FACILITIES COMMITTEE UPDATE

TO: Denver Language School Board of Directors
    Kathy Benzel, Executive Director
    Robert Newman, Principal
    Doug Seligman, Principal

FROM: Parker Schenken

DATE: June 15, 2019

RE: June 7, 2019 Meeting with DPS Regarding Facilities

On June 7, 2019, Ms. Benzel and I met with Liz Mendez, Director, Operations Support Services for DPS. The purpose of the meeting was to open lines of communications concerning our DPS facilities, including both the Gilpin and Whiteman campuses, and to touch on some specific needs, particularly at the Gilpin Campus. Following is a summary of the specific topics discussed and information obtained:

**Gilpin Elevator.** This has been identified by DPS as a “premium project” awarded by the DPS Bond Committee due to the need for access to public spaces such as the Gilpin cafeteria and gymnasium. This project is currently in the design phase, and construction is expected during summer 2020. This project budget is approximately **$2 million**, all of which is to be covered by DPS. Ms. Mendez is willing to share preliminary design/location information for the project.

**Gilpin Field.** According to Ms. Mendez, there is a district-wide facility condition assessment underway which, among other things, will assess the condition of all district fields. Once all those assessments are finalized and reviewed, the conditions and need for repairs will be prioritized by DPS. No definitive timelines or budget commitments were available. It was noted that if safety is viewed as an issue, we are to contact DPS “First Call” to address immediate needs (i.e. filling holes, removing obstructions, etc.). Ms. Mendez did raise the possibility of artificial surfaces being a possibility for some schools, depending on the area to be covered and the maintenance costs avoided by the use of an artificial surface. But for now, it seems like there are no immediate plans on the part of DPS for Gilpin’s field. [For discussion, given the priority of this project from the perspective of the DLS Board, in my view the DLS board ought to consider: (a) obtaining its own assessment of field condition (rather than waiting for the DPS assessment), (b) to the extent necessary, utilizing First Call resources to address any immediate needs, (c) keeping communications with DPS open, particularly about the status of the DPS facility assessments to see if Gilpin ends up on the priority list for field improvements, and (d) actively fundraising for field improvements once a scope and budget are known.]

**Gilpin Heat Mitigation.** Various heat mitigation measures are under way at Gilpin. Original plans included ventilation via grills on doors for air circulation/return, but this may now not be code compliant so additional measures are being discussed. The project manager is in contact with Principal Newman and we should have additional information following those discussions.
Gilpin “Summer Projects”. We also discussed a number of Gilpin projects planned for the summer of 2019 and summer of 2020. These included:

Asbestos Abatement. This project is currently under way and should be completed during summer 2019.

Pipe Replacement and Hydronic Heating. This project includes the replacement of damaged pipes located throughout Gilpin’s crawlspaces and replacement/upgrading of heating system components to implement a hydronic system. This portion of the project is planned for construction in the summer of 2020.

The asbestos abatement and pipe/heating projects are budgeted for approximately **$8 million** and are all covered by DPS by way of a Best Grant. Ms. Benzel is going to explore potential adjustments to the 2020-2021 academic calendar in order to extend the summer break of 2020 to provide more time for DPS to complete the 2020 summer projects.

Other Items Discussed. The discussion touched on a number of other items that may be of interest to the Board:

Pest Control. The need for pest control was discussed. Other than routine ongoing pest control measures, significant pest control activities will likely follow the asbestos and pipe replacement projects since moisture in affected areas (i.e., crawlspaces) will no longer be as much of a factor.

Water Coolers. We also discussed the need for additional water coolers with bottle fillers, particularly on the Gilpin cafeteria level. We were advised that current DPS priority/goal was to have two bottle-filler coolers in each building – which we do have at Gilpin. We did not sense there was DPS money available for funding these types of water coolers, although if we were able to fundraise for an additional water cooler, there may be some level of DPS support for installation and/or ongoing maintenance.

Water Quality Discussion. I raised the question about water quality at Gilpin, and specifically the recent reports concerning lead levels. We were informed without any hesitation that lead levels are not a problem, that water quality is tested regularly and meets all applicable standards, and that the reporting on lead levels was not accurate.

Surplus Space. Ms. Mendez asked if we felt like we had any excess space that might be used for other district programs. Ms. Benzel generally indicated that we did not, although use of the community room would be fine, subject to scheduling, etc. My sense was that this is a question that is asked of every user of DPS facilities and wasn’t singularly directed at DLS. But we should be aware that this is an ongoing discussion item for DPS.