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Baker School Board 5J Accepts the Long Range Facility Planning Committee Recommendation

During Thursday night’s meeting, Pat Heriza and Kim Mosier presented the Long Range Facility Planning Committees (LRFPC) recommendation to the Baker School District Board. This presentation was a culmination of many hours of diligent study over the past year by a 24 person committee made up of community members and district staff.

The team shared the average age of the District’s instructional facilities is 82 years. It was noted that the district has invested systematically in maintaining the educational facilities recognizing the limitations of school funding. Also, it was brought out through the presentation the infrastructure was built primarily in the 1950’s based on educational programming needs at that time. Over the past 6 decades, educational requirements have changed dramatically, requiring major shifts in the space requirements to meet the needs adequately of all students.

As part of this process, the LRFPC identified eight priorities that need to be addressed in our schools as we move toward the future. They include capacity, safety and security, 21st-Century learning environment, operational costs and energy efficiency, deferred maintenance and repair cost, community facilities, technology, and limiting transitions for children and families. These priorities are addressed in each proposal given to the board for consideration.

Kim Mosier stated, “The committee has identified potential solutions that address these priorities, but we will need to share these conceptual plans with our community to receive
feedback and see what they will support.” The facility scope includes: Repurposing Brooklyn for a Baker Early Learning Center, upgrade existing facilities and/or new construction for grades 1-6, updates to Haines and Keating schools, upgrade Baker High School Football Stadium, and convert Baker High School into a 7-8 / 9-12 instructional facility.

Board member Andrew Bryan noted, “One of the primary roles of the school board on behalf of the broader community is to periodically engage in an assessment of the district's facilities.”

“This board is instituting a quality approach to addressing questions. The committee's dedicated work has provided us with an excellent road map to move forward as we now thoroughly engage the community for additional input and all work together to build a bright future for our youth and the place we all call home,” Bryan said.

The presentation given to the Board of Directors by Kim Mosier and Pat Heriza, LRFPC members, can be found on the Baker 5J website.

About Baker 5J School District

Nationally recognized Baker School District 5J (BSD) in Baker City, OR, is the largest of three rural school districts in Baker County, serving 1,700 students and employing over 110 educators and staff. District elementary schools include Brooklyn Primary School, Haines Elementary, Keating Elementary School, and South Baker Intermediate. Baker Middle School and two high schools, Baker High School and Eagle Cap Innovative High School, are also part of BSD. Additionally, BSD sponsors two charter schools, Baker Web Academy and Baker Early College, each offering teacher-supported online education. BSD provides next generation education for the future of Eastern Oregonians and launched Baker Technical Institute (BTI), a career and technical program that partners with regional employers and industry experts to provide an innovative education in hands-on fields. BSD believes strong schools are the foundation of strong and vibrant communities and is committed to prepare students to become successful life-long learners.

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