

From: [Susan Santa Cruz](#)
To: [KDE KBE](#)
Subject: KBE meeting and public comment
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 3:16:20 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky K-12 schools, or Kentucky State Government. Do not click links, open attachments or forward unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am Susan Santa Cruz-Rogers, a resident of Nelson County and a retired Kentucky educator. I have emailed the board, but would like to use the public comment for one last speaking opportunity.

Nelson County has a proposed merger of 6-8 grades to the two local high schools on the amended DFP. The finalized vote will be by you at this very meeting. Throughout the past few controversial months, our county has been divided by this proposed merger. Nelson County Superintendent, Wes Bradley, had this idea developed, pushed this proposal and completely railroaded the DFP/LPC process all in less than a year.

As a former middle school educator, placing 11 year- old students with high school students is a huge mistake in their development socially, mentally and academically. These students are used to a middle school setting of 450 (or so) or a K-8 community school and thrusting these students into a high school setting (1200-1400 students) is not best practice.

The middle school students will have “natural barriers” that will set into place to separate the middle school and high school students. From our local paper, The Kentucky Standard, “Student safety in the 6-12 model is a recurring concern, with parents worried about interactions between older and younger students, bullying, school security and the difference in maturity level between middle schoolers and high schoolers. Bradley has said that “natural barriers” would occur in the school in how learning spaces are separated”. In my opinion, that means no real plans for their safety. Think of it- a newly promoted 6th grader - used to line leaders being pushed to a 1300 enrollment high school setting. Visualize your child/grandchild - traveling through crowded hallways with much older students. No real middle school walls to separate- just “natural barriers” to have to contend with daily.

The LPC manual states that an AMENDMENT means changes in the District Facilities Plan that are undertaken by the district during the four (4) year DFP cycle. The local board of education may request an amendment to its DFP to accommodate major enrollment changes, major curriculum changes, major disaster or unforeseen occurrences. In 2021, (not 2023 as the LPC should have been convened) the Superintendent made a decision to reconvene a NEW LPC committee. Why? The 2019 DFP prioritized renovations to Nelson County High School, construction of a new K-8 school for New Haven, the vocational school and Bloomfield Middle (now slated to be closed). Also, instead of using current 2019 LPC members, a new LPC was formed. Again, why?

From the KY Standard “Nelson County’s biggest reason was to reconvene the LPC was “significant changes in bonding capacity. In our case, we have around \$7 million in bonding capacity and the board chose to reconvene the LPC”.

During this time, many concerned parents, grandparents, citizens and students voiced their concerns and differing opinions about his plan. Several came up with other options, but when

discussed by LPC were quickly shot down. The superintendent's merger plan was then placed back on top and voted through. Our citizen's opinions and thoughts have been discounted throughout this process.

Our county is being used for an experiment that will have lasting negative repercussions for our school system, students, small communities and for Nelson County. The majority of our county does not want this merger to happen. Please do not approve the amended Nelson County DFP.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Susan Santa Cruz-Rogers

