

"Being an early childhood educator myself, I would completely support full-day pre-K for our Akron community," Shipe said. "I think it's long overdue. However, we have to have a realistic roadmap to get to that point. And as of now, I'm concerned that it doesn't appear the superintendent has either a realistic plan on how to implement full-day pre-K, nor does there seem to be any idea of where finances are going to come from to support all-day pre-K in Akron Public Schools."

Robinson said full-day pre-K would give teachers more flexibility and time with their students. The goal, he said, is not just to enroll more students, but also to increase their readiness for kindergarten. This year, just 26% of the district's kindergarten students were assessed as being ready for kindergarten at the start of the year.

"I'm interested in trying to catch those kids early," Robinson said.

Akron school board still considering redistricting plans

Because of the expansion from half-day to full-day, Robinson said, the district may now have use for two buildings that were slated to close, Essex and Stewart Early Learning Centers. Both have students in them now but have high maintenance needs.

The possibility of keeping those buildings open was a change to the redistricting and school closure plan the administration previously presented to the school board, which was slated to vote on the proposal Monday night, but it was removed from the agenda before the meeting. A new date for a vote has not been set.

The redistricting proposal would close Robinson CLC as an elementary school for it to become the new home of STEM High School.

The STEM students have to be out of their current building, the former Central Hower High School building now owned by the University of Akron, by the end of this year. The needed renovations would cost an estimated \$500,000 to \$1 million.

Robinson students would move to David Hill or Mason CLC.

Firestone Park Elementary is also slated to close as part of that proposal, with students being rezoned to Glover, McEbright and Voris CLCs.

No matter whether Essex remains open or closes, the Harris Jackson kindergarten classes currently housed at Essex due to overcrowding at Harris Jackson would return back to their

home school under the proposal. That will trigger additional rezoning of elementary boundaries in the North cluster.

Some Harris Jackson students will be rezoned to Barber CLC, taking them out of the North cluster and putting them into the East cluster. Forest Hill CLC will also have some students rezoned to Harris Jackson, and a small number will be moved from Barber to Seiberling CLC.

If the board votes to approve the closures, the district will reopen the open enrollment window for students affected by rezoning, so families could also opt to apply for a transfer to another school within the district, but they would need to provide their own transportation.

Robinson said he wanted to delay the vote to send out a letter to all families in the district about the final plan. That letter was sent out Tuesday afternoon.

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