

Minutes of the Elmbrook Enrollment
Balancing Task Force Meeting

- Present: Bill Aslin, Mark Hansen (left earlier), Kori Hartman, Erik Kass, Jean Lambert (arrived later), Bridget Mangan, Lisa Mellone (left earlier), 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 (arrived later), and Karen Wolff
- Absent: Andrew Farley, David Frank, Jeff Wurster and Liz Zmuzinski
- Also: Linda Boucher, Deborah Nustad, Jennifer Roskopf and Mike Thompson

The meeting began in the Board Room of the Central Administrative Offices. Mark Hansen provided a kickoff to the night's efforts. Six keys to a winning team were presented, and the members ranked the group as on the high end of each of the categories (Mark Hansen leaves).

Critical Success Factors

At the last meeting, members individually weighted the critical success factors, assigning a total of 10 points per person across all factors. These weightings were discussed to provide greater clarity on why some factors were viewed as being more or less important. Questions included what constitutes balancing, if there is a difference between choice and grandfathering, the distinction between what you achieve and how you achieve it, a focus on outcome or how you reach it, if new tract boundaries are imperative without new space, whether steps beyond moving tracts are needed, if tracts will be mapped to census areas, whether buildings need to have equal numbers of students, looking at capacity versus class size, what trade-offs will result, whether the flexibility of being below capacity is best, if each school will have equitable opportunities, if a ± 10 percent buffer is advisable, whether siblings should be in the same school, if grandfathering is more important for deeply-rooted families even without busing, how to appropriately split weighting between impacting the fewest number of families versus grandfathering, whether to continue to honor the current feeder system, and if acceptance of grandfathering will require more tracts to be moved. Members once again individually weighted the critical success factors.

Connecting Data

Erik Kass is working with architects on capacity figures. Addressing enrollment was presented with an overview going from a conservative to an aggressive approach. Some projections are showing a possible capacity concern in addition to rebalancing. Members looked at an example census tract that might allow neighborhoods to be broken out and potentially logical ways to separate areas. Benchmarking of best practices in addressing rebalancing and/or capacity concerns is also occurring. Some of the approaches being used by others were explained (Lisa Mellone leaves). Member groups prepared two ideas each for handling capacity/rebalancing concerns, one set as a conservative approach and the other as aggressive. Members were asked to select their five favorite and five least favorite ideas (see attached list and vote totals). The four with the highest votes were reviewed more closely (see the attached list).

Next Meeting

Tuesday, May 31, was selected for the next Task Force meeting.

The meeting ended at 9:06 p.m.

Attachments

CONSERVATIVE AND AGGRESSIVE IDEAS

Conservative

Wait and see; projections could prove to be wrong (8 least favorite)

Allow choice for families for Swanson and Brookfield Elementary students (4 favorite, 1 least favorite)

Remove small tracts from Swanson (13 favorite, 1 least favorite)

Use modular classrooms to manage capacity until the enrollment levels fall (11 least favorite)

Rebalancing and retracting (6 favorite, 2 least favorite)

Incentivize elementary school choice (4 least favorite)

Push fifth graders to the middle schools (4 favorite, 7 least favorite)

Use modular classrooms for the short term (1 favorite, 8 least favorite)

Use capacity at Dixon as a centralized school for pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and first grade (12 favorite, 1 least favorite)

Aggressive

Add more square footage (1 least favorite)

Limit enrollment to just City of Brookfield and Village of Elm Grove (2 favorite, 15 least favorite)

Reopen Hillside and use modular classrooms until then (16 favorite; 6 least favorite)

Push fifth graders into the middle schools and do not expand four-year-old Kindergarten (1 favorite, 1 least favorite)

Use design-concept elementary schools (14 favorite, 8 least favorite)

Restructure traditional grade models (13 favorite)

Open or build a new elementary school (10 favorite)

Build a new middle school and shift fifth graders to the middle schools (12 least favorite)

WINNING IDEAS REVIEW

Restructuring the graded models – school that is K-2, 3-5, K-8, or alternate structuring

- Could class sizes be smaller at the centralized K-2 school?
- Does the K-2 model include preschool?
- Need to consider time on the bus when locating a centralized K-2 school
- Costs to retrofit elementary school buildings for middle school students in a K-8 model?
- Costs to retrofit middle school buildings for elementary school students in a K-8 model?
- K-8 licensing issues
- Is there room to do K-8 in the middle school buildings?
- If we reconfigured the District's elementary and middle schools to be K-2, 3-5, K-8, multi-age, is there capacity to handle all of the students (also bus times and bus costs)?
- Has any other district configured in this manner?
- To what degree are we willing to offer choice in this manner?
- Can we just do multi-age right now for all grades K-5?

Reopening Hillside or building a new school

- What is the cost of these options?
- What is Hillside's capacity and what would be the preferred capacity of a new school?
- Tract redistribution would be needed
- What would the employment (staffing) need be?
- What would the busing logistics be?
- Would the location be chosen by community opinion or population trends?
- Eliminate and add
- Could the new building also house the Central Administrative Offices or change later to a middle school?
- Operating as well as capital costs
- Need to consider community reaction to the building of a new school
- Could a smaller elementary school be closed as part of a plan to build new?
- Other District properties (Mary Knoll, and Imperial)

Centralized primary grade school at Dixon (4K, K and first grade)

- Professional development and resources would be primary-grade based
- Strong opportunity for peer observation and teacher growth
- Building could be designed for particular age groups
- Cross-community partnerships
- Positive academic impact
- Central location
- Big shift for parents and community
- Busing issues
- Sibling splits
- Lack of peer role models
- Possible need for structure changes and remodeling
- Competition for leadership role
- What does it mean for enrollment?
- Will early literacy result in a positive academic impact?
- What would the market share impact be?
- How would it affect the future of the preschool?

Shifting Boundaries

- Identify tracts and neighborhoods
- Geography
- Type of home
- Neighborhood growth
- Density
- Grandfathering considerations
 - How many will stay?
 - Who (fifth graders only or more)?
 - Family members
 - Transportation provided?
 - Split neighborhoods
 - More tracts need to change?
- Impact on feeder system?
- Choice within the feeder system?
- Tracts versus neighborhoods?