

Citizen's Advisory Council
Enrollment & Facilities Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2015

Present: Co-Chairs Sue Kerr and Roger Wallace, U-46 Administrator Jeff King, and members

7:05 pm: Meeting called to order.

Sue opened the meeting by reviewing the intended purpose of the meeting and introducing Tony Sanders, U-46 CEO, as a guest speaker. Tony is here to provide direction on specific issues and answer questions.

Minutes from January 6, 2015 meeting:

- Lisa asked to correct her question on page 2 under the all-day kindergarten discussion: she was asking about special programs, not special education.
- Nathan motioned to approve minutes with change, second by Dave.

Tony Sanders:

- Tony's primary goal is operational efficiency.
- Moving 6th grade to middle schools is not an option. To do so would require a board policy change, there is not room at our middle schools to accommodate another grade, and it would be a very large expense to provide a middle school opportunity to 6th graders (as opposed to self-contained classes).
- Question: Isn't 6th grade curriculum already separated? Tony: It is to some extent. Common Core is grouped K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The problem comes down to the large cost of extra teachers and implementing the middle school model.
- Implementing EDK for all kindergarteners is a great goal if it is financially feasible. In some areas it will work, but in reality it will be tough in some crowded areas of the district. We should look at it, even if it will only work in some sites.
- Question: If EDK will not work in all areas of the district, will we offer it in some areas and not others? Or will we bus kindergarteners from heavily populated areas to other areas where space is available? Tony: Operational efficiency is the goal, along with balancing utilization. Busing a lot of kids that are not currently bus riders would help with utilization, but would not make sense from an efficiency standpoint.
- We need to be continually evaluating boundaries. Unfortunately it has been 10 years since we have made any adjustments to boundaries. Boundary adjustments should occur every 5-6 years.
- Question: Does moving to EDK in some areas and not others open us up to a lawsuit? Tony: We will have to address that if we consider trying to do it.
- We can look at dual language/general ed paired schools. This may help with optimizing class sizes to improve operational efficiency.
- Question: If a student exits dual language at one of the paired schools, will they be able to stay at the dual language school or will they have to move to the general ed school? Tony: I will have to think about how we would handle that situation.
- Question: Dual language is currently in 5th grade and will be in 6th grade next year. Is the goal to continue dual language into middle school? Tony: We won't make a middle school a dual language school – they are too big. There is current discussion about offering specific dual

language classes in middle school, but no decisions have been made at this time. Boundaries are not part of that discussion.

- Tony asked Jeff what he would plan to do with kids already in a school if that school is then affected by a boundary change. Will they get moved immediately? Jeff: Current plans are to grandfather high school and middle school, but not elementary school. There is some discussion of also offering kids moving from 5th to 6th grade to stay in the same school.
- Question: What is the board's direction on closing a school? Tony: He is just looking at operational efficiency when deciding if a school should be closed or not.
- Question: Will we use operating costs, maintenance costs, etc. when considering closing a school? Yes, our Guidelines specifically say so.
- Nathan: We should be able to consider whether a school is high performing or not when deciding on closing a school. Tony: It is not the building that is high performing, but the kids that are high performing. Those kids will be high performing no matter what school they are in. Nathan: Teachers and staff also contribute to the student's performance, so he thinks that should be considered. Renee: Staff from the high performing school could be moved to another school.
- Comment: We should look at staff cost savings when looking at closing a school.
- Question: How do the 10 schools undergoing restructuring affect boundary discussions? Tony: The schools that were undergoing restructuring – "transformation schools" – are no longer being restructured. The state says we no longer need to do this.
- Question: What about closing more than one school? Tony will leave that decision up to E&F and Omega.
- Question: Full day kindergarten (FDK) is for at risk kids, while extended day kindergarten (EDK) is for kids that pay to stay all day. Currently there are 14 FDK and 4 EDK classes. A lot of parents, especially in Bartlett, have expressed interest in EDK. Can we add more EDK classes, using some of the empty classrooms in that area? Jeff: There is an internal disagreement on whether paid EDK is self-sustaining or not. There is a waiting list for EDK, and parents pay \$300 for each student to be in the program. Tony: The decision to continue or expand paid EDK is separate from the boundary discussions.
- A lot of programs take kids from their home schools. Does that artificially take attendance down at the home schools? Are we looking at that and those numbers? Sue: Yes, we do tract those numbers every year.
- Question: Are self-contained special ed classes in regular classrooms? A lot of them are, but not all of them. There are a few classrooms that are specially designed, and we keep track of them and what schools they are located in.
- Question: Do special ed students stay at the same school, or are they moved to other schools sometimes? Special ed students are often placed in classrooms out of their attendance area. Administration reviews placement of those students, and does at times change the location of a class based on many factors including what students will be in the class and their specific needs.
- Question: Are we able to affect programs? Tony: Not directly, but after adjusting boundaries administration may decide to change the location of one or more special ed class. Jeff: Administration will look at each student and try to keep their bus rides as short as possible.
- Question: At our last meeting there were a lot of concerns raised about feeder patterns. What is the administration and board's opinion on feeder patterns? Tony: We should try to maintain consistent feeder patterns – not split a neighborhood, but it will not always be possible. A consistent feeder pattern is not only preferred by most kids and parents, but it is the most operationally efficient way to operate.

- Question: What is the district's opinion on opening a school? Tony: He is ok with that as long as it improves operational efficiency.

Omega:

- Based on comments from our last meeting, it was apparent the committee would like more input from Omega. Jeff set up a conference call with Omega. Sue and Roger met with Jeff and were part of the conference. Omega was given criteria to create scenarios that will be presented to the committee. This is part of the existing contract with Omega.
- Nathan: We need to be able to quantify the exact savings of any changes and be able to share this with the community.
- Question: There has been talk of using Illinois Park as an elementary school. If we do, what happens to the kids currently attending that school? Jeff: He is having discussions with Elgin on alternative buildings. He will wait to see what Omega suggests and the committee decides before making any final decisions. Jeff said he has plenty of time to pick the exact building.
- If Omega turns a bus rider into a walker or vice versa, they do not know the cost impact of that. Jeff said our transportation can easily determine that for us.

Data on underutilized schools in the southeast corner of the district:

- According to enrollments on September 30, 1994, 7 schools in the southeast corner of the district have less than 65% utilization: Centennial, Hawk Hollow, Horizon, Prairieview, Spring Trail, Sycamore Trails, and Wayne.
- Jeff provided financial, historical, and informational data on the 7 schools. That data, along with data from E&F's data, was put in a document that was handed out to the committee. This document is a draft, subject to change when additional data is provided.
- Question: What happens if we try to break an intergovernmental agreement? Jeff: It is his understanding for Prairieview, for example, if we try to break the agreement, we have to offer to sell the building to the park district. That is something we wouldn't want to get involved in.
- Question: Is money for upcoming capital projects currently being spent, or is it just projected? It is projected.
- Question: How are class sizes determined in these buildings? For projections, classes are assumed to be the maximum size by grade level.
- Question: Can we capture the time kids are on the bus? Especially with Wayne elementary's population being so spread out, how would moving them affect bus riding times? We will look at that after we see what Omega's recommendations are on which school (s) to close, if any.
- Nathan: We should look at all schools under 65% utilization, not just the ones in the southeast.

Membership in E&F:

- There are several people who need to get their membership certified by having their principal notify CAC. Emails have been sent to those individuals. Please make sure you talk to your principal as soon as possible, because CAC will soon begin to decertify schools.
- You do not need to attend CAC general meetings to be a member of E&F and vote. You just need to attend E&F meetings.
- We need a quorum to be able to vote; therefore, it is important for members from each school to attend every meeting.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for February 3, 2015 at 7pm, but will depend on response from Omega.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.