



Brief History:

FLAIM's Facility Challenges

Since the inception of the foreign language immersion program at FLAIM, there have always been two major concerns among the FLAIM community:

- The generally poor state of the Mayflower Street facility
- The fact that, beyond the 12 classrooms (and T-buildings) at Mayflower, there is no additional room or path for growth. And, because of how we 'float' an ELA teacher, any future growth would need 24 classrooms

The pages that follow outline a brief history of the options and challenges FLAIM has had over the past 10 years.

Stayed informed by signing up for the FLAIM PTO e-blast, visiting our website at <http://www.brflaim.org> and joining the FLAIM Private Parent Page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brflaimpto/>

For additional questions and concerns, do not hesitate to contact:

Mrs. Miller, FLAIM Principal, at cmiller@ebrschools.org or call 225-343-6630, or FLAIM PTO at brflaimpto@gmail.com



Chapter One: Dufrocq Elementary

In 2008, EBR voters approved a mammoth (\$488 million) tax plan to rebuild/renovate many of the schools in EBRPSS. Shortly after that approval, BRFLAIM parents were presented with the option of moving our entire program to Dufrocq Elementary along side the other Dufrocq elementary program. Had the parents accepted the move, it would have put BRFLAIM in newly renovated elementary school and provided us plenty of space for growth. Unfortunately, the program would have not been able to keep Mrs. Miller, and much like Westdale, FLAIM would have been a program amongst many. Parents rejected the plan.

However, the school board continued on with a plan that:

1. Renovated Dufrocq **anyway** (at a cost of \$20 million) into one of the most modern facilities in the district
2. Built a **competing** academic magnet program
3. That is now the second largest (at 613 students) elementary school in the parish

Chapter Two: Move FLAIM to Polk

In November 2013, BRFLAIM parents were presented with the option of moving our entire program to Polk Elementary. Had the parents accepted the move, it would have put BRFLAIM in a wonderfully renovated facility. However, parents rejected the move because Polk only has 18 classrooms (we needed 24) and some parents were unhappy about the Polk location.

Chapter Three: Create FLAIM II at Polk

In 2014: However, the school board continued on with a plan that:

1. Renovated Polk **anyway** (at a cost of \$6 million) into a modern facility
2. Built a **competing** foreign language immersion program, called BRFLAIM II
3. Tasked our faculty with populating the program but did not have Mrs. Miller as the principal (our initial fear with Dufrocq)

We ended up with a situation in which BRFLAIM I (at Mayflower) ended up competing with BRFLAIM II (at Polk). It didn't fix the Mayflower campus problem and created a program at Polk that struggled to find its footing.

At this time, BRFLAIM was one of the smallest elementary schools in EBRPSS. In order to get a larger, renovated facility, we would have to grow our numbers, and by creating the second FLAIM campus, we had that chance. However, the sense of community and togetherness was lost over the separation.



Chapter Four: FLAIM Primary and FLAIM Intermediate

After two years apart, the faculty and the parents knew we had to do something to bring us on campus, and we started researching other possibilities and campuses where we could move to that would fit our current population and allow growth. There was nothing currently available that didn't need as much work or more work than the Mayflower campus.

In April 2016, our conversations with the superintendent's office yielded a new plan: Create BRFLAIM Primary (for K-2) at Mayflower, and BRFLAIM Intermediate (for 3-5) at Polk. We took this deal because:

1. It would build a stronger BRFLAIM community. (Better Together)
2. New parents and students would be together.
3. It would end the BRFLAIM I vs. BRFLAIM II competition for enrollment
4. It would allow us to double our total enrollment, starting in the lowest grades
5. It would allow our kids to eventually enjoy the excellent facility at Polk
6. Would be a *temporary* solution for 2-3 years while a permanent home would be found

Chapter Five: FLAIM to Valley Park

By 2017, the faculty and parents knew that the two campus temporary solution needed to be just that: temporary. The issues that the two campus system faced before persisted and were almost worst because the upper grades knew what they were missing. A new solution had to be found quickly.

In May 2017, we secured the support among the school system to move FLAIM to Valley Park in August 2018 (when Broadmoor Elementary moved to its new home).

The major problems with Valley Park are:

1. The site still needs elementary-appropriate restrooms, storage, and outdoor facilities
2. The site needs repairs to its parking lot and will need six extra classrooms by 2020.
3. EBRPSS is not entirely enthusiastic about FLAIM at Valley Park because they like using the space as "swing space" where they house students while renovating other schools
4. EBRPSS is not interested in building Middle School facilities at Valley Park

FLAIM at Valley Park is our current default plan, the result of years of work, and we're making strong inroads at establishing a plan to make the site appropriate for elementary-schoolers and provide the remainder of the desired facilities.



Chapter Six: FLAIM to Westdale Middle

As of last week, Westdale Middle's administration has offered a plan that would move BRFLAIM to Westdale Middle's football field.

The plan is appealing because:

1. Tax Plan 2018 has already dedicated funds for major construction at Westdale Middle
2. BRFLAIM would be an independent school on the Westdale site
3. It would create tighter bonds and sharing of resources between BRFLAIM and Westdale Middle, and foster better communication with the faculties of the two largest public immersion schools in the parish
4. The school board doesn't want us at Valley Park, and this forces them to speed up the construction of BRFLAIM in the calendar

At present, FLAIM + Westdale = Immersion Megaplex, and it has the support of FLAIM admin, Westdale admin, the EBR central office, and several school board members.

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