needs) and the district’s budget, staffing, programs, and services.
- Consult with appropriate officials from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning.
- Prepare and submit a report, complete with findings and recommendations, to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the report to the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force and the High School Enhancement Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- Complete and submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools, the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force and the High School Enhancement Community Task Force by September 30, 2001.

Lead Administrators:

- Mr. Gene Boyle, Principal,
Moorhead Senior High School
- Mr. Mike Siggerud, Assistant Principal,
Moorhead Senior High School
- Mr. Russ Henegar, Assistant Principal,
Moorhead Senior High School
- Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent
of Teaching and Learning

Research Study Group Membership:

This Research Study Group shall include members of the district’s professional staff and outside experts as deemed most appropriate by the lead administrators assigned to the Research Study Group.

Community Task Force

Purpose:

The High School Enhancement Community Task Force will hear and consider the research report made by the High School Enhancement Research Study Group and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Specific Responsibilities:

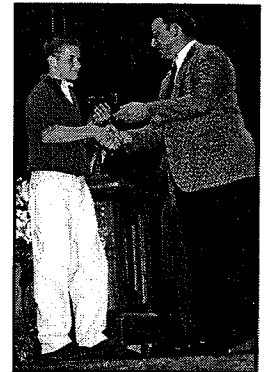
- Study and consider the report submitted by the High School Enhancement Research Study Group.
- Determine appropriate methods to inform and involve the larger community in understanding the high school enhancement recommendations.
- Provide a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The High School Enhancement Community Task Force shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately Aug. 15, 2001.
- The High School Enhancement Community Task Force shall submit a report to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force by Nov. 15, 2001.

Community Task Force Membership:

The Community Task Force membership will be determined by the Community Task Force Membership Selection Committee. Membership shall include approximately 10-12 members.



Principal Gene Boyle presents an academic award to a Moorhead High student.

“The present physical facility is not a warm and inviting place. The high school’s daily schedule and organization does not lend itself to having students and staff get to know each other on a personal basis. Therefore changes in both of these would better meet our students’ needs.”

– Gene Boyle
Principal
Moorhead High School



Primary Focus Area Six: Operational and Capital Revenue Analysis

Administrative Project

Purpose:

This Administrative Project will involve the research and analysis of the district's options for operational and capital revenue utilization or enhancement.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Complete a comprehensive research study of the following:
 - A. Lease Levy
 - B. Excess Levy
 - C. Bond Levy
- Consider all levies, and other revenue sources, for meeting the ongoing operational needs of the district, as well as for use in meeting the present and future capital needs of the district.
- Consult with appropriate officials from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota School Business Officials Association, and others.
- Prepare a report of the study.
- Submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the report to the Facilities and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The final report shall be completed on or before August 1, 2001.

Lead Administrator:

Mr. Mark Weston, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

"I have known of no other school district in the state of Minnesota that has ever asked for the passage of excess levy referendum — that is one that supports programs, services, and staffing — to use that money for capital improvement or technology."

*— Dr. Roger Worner
during the Feb. 27, 2001,
Public Information Meeting*



A Robert Asp student performs with the elementary orchestra. The excess levy referendum provided funding for additional space at Robert Asp for the orchestra program as well as space at Moorhead Senior High and Washington and technology improvements.



Primary Focus Area Seven: Special Education Delivery Model

Administrative Project

Purpose:

This Administrative Project will involve the research and analysis of the district's current delivery model for special education services and examine models which may promote improved economic efficiency.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Complete an analysis of the district's current delivery model for special education services.
- Examine models for the delivery of special education services which may prove more economically efficient.
- Consult with appropriate officials from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning and other appropriate agencies.
- Prepare a report of the study.
- Submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the report to the Special Education Delivery Model Research Study Group.

Time Frame:

- The final report shall be completed and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools and the Special Education Research Study Group on or before December 15, 2001.

Lead Administrator:

To Be Appointed, Director of Special Education and Federal Programs

Ms. Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Research Study Group

Purpose:

This Research Study Group will focus on the research and recommendations pre-

sented by the Special Education Delivery Model Administrative Project. Primarily, this group will decide what additional research is required for the successful implementation of delivery model changes.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Study and consider the research and recommendations presented by the Special Education Delivery Model Administrative Project.
- Conduct additional research as deemed appropriate.
- Develop a recommendation for an implementation plan for changes to the district's special education delivery model.
- Recommend methods for informing and involving appropriate staff and parents.
- Submit the report, with recommendations, to the Superintendent of Schools.

Time Frame:

- The Special Education Delivery Model Research Study Group shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately November 1, 2001.
- Complete and submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools by February 1, 2002.

Lead Administrator:

To Be Appointed, Director of Special Education and Federal Programs

Ms. Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Research Study Group Members:

This Research Study Group will include members of the district's professional staff, the Parent Advisory Group, and outside experts as deemed most appropriate by the lead administrators assigned to the Research Study Group.

"The delivery system that is being carried out is very staff intensive. There is no doubt that the school district's exceptional instruction program is well staffed and successful. The question becomes one of whether the school district, a below average spending school district, can be, should be in a position to be extraordinarily higher in exceptional instruction than peer and state averages."

*— Dr. Roger Worner
during the Feb. 27, 2001,
Public Information Meeting*



Primary Focus Area Eight: Alternative Education Delivery Model

Administrative Project

Purpose:

This Administrative Project will involve the research and analysis of the district's current model for delivery of alternative education and examine alternative models which may prove useful in eliminating duplication and maximizing educational effectiveness and economic efficiency.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Complete an analysis of the district's current delivery model for alternative education with emphasis on any duplication between the Red River Area Learning Center, Youth Educational Services, and Moorhead High School.
- Examine alternative models for the delivery of alternative education which will provide greater educational effectiveness and economic efficiency.
- Determine, by using appropriate research methods, the factors driving increasing student enrollment in alternative education programs.
- Complete an analysis of the entrance and exit criteria for students in alternative programs and recommend improvements in the criteria and process.
- Consult with appropriate officials from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, Lakes Country Service Cooperative, and other appropriate agencies.
- Prepare and submit the report of the study to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the report to the Alternative Education Delivery Model Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The final report shall be completed on or before September 15, 2001.

Lead Administrators:

Ms. Deb Pender, Director,
Red River Area Learning Center
Ms. Colleen Tupper, Principal,
Moorhead Junior High
Mr. Gene Boyle, Principal,
Moorhead Senior High

Ms. Lynne Kovash, Assistant Superintendent
of Teaching and Learning

Community Task Force

Purpose:

This Community Task Force will focus on the research and recommendations presented by the Alternative Education Delivery Model Administrative Project. Particularly, this group will decide what additional research and public information is necessary for the successful implementation of delivery model changes.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Study and consider the research and recommendations presented by the Alternative Education Delivery Model Administrative Project.
- Conduct additional research as deemed appropriate.
- Develop a recommendation for an implementation plan for changes to the district's alternative education program.
- Recommend methods for informing and involving students, staff, parents, and the community.
- Submit a report, with recommendations, to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Submit and interpret the report to the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Community Task Force.

Time Frame:

- The Alternative Education Delivery Model Community Task Force shall meet regularly as needed commencing approximately August 15, 2001.
- Complete and submit the report to the Superintendent of Schools and the Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model Community Task Force by Nov. 15, 2001.

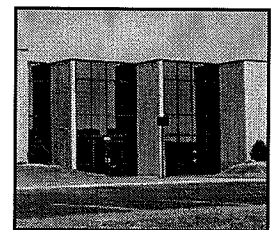
Community Task Force Membership:

The Community Task Force membership will be determined by the Community Task Force Membership Selection Committee. Membership shall include approximately 10-12 members.

"We need to look at integrated alternative education services so that we are providing for the total education of all our students."

– Lynne Kovash

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning



The district leases space for the Red River Area Learning Center in the D&M Professional Building.



Community Task Forces

Membership Selection Process

This recommendation requires the establishment of five Community Task Forces: Student Demographics, Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model, Middle School Model, High School Enhancement, and Alternative Education Delivery Model.

Members will be selected to serve on the respective Community Task Forces based upon their interest and ability to serve, the perspective they represent, and the experience or expertise they may bring to the process. Individual volunteers will be required to complete and submit a Community Task Force Member Selection Form (See Appendix D). A selection committee will be formed to name persons to the Community Task Forces.

Membership Selection Committee

The Membership Selection Committee will be formed on an ad hoc basis to review submissions for membership to the Community Task Forces. The Selection Committee will seek to determine the most appropriate membership for the Community Task Forces. The criteria used to guide the selection should be:

- 1) interest and ability to serve for the duration of the effort;
- 2) the perspectives represented; and,
- 3) the experience or expertise provided to the process.

Members of the Selection Committee hold positional credibility with the district or

community and represent a broad base of perspectives.

The Selection Committee Members are recommended as follows:

- Moorhead High School Student Council Representative - *TBD
- Education Moorhead Representative - *TBD
- PTAC Representatives
 - Edison - *TBD
 - Probstfield - *TBD
 - Riverside - *TBD
 - Washington - *TBD
 - Robert Asp - *TBD
 - Junior High - *TBD
 - Senior High - *TBD
- Principal Representative - *TBD
- Central Office Team Representative - *TBD
- School Board Representative - *TBD
- City of Moorhead Representative - *TBD
- Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Representative - *TBD

*TBD — To Be Determined:

Each representative group will be asked to name a member to the Membership Selection Committee.

Time Frame:

- The Membership Selection Committee shall meet as needed commencing approximately June 1, 2001.
- The Membership Selection Committee shall provide a recommendation for completed membership rosters for each of the Community Task Forces to the Superintendent of Schools by June 30, 2001.



A George Washington student interviews Mayor Morrie Lanning during Marketplace for Kids. School and community partnerships enhance the education of Moorhead students.

Community Task Forces			
Task Force	Start Date	Completion Date	Provide Report To:
Student Demographics	August 15, 2001	October 31, 2001	Superintendent
Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model	August 15, 2001	December 15, 2001	Superintendent
Middle School Model	August 15, 2001	October 15, 2001	Superintendent, Facility & Grade Level Configuration Community Task Force
High School Enhancement	August 15, 2001	November 15, 2001	Superintendent, Facility & Grade Level Configuration Community Task Force
Alternative Education Delivery Model	August 15, 2001	November 15, 2001	Superintendent, Facility & Grade Level Configuration Community Task Force

“This recommendation is also based upon a philosophical premise that collaborative decision making is more appropriate in this context. Collaboration requires trust, honesty, open dialogue, and mutual respect for individual perspectives.”

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



Summary

In response to Dr. Worner's Organizational Study Report, Superintendent Larry Nybladh recommends a research-based and data-driven, collaborative decision making process.

This recommendation provides for eight Primary Focus Areas.

- Primary Focus Area One: Student Demographics
- Primary Focus Area Two: Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model
- Primary Focus Area Three: Current / Future Facility Analysis
- Primary Focus Area Four: Middle School Model
- Primary Focus Area Five: High School Enhancement
- Primary Focus Area Six: Operational and Capital Revenue Analysis
- Primary Focus Area Seven: Special Education Delivery Model
- Primary Focus Area Eight: Alternative Education Delivery Model.

Each of these Primary Focus Areas is associated with one or more of the recommendations offered by Dr. Worner in the Organizational Study Report. Each Primary Focus Area will be addressed by one or more approaches.

The three approaches that will be utilized are the Administrative Project, the Research Study Group, and the Community Task Force. The *Administrative Project* approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas in those areas that the district has sufficient administrative resources to adequately research and provide recommendations.

The *Research Study Group* approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas where relatively significant amounts of additional research is needed for informal decision making. The Research Study Group will be directed to conduct sufficient research in the

topic area so that data-based and research-based recommendations can be developed.

The *Community Task Force* approach will be used for addressing Primary Focus Areas which require significant community collaboration and consensus building for decision making. The Community Task Forces will be asked to consider information and data developed and presented to them by the Administrative Projects and the Research Study Groups, as well as to conduct additional research as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Five of the Primary Focus Areas require the completion of an Administrative Project. The Administrative Projects will then be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools and the appropriate Research Study Group(s) and/or Community Task Force(s).

Three Research Study Groups will be formed: Middle School Model, High School Enhancement, and Special Education Delivery Model.

The recommendation also requires the establishment of five Community Task Forces: Student Demographics, Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model, Middle School Model, High School Enhancement, and Alternative Education Delivery Model.

Members will be selected to serve on the Community Task Forces based upon their interest to serve, the perspective they represent, and the experience or expertise they may bring to the process. Individual volunteers will be required to complete and submit a Community Task Force Member Selection Form (See Appendix D). A Membership Selection Committee will be formed to name persons to the Community Task Forces.

"We must look beyond yesterday and today. We must address our problems, but more importantly, we must seek to find the opportunities of tomorrow. We must be future-focused."

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



"The children are our future."

*– Dr. Larry P. Nybladh
Superintendent*



Summary of Recommendations

Moorhead School District Organizational Study

Dr. Roger Worner
February 26, 2001

On February 26, 2001, Dr. Roger Worner in his Organizational Study Report tendered the following recommendations to the School Board and Superintendent of Moorhead School District #152:

Recommendation 1

That the Superintendent and School Board create, minimally, four task forces to study implementation of recommendations regarding (a) student demographics; (b) design and implementation of a middle school philosophy, programming, and facility; (c) implementation of alternative special education delivery models; and (d) future facility utilization and betterment.

Recommendation 2

That the school district develop a plan of action to reduce student out-migration through open enrollment, non-public school attendance, home schooling, and alternative program enrollment.

Recommendation 3

That the school district request authorization from its public to expend excess levy funds — previously approved over a ten year span of time for capital improvements and technology implementation — to support General Fund operations, thereby reducing General Fund budget reductions, and, further, approve a bond referendum to fund new facility construction, capital improvements, and continued technology implementation.

Recommendation 4

That the school district study and implement a lower-cost, alternative special education delivery model.

Recommendation 5

That the school district reconfigure its organization from a K-4/5, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12 design to a K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12 design.

Recommendation 6

That the school district conduct a bond referendum to (a) construct a new 1,300 student, multi-house, grade 6-8 middle school and (b) remodel Moorhead Senior High School.

Recommendation 7

That the school district convert Edison, Washington, and Probstfield Schools to K-3 facilities.

Recommendation 8

That the school district convert Robert Asp School to a grade 4-5 intermediate school.

Recommendation 9

That the school district close Riverside Elementary School, Voyager School, Moorhead Junior High School, and Lincoln School. As soon as practicable, the school district close Edison Elementary School.

Recommendation 10

That the school district market and sell Riverside Elementary School and Lincoln School and demolish Voyager School.

Recommendation 11

That the school district market, vacate, and sell the Townsite Centre and relocate its offices to Moorhead Junior High School or some other facility/setting as may be deemed more appropriate through a facility analysis.

Recommendation 12

That the school district convert Moorhead Junior High School to a district administrative, community education, alternative education, early childhood family education, and adult learning center or, alternately, market and sell Moorhead Junior High School and relocate the mentioned programs/services to some other facility/setting as may be deemed more appropriate through a facility analysis.

Recommendation 13

That the school district reduce current expenses incurred in leasing select spaces to house instructional programs and services.

Recommendation 14

That the school district implement measures to reduce costs incurred through duplicatory alternative education programming.

Recommendation 15

That the school district's high school implement advisor-advisee, school within a school, and academy curriculum concepts to personalize the school's teaching/learning environment.

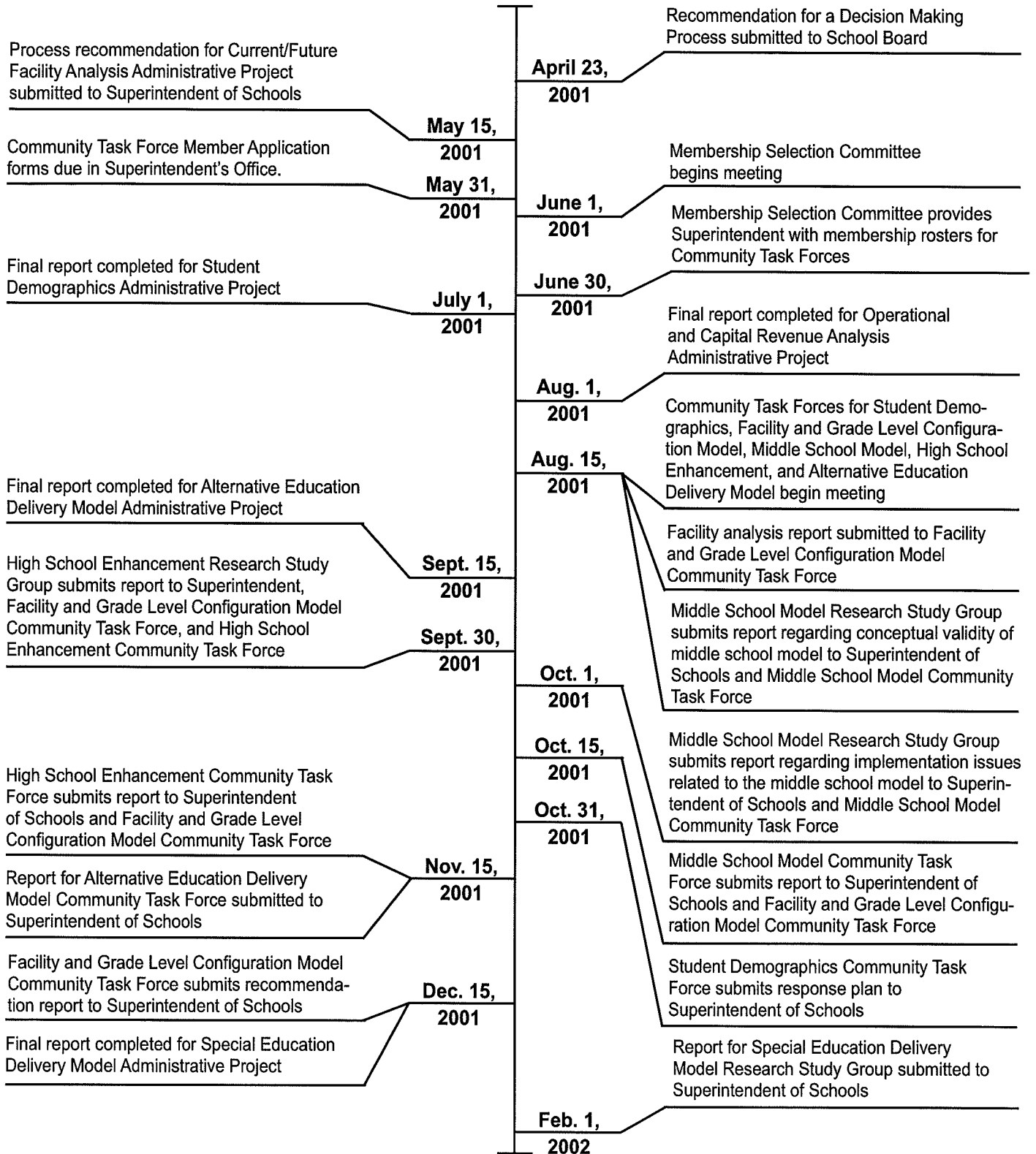


Primary Focus Areas

Number	Primary Focus Area	Worner Recommendation	Administrative Project	Research Study Group	Community Task Force
1	Student Demographics	1 2	✓		✓
2	Facility and Grade Level Configuration Model	5			✓
3	Current / Future Facility Analysis	1 7 10 5 8 11 6 9 12	✓		
4	Middle School Model	1 5 6		✓	✓
5	High School Enhancement	6 15		✓	✓
6	Operational and Capital Revenue Analysis	3 6 13	✓		
7	Special Education Delivery Model	4	✓	✓	
8	Alternative Education Delivery Model	14	✓		✓



Process Timeline





Community Task Force Member Selection Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

E-mail: _____

I am interested in being named to the following Community Task Force(s):

Student Demographics

High School Enhancement

Middle School Model

Alternative Education Delivery Model

Facility and Grade Level
Configuration Model

I will bring the following perspective(s) to this process: _____

I believe I have the following experience or expertise which will facilitate this process: _____

Additional comments: _____

Please mark all that apply to you:

- Student
- Alumni
- Parent
 - Edison
 - Probstfield
 - Riverside
 - Robert Asp
 - Washington
 - Junior High
 - Senior High
 - RRALC
- Grandparent
- Administrator
- Teacher
- Support Staff
- School Board
- College Faculty
- Senior Citizen
- Community Leader
- Business Leader
- Government Leader
- Other _____
- Other _____

Return form by May 31, 2001 to: Superintendent's Office, Townsite Centre, 810 4th Ave. S., Moorhead, MN 56560.
This form can be completed and submitted online on the district's Web site at www.moorhead.k12.mn.us.