

Citizen's Advisory Council  
Enrollment & Facilities Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 6, 2015

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

7:07 pm: Meeting called to order.

Lynda motioned to approve minutes, second by David.

Even with the delays we've experienced so far, our current Timeline is still valid. It calls for presenting boundary ideas to schools and the community in February. With one more meeting scheduled this month, we should have time to get information to present, but there is no more wiggle room left.

Jeff discussed Omega/GIS:

- After meetings with Sue and Roger, Jeff is using attending data instead of residing data.
- The software can generate boundaries automatically. Unfortunately, there are significant limitations to what the software can do automatically, resulting in problems that need to be corrected manually. For example, it consistently put approx. 1,900 students in SEHS, far short of what would be a reasonable enrollment. It also left some areas on the east side unassigned. Jeff put the automatic scenario map on the overhead so everyone could see what it looked like. We briefly discussed some of the problems that led Jeff to creating his own scenario starting from the automatic one but with several manual changes.
- GIS is a powerful tool, but with limitations. It is not a substitute for E&F in making boundary decisions. GIS' automated scenario can be used as a starting point, but we should use it as a tool, making manual revisions, to help us develop what we feel is best for our schools' boundaries.
- David asked why Omega is not more involved – he thought they were supposed to support us more than they are. We need to decide how much we want Omega to be involved. Omega is currently contracted to help us in one session. We will have to pay for any other direct assistance, around \$5,000 per session. Jeff has spent a lot of time learning GIS so that he can work with it effectively and not need Omega's involvement every time we use GIS. One approach we could take is to develop some scenarios ourselves and then have Omega meet with us to review what we did and help finalize them. For reference, the last time we had boundary discussions with a demographer's help, the demographer gave some recommendations, but E&F ultimately made their own recommendations that went to the school board for approval.

There was a general concern by many members about how changes we propose may open us up to more legal issues. When we develop our scenarios, Jeff will look at demographic information before and after each change, discussing things with our legal department as necessary to try to avoid any legal problems.

With some input from Sue and Roger, Jeff has been working on creating reasonable high school scenarios. After showing the group what GIS' automatically created map looked like, Jeff displayed a map from a scenario that he has been working on:

- This scenario provides a good utilization balance between schools, while correcting the problems created by GIS' automatic scenario.

- There were immediate concerns about feeder patterns. Specifically, Renee asked to see the impact if Otter Creek and Fox Meadow were put back in Larkin HS. Jeff manually moved those kids, which then pushed Larkin enrollment higher than we wanted. To level the high schools again, groups of kids would have to be shifted in and out of each high school in somewhat of a circular pattern around the district.
- Natalie then raised the concern about how much we would be splitting up elementary schools. This scenario does split some elementary schools, especially around Larkin.

How do we know these changes will still be okay in a few years? We should be reviewing the boundaries at least every 5 years and make adjustments as necessary to meet current and near-term projected demands.

There was a lot of concern about feeder patterns:

- Some felt that keeping good feeder patterns is good for the kids socially, while others thought that some kids would appreciate being with a different group of kids.
- David asked if anyone knew of any studies of how changing feeder patterns affected kids. No one was aware of such a study.
- With all the concern about feeder patterns, high school boundaries are not the place to start. It appears we should start with elementary schools, then middle schools, and then high schools. Elementary schools are where the biggest problems with overcrowding and underutilization exist.

All day kindergarten:

- Bev asked if the district is going to give us direction on whether we will have EDK in all schools or not. Natalie said that this is such a big point that we really should be given direction.
- Changing to all EDK would require additions to 10-15 buildings to handle the extra capacity.
- Moving 6<sup>th</sup> grade to middle school would help, but then middle schools would be overcrowded.
- Opening Illinois Park as an elementary school might help.
- Lisa asked if moving special programs to other schools might help create more room? We would have to investigate whether certain kids could be moved or not before we consider this.
- Jeff will talk to Tony about our concern. He is sure that Tony will at least want to see a scenario with EDK, so we will need to provide that.
- Jeff said another option to make room for EDK would be to create pairs of neighboring schools, with one that is all dual language and the other that is all regular ed. Pairing Lowrie and Washington this way did make enough room for EDK. Jeff looked into the possibility of doing this, and there are no legal issues with it.
- Another option would be to pair schools, having one with K-3 and the other 4-6. Lisa didn't think people would want their elementary school siblings split up like that.

There is the possibility that one of the 7 schools in the southeast region will be closed due to underutilization:

- Some people thought we should create a scenario for each school. This will take a lot of time to create these scenarios. At least if we do create those scenarios, we will be better able to defend our position when we decide on which one to close.
- Jeff will get us information on costs associated with operation of each school and costs of any known improvements or big maintenance items coming up. He will also get us data on percentage/number of walkers vs. bus riders at each school.

There is a concern that people will try to join E&F at the last minute and be able to vote without being part of the whole process. Sue and Roger tried to get approval on special membership requirements to deal with this, but were unsuccessful. Because the Timeline calls for E&F voting on our recommendations in early October 2015, the current membership rules will allow new members to join next year and be able to vote. Hopefully this will not become a problem, but there is no way to avoid it.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2015 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.