

Citizen's Advisory Council
Enrollment & Facilities Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2015

Present: Co-Chairs Sue Kerr and Roger Wallace; Jeff King, Chief Operations Officer; Bruce Silva, Demographer, The Omega Group; and members

7:07pm: Meeting called to order.

Minutes from February 17, 2015 meeting: Bev motioned to approve, second by Dave.

Special guest Bruce Silva, demographer from The Omega Group:

- Bruce has been working in this field for 21 years. He was employed by the San Diego schools as their demographer for 7 years. Bruce also developed the School Planner software.
- Bruce explained his methodology to the committee. His PowerPoint presentation is attached below.
- Question from Barb: Did we make special adjustments for outlier schools – schools that have unexpected changes in actual data that adversely affect projections?
 - The most recent update to Omega's projections, which was emailed to the committee this afternoon, helps account for this. Previously, the optimized methodologies were only applied to the attending data. The new methodologies are now also applied to the residing data.
- Question from Nathan: Should we be creating data with attending data or residing data? There are students that do not attend their home school, but instead attend a program at another school. An example of this is 11 students from Prairieview that will attend other schools next year for the Ignite program. If we use attending data, Prairieview's enrollments will be lower because those 11 students attend other schools, while the schools they attend will be higher. That could lead to a decision to close Prairieview due to low utilization and make his kids ride a bus rather than walk 5 minutes to school. But there does not seem to be any specific reason for placing Ignite at Horizon or Sycamore Trails. Ignite could be placed at Prairieview where there is room, therefore gaining attending students instead of losing them. It makes more sense to base boundaries and decisions about closing a school on where students live – residing data. Once those boundaries are established, then determine the best placement for programs.
 - Bev asked if we should look at the two options (attending boundaries and residing boundaries) side by side. Nature Ridge is a good example of how placing a program at a school can make it overcrowded. Nature Ridge has been overcrowded ever since dual language was put there. It doesn't make sense that putting a program at a school could force a resident walking student into a bused student.
 - Renee pointed out that some programs are required to be in specific schools due to the number of students in the program.
 - Jeff said that next week he will be looking at programs and comparing attending data to home schools (residing data). If most of the students in each program class are already at their home school, he will leave that program there. If not, he will consider moving them to another school, with the goal having the majority of students in or as close as possible to their home school.
- Question: An estimated half of the older historical data in Omega's spreadsheet doesn't match the data in E&F's spreadsheet. Why is that?

- When Sue, Jeff, Bruce and Roger have been reviewing data in the last few weeks, it was discovered that there were some students being double counted in the September 30 attending data the district has been supplying to E&F and Omega. Bruce corrected all of that data in his spreadsheet, but Sue and Roger have only corrected the data for this current year.
- Question: As built capacities in Omega's spreadsheet don't match E&F's spreadsheet in some cases. Why is that?
 - Sue is still working on resolving capacity discrepancies. The main reason for the difference is that Omega is using capacities based on current building usage, while E&F's baseline data is based on design capacity with art and music rooms.
- Question: Is it contradictory to use residing data, which does not account for programs, for projections, but use capacities that do include programs?
 - Bruce explained that attending data, which does account for programs, is what is compared to capacities. Residing data is used to provide a more stable base to attending projections.

The current draft of Report text was emailed to the committee. There were no comments at this time, but the committee is asked to review the Report and submit any comments or corrections.

We have not been able to keep to the current Timeline. When we update it in the near future, we may find that we need to meet one or more times over the summer. To maintain membership status, everyone should contact their principal before the end of this school year and ask them to submit their names for membership for school year 2015-16.

Project Plan (next steps):

- Next week Jeff plans to evaluate:
 - Programs: As mentioned above, Jeff will evaluate and optimize placement of programs based on students' proximity to their home schools. Jeff will provide his findings and supporting data to the committee by April 7.
 - Dual Language/General Education Paired Schools: As discussed in previous meetings, a possible solution to overcrowding in some areas of the district is to pair DL and GenEd schools. DL is currently located in 16 sites. Jeff will work with Bruce to look at populations of DL and GenEd students in overcrowded areas and see if it is feasible to pair schools so DL and GenEd students can be shared, reducing overcrowding problems. Jeff will provide his findings and supporting data to the committee by April 7.
 - Full Day Kindergarten: Jeff will work with Bruce to look at the feasibility of providing full day kindergarten in all schools. Tony Sanders has said if it can't be done at all schools, we can't do it at some. Jeff will provide his findings and supporting data to the committee by April 7.
- Jeff will look at the lawsuit settlement agreement to see if it is possible to move gifted programs.
- Jeff will provide the remaining financial data necessary to evaluate possible school closings. This data will be in addition to what has already been collected for the seven elementary schools in the southeast corner of the district that have utilizations below 65%, and will include personnel and operations cost savings if the school were to close.
- Sue and Roger will continue to fine tune the data to remove discrepancies and make sure we all agree we are using the most accurate data.
- Sue and Roger will finalize the Report.
- Once the program assessment and feasibility studies are complete, we can give Bruce direction on which boundary scenarios to generate. The committee recommends an ideal capacity in the range of 65-85%, and utilizing Illinois Park as an elementary school to help alleviate overcrowding in the

Elgin area. There will not be time to have this done by our next meeting on April 7, but the goal is to have scenarios complete by the following meeting on April 21.

Other business:

- Question: Can we adjust some boundaries but leave others alone? Answer: That is what we hope to do. We hope to alleviate overcrowding while moving as few students as possible.
- Question: We did not use program information in previous boundary discussions. Why are we using it now? Answer: The district has changed a lot since the last boundary discussions over 10 years ago. There are a lot more students in programs than there were last time, and there are more every year. There are so many students in programs that it doesn't make sense to no consider that information.
- Nathan asked what the actual savings of closing a school would be. Jeff said personnel savings would be in the range of \$250k - \$350k per year. There would be some operations savings (heat, a/c, paper towels, etc.). We can make a good list. Nathan expressed his concern over the animosity that would be created over saving such a small percentage of the district budget, and wondered if it is worth it. That is a question that Tony Sanders and/or the BOE would have to answer.
- Many in the committee would like to see all day kindergarten in our schools. There is even a bill in the state congress that would require it. There have also been much respected studies that have shown the benefit to students that had all day kindergarten. Jeff said that the district is in favor of all day kindergarten, but the problem is the physical space requirements and cost of implementation and operation.
- The committee is again concerned that we are falling behind the Timeline, and they don't want to rush to get the work done. Jeff agrees that he would rather do it right than meet an unrealistic deadline. Tony Sanders was asked again after our last meeting, and he still stands by making changes for the 2016-17 school year. We will put a comment in the Report about our concern with the Timeline and that we want to do a quality job. The information in the Report on page 11 can be updated to reflect our concerns.
- The committee would like to see residing data in E&F's spreadsheet so it could better match what Omega is using. We could then analyze students in programs who are in or not in residing (home) schools (graph the comparison). We could also analyze a scenario of residing capacities with all day kindergarten, which would ignore programs.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for April 7, 2015 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:14pm.

Attachment:

- "Enrollment Projections Methodology 2015-16 to 2019-20" by Bruce Silva, The Omega Group