

From: amanda.deaton@attorney.com
To: KDE KBE
Subject: Nelson County School District Facility Plan
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 8:59:12 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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 just wanted to speak out regarding a very important matter on your February 9th agenda. I am a former Nelson County student, a parent of 2 students, and a resident of Nelson County.

Your Board will be voting on the Amended District Facility Plan for Nelson County School District. To say this is a plan disfavored by the majority of Nelson County residents would be an understatement!

Among other things, this plan closes down a wonderful school – Bloomfield Middle School. This is a school which boasts rich parental involvement, a wealth of opportunities for students and an excellent existing facility in good repair. This school is the centerpiece of the city of Bloomfield, KY. This school serves the students residing in the north and east of our very oddly shaped county.

This plan also removes middle school students from Boston School and New Haven School. The loss of these students in schools already under capacity will almost certainly result in their closure in the very near future.

This plan buses students from our 424 square mile county to two schools in the middle of our most commercial areas – on roads that are already overwhelmed with traffic. There was no traffic study!

This plan – with NO precedent for a school district with our shape, demographics and size – represents a complete departure from the way education has been administered anywhere else in the state of KY, and certainly in our county. This plan consolidates high school and middle school students under one roof. 6th graders and 12th graders will be walking down the halls together, eating lunch together, sharing gym facilities.

This plan was rushed through. The reason? If something is this unpopular and without appropriate justification it had to be pushed through quickly. Almost certainly if the school superintendent went through the proper channels of studying bus routes, gathering relevant data or attempting to garner community support he would have lost. The mantra of our superintendent and school board has been: “If you want something unpopular done, do it quickly!”

As community members and parents, we asked many times the important question: **What is the problem we are attempting to solve?** I can honestly say we never received an answer. There was talk of a lack of equity amongst middle schools. However, on a radio interview Wes Bradley said “the inequities were exaggerated!” There was talk of a monetary savings – even a specific dollar amount was used - \$2 million. When asked for the date to support that number, we found out

quickly that it didn't exist! We are told that we need to spend money to save money. We are essentially adding the same number of square feet in school additions that we are losing in school closures. This plan calls for building at a time when building costs have never been higher! It is senseless.

Please know that approval of this plan is wrong. It is wrong for the parents and students of Nelson County. It is wrong for taxpayers from our county and the state of Kentucky – to spend excessive funds with no good reason, and no proof.

The Kentucky Board of Education was created as a checks and balances system. Certainly school boards should have some autonomy over education in their county, however the KBE should ensure that state taxpayer dollars are not wasted. They should make sure that huge building projects such as this have substantive purpose – supported by studies and data and taking into consideration community support.

In addition, the KBE should ensure that the plan itself was created and voted in in accordance with all the regulations set forth in the District Facilities Planning Manual. Those are rules, not suggestions. You will find almost every aspect of this process is tainted with failure to follow procedure.

Please look at this facility plan with the utmost scrutiny. At the very least, send this back with requests for real data. Read the numerous public comments AGAINST the proposal. Once approved, this is a bell that cannot be un-rung. We cannot close good schools and open them back up later when we realize a huge mistake has been made.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Amanda Rogers Deaton