

## Notes from Coffee with John -9/30/09:

John began the meeting by talking about the Upcoming Student Assignment Plan. John has created a summary document which is available at the Scrip table, as well as a list of the upcoming Community meetings.

Information relative to Option Schools (which we are now being labeled by the District as, instead of Alternative):

- 1) Option schools do not have attendance boundaries; but they do have Geographic zones. Which means there is the potential for all city draw, but only families within the Geographic zone receive transportation.
- 2) Options schools will continue to have sibling preference, as long as the older sibling is attending the school.
- 3) Tiebreakers for admission will be a) sibling, b) geographic zone
- 4) Schools will be handling their own registration, there will no longer be enrollment centers.
- 5) As part of the shift, all first choice students will be assigned first, then second, then third.
- 6) New families will be assigned to a neighborhood school by their address according to the new maps (which will be made public after the work session on Oct 6<sup>th</sup>). If a family does not want their child to attend the assigned school, then they have to apply to attend one of the Option schools (i.e.: Thornton Creek, AS1, Jane Addams).
- 7) The maps will be a series of puzzle pieces, not concentric circles, with a school contained within some part of the boundary. This will be potentially contentious for those families within walking distance of Eckstein, who may be assigned to Hamilton.
- 8) As part of a geographic zone, we will be a feeder to a comprehensive Middle-School. But not all families will have an address is not assigned to that MS, and will then have to apply to an Option school to try to keep their child with their cohorts.
- 9) Students in Option Schools are guaranteed a place in the school thru the highest grade- it doesn't matter if you move and change addresses.
- 10) K-8 Option Schools do not have feeder patterns or assigned students.

### Alternative vs. Option School

Principles were asked to create a 1pg school description to accompany the new boundary maps. John wrote: Thornton Creek is an Experiential Learning Alternative School within the Seattle Public School District.

John feels that it is unfortunate that the Alternative School Audit got postponed- the District is trying to blur or erase what Alternative education means.

By removing the Alternative Status, the District is removing Voice and Choice from our schools. TC is still waiting to receive a response to our request for a Math waiver.

Both Jane Addams and Broadview Thompson are now Option Schools since they are K-8 configurations, not because they are offering different Alternative curriculum.

### K-8 Discussion

Again there is concern over whether we are going to be “asked” to move and expand our program.

We are on a preliminary BEX build list for a new school- to expand and reconfigure to a K-8. But the Dist staff needs to do a study of the demographics and the list won't be finalized till 2012.

There has been an on-going discussion of TC becoming a K-8 since John Sanford was Superintendent. Right now we are an odd duck- we are a K-5 alternative/Option school among a group of K-8 Option Schools, and the Superintendent wants uniformity.

### Salmon Bay Assignment Preference for Middle School

The District is intent on discontinuing this preference because of transportation costs and it doesn't fit with the new system. But we, as parents, are working to continue the Preference during the Implementation/Transition period to this new Assignment plan.

Please write a Board member, or all of them- the more emails they receive on this topic, the more likely it will be included in the Transition plan!

Dist staff are working to create geographic continuity thru the new plan and don't want to continue to provide for loop-holes such as the Salmon Bay Preference.

### Kudos:

We are receiving an award from Phi Delta Kappa for being one of Seattle's 5 Great Schools. There will be a Board presentation to our School.

Thornton Creek has been asked to participate in a National Conference on Imagination that is being held in Seattle this month, since we are the first local recipients of the WA State Imagination grant.

### Accessing the District Proposal:

Dist staff have asked that each school designate a computer for parents to use during the school day and after hours to look at the maps and plans on-line. The maps and data will be available on-line after the Board Work Session is over on Tuesday evening.

John's contact at the District said that TC will not be significantly impacted by the information that will be released on Tuesday.

The New Assignment plan is only 1 piece of the District's strategy for dealing with Capacity. The Dist is also using BTA \$ and the BEX levies to address the growing # of students. 4 buildings are under consideration to be reopened: John Marshall, McDonald, Sand Point and View lands. In addition, there has been talk about adding playground equipment at Lincoln.