

Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting Minutes

Date: July 29, 2026

Public Hearing Period: 5:06 PM – 6:40 PM

LPC Main Meeting: 6:55 PM – 8:09 PM

1. Public Speaking Portion (5:06 PM – 6:40 PM)

The public comment period opened at 5:06 PM. Community members addressed the committee regarding the proposed designation of North Middletown Elementary School (NMES) as "transitional" and potential facility closures.

- **Laurie Worthington:** Noted panel was voted in to speak by the NM community. Urged the committee to explore alternatives before making a transitional designation. Asked what evidence, reports, assessments, and analyses were reviewed prior to voting NMES as transitional, and requested a postponement of the LPC until numbers are thoroughly reviewed.
- **Dr. Ryan Bradley:** Alumni of NMES seeking alternative solutions (savenmes.org). Highlighted district-wide trends: elementary enrollment is down 16.5%, tax revenue is below 2012 levels, and district expenses are up 1.5. Questioned what specific analysis the committee relied on to label NMES as transitional.
- **Brandy Asbury:** Parent of an elementary student. Noted NMES has the highest state assessment averages (2016 Distinguished) and cautioned that receiving schools typically see lower test scores the following year. Asked how social, emotional, and academic factors are being weighed and what benchmarks exist for accomplished goals.
- **Clayton McAlmond:** Addressed operating costs, noting claims that NMES costs the district \$156,000. Advocated for alternatives to closure.
- **Charlie DeAtley:** Pointed out NMES is the only building showing improvement on state inspections and has the smallest repair bill in the district. Inquired about shifting facility capacity numbers across reports, the timeline for decisions, and how actual savings would be allocated toward facility goals.
- **Greg Barnhart:** Discussed district revenues, noting the School Board can implement a 4% tax increase without a public vote, yielding \$350,000 and unlocking \$30 million in bonding capacity.
- **Jeff McFarland:** Cited historical data showing that over 30 years across 339 school closures, test scores and savings generally did not increase, noting the previous Millersburg closure yielded no visible budget savings. Inquired about campus plans,

structural requirements to keep the school open, and whether presented figures are estimates or consultant calculations.

- **Lana Stone:** Resident of NMES area. Expressed concern over bus commute times reaching 45 minutes for young students.
- **John Sparks:** Local cattle operator. Highlighted NMES as a key draw for local agricultural labor. Asked why a high-performing academic school is targeted for closure, how other schools can replicate NMES's success, how academic transition and revenue loss from potential enrollment drop will be measured and managed.
- **Justin M.:** Parent of NMES students. Called on the committee to analyze the underlying analytics and provide a written rationale for their decision.

The public speaking portion concluded at 6:40 PM. An intermission was taken until 6:55 PM.

2. Main LPC Meeting (6:55 PM – 8:09 PM)

A. Presentation of Draft District Facilities Plan (DFP)

Emily from Ross Tarrant presented the second draft of the DFP:

- **Overview:** Summarized Ross Tarrant's role in conducting assessments and compiling DFP priorities based on LPC direction. Emphasized that the DFP is currently a working draft and no designations are permanent.
- **Key Changes in Draft 2:**
 - NMES listed as "transitional" (primary change from Draft 1).
 - Capacity figures updated for Bourbon Central Elementary (BCES) and Cane Ridge Elementary (CRES) to reflect rooms currently used or designated for future classroom use.

B. Review of DFP Project Priorities

The committee reviewed the draft project priorities (costs and scope driven by Kentucky Department of Education / KDE system requirements):

- **Priority I (Immediate Building Needs):**
 - *Bourbon County High School (BCHS):* HVAC, electrical, plumbing upgrades; front porch/security vestibule.
 - *2002 Building:* HVAC, electrical, plumbing upgrades.
 - *Bourbon County Middle School (BCMS):* Exterior doors, floor finishes, electrical, water heaters, plumbing fixtures.
 - *BCES:* Roof replacement (original building and addition).
 - *CRES:* Roof replacement (original building and addition); construct gymnasium and four standard classrooms within existing gym. *(Note: Emily will investigate if the gym and classroom expansions can be split).*

- *Life Safety/District-Wide*: Elevators, fire alarms, emergency lighting (Ag building), fire sprinklers.
- **Priority II (Renovations & Additions):**
 - *BCHS*: Foundation work, alternate roofing, wall/superstructure repairs, lighting, plumbing. (KDE standards flag a slight deficiency requiring two classrooms, science labs, and custodial receiving area—does not mandate construction, but unlocks state funding eligibility).
 - *BCMS / BCES / CRES*: Foundation, structural, window, site work, plumbing, electrical, and stormwater management repairs across sites.
 - *BCHS Ag Building*: Foundations, roofing, doors, windows, stormwater management.
 - *Locally Identified Areas*: Local discretionary usage rules explained (e.g., rigid space rules for gyms/bleachers).
- **Priority III (Support Facilities):**
 - Foundations, roofing, structural, site lighting, interior finishes, electrical, and plumbing repairs for Central Office (CO), Bus Garage, Bus Warehouse, Record Storage, Conference Center, and E-Tech.
- **Priority IV (Discretionary Athletic/Extra Projects):**
 - Bourbon Athletic Training Center, Concession Building, Softball Facility, and Potential Property Acquisition.

C. DFP Process and Next Steps

Justin outlined the regulatory process following DFP submission:

1. **KDE Review**: KDE reviews draft for technical markups and feedback.
2. **Formal Guidance**: KDE representative meets with LPC in a structured session to outline strict protocol steps.
3. **Public Hearing**: Formal public meeting held to present the accepted draft DFP.
4. **Board Review**: DFP recommended to the School Board for adoption (Board may approve or remand to LPC for revisions). Estimated timeline to Board review is approximately 6 weeks.
5. **Clarifications**:
 - *Inclusion vs. Obligation*: Listing a project on the DFP does not obligate the district to complete it, but unlisted projects **cannot** be funded via bonding.
 - *Transitional Status*: Clarified with KDE that a "transitional" listing on the draft does not bind the board; the Board holds final authority on school status and timelines. KDE guidelines note a baseline of 150 students with a phase-out threshold at 125.

D. Committee Discussion & Motions

- The committee paused to review the draft details before determining whether to submit it to KDE for initial feedback and markups.

- Committee members requested verified figures detailing actual cost savings associated with NMES before final decisions are made.
- **Motion:** Moved to send the second draft of the DFP to KDE strictly for initial markups and review notes (not for final acceptance).
 - **Outcome:** Motion **Passed** (10 in favor, 2 opposed, out of 14 members present).

3. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **8:09 PM**.