

Board Special Meeting Work Session

September 12, 2018, 4:30pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center
2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



Minutes

Call to order: Director Harris called the meeting to order at 4:34 pm. Also in attendance: Director Mack, Director Burke, Director Patu, Director DeWolf, and Director Geary. Superintendent Juneau and Director Pinkham arrived at 4:40 and 4:44, respectively. The meeting was staffed by Associate Superintendent Flip Herndon and Director of Enrollment Planning Ashley Davies.

Director Mack welcomed everyone to the work session. She reminded everyone of the purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential boundary changes, which could help alleviate capacity conditions in various areas of the district. The changes discussed at this meeting would go into effect in 2019-20.

Herndon presented the timeline for the boundary changes process. The Board decision is due in December, therefore recommended changes will be reviewed by the Operations Committee in October and November.

Davies reiterated that the suggestions presented at this meeting would affect the 2019-20 school year. Staff would be presenting new information for discussion and updates on community engagement. She referred the Board to the meeting materials, highlighting one-pagers on each of the schools facing boundary issues and another one-pager outlining district-wide issues which impact capacity and boundary changes.

Director DeWolf requested clarification on the frequency and process for boundary changes. Herndon explained that the district reviews boundaries each year, to verify that the changes made the previous year are still appropriate and in alignment with newly opened buildings. New buildings do not eliminate the need for boundary changes to address capacity and it is important to keep the public informed about the district's planning for these challenges.

Enrollment Headcounts and Projections

Davies reported that enrollment has continued on an upward trajectory in the last ten years, although it has started to slow down. Director Mack confirmed that the numbers in the presentation were based on projections made in February 2018. Davies clarified that the district only has a few days of actual numbers, right now. However, updated actuals will be conveyed at upcoming community meetings.

Enrollment Growth

Davies presented the percentages of enrollment growth for each of the last ten years. Again, the data for 2018 was based on projections made in February 2018 and updates are pending actual numbers coming soon. Davies noted that some enrollment-related issues are solved through BEX IV and boundary changes.

Capacity Issues

Davies highlighted “hot spots” at schools throughout the district and potential changes for each area. She recognized that in some cases there is no clear solution at this time. Davies referred the Board to the one-pagers in the meeting materials for comprehensive information about each of the schools facing capacity issues and the proposed solutions. She then highlighted the challenges facing each of the following schools:

- Green Lake Elementary School
- Magnolia Elementary School
- Maple Elementary School
- Robert Eagle Staff Middle School
- Asa Mercer International Middle School

Capital Projects and Planning Changes for 2019-20

Davies identified building changes that would affect the 2019-20 school year:

- Queen Anne Elementary School addition, providing 72 new seats
- Magnolia Elementary School opening, providing 500 new seats
- Lincoln High School opening, providing 1600 new seats
- Ingraham High School addition, providing 500 new seats

Community Engagement To Date

Davies reported on meetings which Enrollment Planning held in the past several months:

- May 2018
 - Community meetings in Magnolia and Queen Anne
 - Building walk-through at BF Day Elementary School
- June 2018
 - Community meetings at Maple Elementary School and Van Asselt regarding potential boundary changes
 - Community meeting in Magnolia regarding potential boundary changes
- Summer 2018
 - Principal and parent leader meetings regarding potential boundary changes

Director Harris inquired into the reach and attendance of summer meetings. Davies clarified that any summer meetings were agreed upon before the end of the school and only included principals and parent leaders, such as the PTA. There were no public meetings with new information.

Board Questions and Discussion

Director Burke asked about the timeline for community meetings for Licton Springs and Robert Eagle Staff. Davies explained that Enrollment Planning needs to focus the topics for discussion, with attention to clarifying who might be impacted, before going out to the public. Director Burke countered that with only three months before the decision is made, it’s important to engage the public with a set of options soon. There’s no resolution that doesn’t impact a group of people in a negative way. Director Mack added that she appreciated engaging communities to achieve mutual decisions, versus setting communities against each other.

Director Mack inquired into ed specs for middle schools and the number at which a school may be allocated additional staff. Herndon confirmed that the current number is 1000. He continued that enrollment analysis balances both current and anticipated numbers.

Director Harris requested that Michael Tolley, Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, join the conversation, to address the staff recommendation that Cleveland High School become the dual language school for the southeast region. Tolley reminded the Board of the agreement to address the dual language pathway in the southeast. The potential schools were: Franklin, Cleveland, or Rainier Beach. Tolley clarified that while Rainier Beach has the most available capacity, it was ruled out as being too far from Mercer.

Director Harris voiced disagreement with the recommendation, as Rainier Beach does have the capacity and is accessible via light rail. The Rainier Beach community already feels left out and disrespected by the district and this decision may magnify those sentiments. Further, Cleveland is an option school and the dual language pathway would further limit seats in that program.

Director Patu also expressed concern on behalf of the Rainier Beach community. She wanted the school to be considered for the dual language pathway. She asserted that all children are special and the Board's actions ought to demonstrate that.

Director Mack added that from a capacity perspective and programming, she was not convinced that Cleveland was the appropriate solution.

Director Mack returned to the matter of budget and staffing. She cited the approximate number of students to indicate an additional assistant principal is 667, and that Title I schools, which are allocated more full-time employees, reach that number sooner. She asked the Board to hold that in mind while considering boundary changes.

Director Pinkham asked to see the capacity data for each area by school and then assess the boundaries. Davies clarified that Capital Projects and Planning present the data that way, but Enrollment Planning organized it differently to specifically identify the "hot spots." Director Pinkham concluded that the district has sufficient seats, but not in particular schools.

Director Mack raised the issue of portables. Davies clarified that the current numbers are for right-size capacity and include seats in portables. Without those seats, everything would indicate over capacity and there would be no way to focus the data for particular schools for the coming year.

Director Mack returned the discussion to the schools listed for boundary changes, above.

Green Lake

Director Mack suggested a boundary change, that's not a geo-split but would roll up over time, to avoid affecting current students. Davies agreed that Enrollment Planning intended a smaller change, to mitigate the impact.

Director Geary expressed concern that making both McDonald and John Stanford option schools exacerbated the capacity issues in this area. She suggested moving one of the dual language option schools further north, which would address capacity and make the program more equitably available in the district. Given the size of this issue, she did not have immediate suggestions for where to move it, in time for the 2019-20 school year, but wanted to present the idea for long term consideration.

Director Burke inquired into the number of students who would need to be moved out Green Lake to alleviate capacity. Davies explained the current state of the school crowding, in terms of a divider in the library and other creative measures to provide appropriate learning spaces. Herndon added that it's not a matter of moving students to another nearby school, as they are also at or near capacity and employing

portables. He added that landmarking is an issue with BF Day, John Stanford, and possibly McDonald, which influences what can be done at those sites to expand capacity.

Director Pinkham noted that more international schools would help the district, as students are opting into those programs. Director Harris reminded the Board of the former Superintendent Nyland's intention to "replicate our successes." Per this line of thinking, she suggested that the district replicate the success of international schools and produce more opportunities to keep students in the public school system via attractive offerings. She recognized that this would be a collaborative effort between Capital Projects and Planning and Teaching and Learning. Director Mack concurred.

Director Mack concluded the discussion with a request for further analysis of where portables could be placed and the impact of not geo-splitting the boundary change. Davies agreed to this assignment.

Magnolia

Davies confirmed that the starting assumption for the new boundary would be along 15th Avenue and would not move into Queen Anne.

Director Harris inquired into the public's suggestion of switching the grade levels at McClure and Catharine Blaine. Director Mack confirmed that the suggestion was raised in the Facilities Master Plan Task Force (FMPTF) and while it could be appropriate for capacity, the community sentiment was against it, at this time. Pursuing that option would require further discussion. Herndon continued that there are also concerns about the overall capacity needs for middle school in that area, so more investigation is required. Director Mack added that the Highly Capable cohort programs relieve capacity when they go to other schools, example students in Magnolia who go outside of the neighborhood, adding an additional variable to the analysis. In the meantime, the boundary needs to change for 2019-20.

Maple

Director Mack reminded the Board that the last meeting on this boundary was contentious and raised concerns that the boundaries pull the diverse families out. She suggested that Georgetown be pulled into the area. Davies noted that the idea has been discussed with the principals, plus a meeting with the school leaders is scheduled for October 4, 2018.

Director Harris inquired into how data is analyzed with an equity lens for racial and ethnic diversity. Herndon reminded the Board of the last round of boundary changes and the district's analysis of demographic impact, including special education, English language learners, and free and reduced lunch. Attention is made to balance the programs across schools and maintain appropriate numbers at Title I schools. Enrollment Planning does attend to these trends.

Robert Eagle Staff

Director Mack asked about the number of students appropriate for the middle school program at Eagle Staff. Herndon clarified that while the ed spec for the building is 1000 students, housing two programs in the building affects the total capacity based on space that is used differently than classroom. Right now, the space not utilized by Licton Springs isn't sufficient for Eagle Staff. Therefore, a number of possibilities need to be considered.

Director Mack suggested reexamining the assignment of feed schools into Whitman Middle School and Robert Eagle Staff. She noted that given that families in this area have just experienced significant changes to boundaries, a new arrangement avoid geo-splitting.

Director Burke summarized the options proposed for this area. He noted that the Board has a commitment to Licton Springs. He inquired into an arrangement where the Licton Springs middle school students

might be served at Eagle Staff, and redistribute the Highly Capable program students. Director Mack agreed and added that information is needed from Teaching and Learning regarding the Highly Capable cohort.

At this time, Director Mack made a time check, and the Board agreed to extend the meeting to 6:15pm.

Mercer International

Director Mack clarified the issues at this school as identifying which feeder schools are appropriate, geographically and programmatically. Davies highlighted that both Washington and Aki Kurose have capacity for additional students. She suggested that this might be a case where it makes sense to utilize a boundary change to alleviate capacity at Mercer. Director Mack asked if this could start in 2019-20 and if it could roll-up, not geo-split. Herndon reiterated that both schools have space available, which means the solution has flexibility on timing. Mack concluded that the solution involves reexamining the feeder schools into Mercer and looking into the Teaching and Learning options at the other middle schools where students might be routed.

Director Harris adjourned the meeting at 6:15, and the Board moved into a Closed Session.