

Minutes of the Elmbrook Enrollment  
Balancing Task Force Meeting

Present: Bill Aslin, David Frank, Mark Hansen, Kori Hartman, Jean Lambert, Lisa Mellone, Paul Neumeier, Franklin Onwubuariri, Heather Paradis, Silvia Paquini, Lisa Rettler, Sarah Sagert, Thomas Schaefer, John Schnabl, Jeanne Siegenthaler, Stephen Taipala, Danny Thomas, Daniel Westfahl, Scott Wheeler (arrives later) and Karen Wolff

Absent: Andrew Farley, Bridget Mangan, Jeff Wurster, and Liz Zmuzinski

Also: Glen Allgaier (arrives later), Deborah Nustad, Jennifer Roskopf, and Mike Thompson

The meeting began in the Board Room of the Central Administrative Offices at 6:01 p.m. Mark Hansen advised that the objective would be to reduce the number of options being considered to two. Task Force members were asked to take the drafted elevator speech statements and simplify them to make them more memorable/easier to use. The results of this activity are attached. An updated version will be available for the Task Force meeting on August 2 (Scott Wheeler arrives).

Requests were made to consider communicating to the whole community the natural and cyclical fluctuations of enrollment, some data about projected enrollment growth, and that no changes in secondary pathways are planned before the Task Force recommendation is presented to the Board of Education. Having resources available for students and families as needed through the process was also suggested. If a formal communication plan or the ripple effect of informal communication would be better was questioned. Members were reminded that some community members may feel that they have “lost” regardless of the manner in which the plan is communicated. While facts may be presented, people will be left with their feelings.

Items to be addressed during this meeting included architectural and housing turnover updates, determining criteria for the division and movement of tracts, the latest scenarios (try to narrow to two), and deciding on any other data points needed.

The time line was again reviewed, with the expected public release of the Task Force report on August 11. Members were asked to attend the August 16 Board meeting. A tentative date for a public forum is September 20. Whether other means of obtaining community feedback will be used was questioned. A link to the video of the August 16 Board meeting may be used.

#### Architectural Update

The report from Epstein Uhen indicated that additions would be possible at both Dixon and Brookfield Elementary but that enrollment above 710 would require additional gym or cafeteria space, more restrooms, etc. Additions at Tonawanda were not recommended. Depending on site preparation costs, the estimate was \$250,000 to \$500,000 per classroom. Annual costs for instructional space would be \$90,000 to \$120,000, with common spaces running about \$50,000. Requests were made to ask the architects about expanding upward or about the ability to build a new school. Whether additions at Swanson or Burleigh resulting in larger elementary schools was possible/desired was questioned. A reminder was made that, after five years, the middle schools may be impacted by higher enrollment.

## Housing Turnover

Jen Roskopf reported on the census and realtor data showing areas of higher housing turnover, both already happening and potentially expected soon (Glen Allgaier arrives).

## Criteria for Dividing or Moving Tracts

Members provided their input on the criteria to be used in determining which tracts could be divided or moved:

<u>Divide Tracts</u>	<u>Move Tracts</u>
High density of students (>200)	Proximity (distance and transportation)
Natural geographic splits	Community/neighborhood continuity
Neighborhood continuity	Honoring communities and neighborhoods
Proximity to existing/new schools	Balancing enrollment
Transportation routes/times	Grandfathering economic impact
Pending developments	High density and growth projection
Cleaner divisions/visual organization	Least impact on families
Future flexibility	No islands (not contiguous to other tracts)
	Tracts moved previously

## Scenario Review

Deb Nustad presented the latest updates to the suggested scenarios and how they matched with the critical success factors. She cautioned that the 2015-16 enrollment figures included resident students only. Jen Roskopf advised that the capacity numbers listed do not include grandfathering. Members met in teams to decide on one scenario with added capacity and one scenario without added capacity to recommend for further study. Questions included whether knowing how many students need to move to accomplish capacity relief would be helpful in making good decisions, if transportation should be provided for swing tracts, and if requesting input from the public on the feeder system would be advisable.

Members agreed that a scenario moving two complete and one partial tract from Swanson to Dixon and moving the preschool program from Dixon to Burleigh should be the preferred scenario without any added capacity. For the added capacity scenario, members were interested in using a similar approach for the tracts but to add appropriate capacity as needed and possibly phased, with priority given as the projected and actual enrollment numbers are vetted. Members also desired to keep the scenario of a new school and possible need for modular classrooms on the table, while acknowledging the political concerns inherent in this choice.

Mark Hansen asked that interested Task Force members interested in electronically collaborating or those having any further feedback on ideas not covered send him an e-mail.

## Next Meeting

The next Task Force meeting will be on Tuesday, August 2, in the Board Room of the Central Administrative Offices, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 9:10 p.m.

## ELEVATOR SPEECH

### Item 1

We are committed to being a diverse, destination district.

Elmbrook is committed to quality.

Elmbrook is committed to giving an excellent educational experience.

Continuing to move Elmbrook from great to greater.

Elmbrook wants to be a destination district.

Destination district.

### Item 2

Projected enrollment growth threatens quality which requires proactive shifts in K-5 boundaries/tracts.

Unless prepared for, enrollment growth could impact our commitment to quality.

Very heavy enrollment pressure in some schools; light in others.

Projected enrollment gains require us to proactively shift student attendance areas.

### Item 3

Enrollment growth is due to four major factors: increased birth rates, housing turnover, new residential housing, and increased resident market share. High-quality data has provided new insight into trends.

Housing trends and demographic factors are driving enrollment growth.

In-depth analyses of recent and projected enrollment growth were presented to stakeholders.

Elmbrook continues to grow due to birth rates, housing starts and turnover, and having more residents attend our schools.

Due to the success of Elmbrook Schools and its reputation, an in-depth analysis has identified the reasons for Elmbrook's significant growth which includes increasing birth rates and housing growth.

### Item 4

Since March, people from the community at large analyzed data through 2020-21, explored possible solutions, and will finalize recommendations for the Board of Education's consideration.

Significant community involvement in the analysis and recommendations.

A group of over 25 people representing all schools and the community at large will be finalizing recommendations for the Board of Education's consideration.

A group representing all schools and the community will prepare recommendations for the Board of Education's consideration.

A representative group of the Elmbrook community explored many options to recommend to the School Board.

#### Item 5

Enrollment capacity exists at Burleigh, Dixon and Tonawanda. Enrollment capacity has been reached at Swanson and will be reached at Brookfield Elementary soon, necessitating a rebalancing of projected elementary enrollment.

Space exists at other schools to relieve crowding at Swanson and Brookfield Elementary.

The goal of the Task Force was to balance enrollments at all schools including projections for middle and high schools.

Swanson and Brookfield Elementary are overcapacity.

Very heavy enrollment pressure in some schools; light in others.

#### Item 6

To tackle such complex enrollment problems, the Task Force defined critical success factors, helping to remain focused on our priorities.

Critical success factors guided the recommendations.

The Task Force created and referenced five critical success factors throughout the process. See the website for details.

Impacting the smallest number of families, maintaining secondary pathways, and keeping elementary schools below 90 percent of full capacity were goals.

Recommend a long-term solution that will affect the least number of families.

#### Item 7

Hillside was thoroughly evaluated, and it was found to be financially prohibitive, would impact a significant number of families, and would not efficiently address our problem.

Reopening Hillside is not cost effective.

Reopening Hillside would be the most expensive and disruptive option and would be a short-term fix for the imbalance of students at the high schools.

Of the options considered, reopening Hillside affects the largest number of families, has one-time costs of \$5 million, and annual \$1 million costs.