



Spokane Public Schools
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Boundary Adjustment Committee Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2020

START TIME:

6:34 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, 2020

FACILITATORS:

Mark Anderson
Phil Crocker
Harium Martin-Morris
Craig Numata

ATTENDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

The meeting was attended by approximately 45 committee members, including SPS staff and a School Board director, via Zoom.

WELCOME AND REVIEW:

Dr. Mark Anderson began by reminding the committee of its purpose and guidelines. Phil Crocker recapped the last meeting where the committee looked at 5 scenarios for the northwest region of the district. The majority of the committee preferred to remove scenarios A and E, and move forward with B, C and D for consideration in this meeting. Phil reiterated that these initial scenarios for each region are a starting place, and the committee will be working to refine the boundaries as we move forward.

CONSIDERING REMANING NORTHWEST SCENARIOS

Craig Numata reviewed the maps and data for the three remaining scenarios (B, C, D), including school size, free and reduced lunch rates, Special Education enrollment, ELD enrollment, race/ethnicity, and feeder patterns. Craig also included a new breakdown of feeder patterns with details of percentages of students moving from each elementary to the middle schools in each scenario. For example, in scenario B, all elementary schools are kept intact, moving 100% of students to the same middle school; whereas in scenario D, one of the elementary schools that feeds two middle schools sends 45% of students to one middle school and 55% to another.



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The committee divided into small groups for discussions in breakout rooms with the charge of either narrowing down to one scenario or eliminating one. After about 25 minutes in small groups, the committee came back together for discussion.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Phil Crocker led the full committee discussion, asking each breakout group to report about their conversations and if there was consensus around one scenario to move forward. Each group reported different conversations and preferred scenarios. Comments included consideration of school size and demographics, concern about school boundaries crossing Division, questions about where Holmes Elementary fits best, an idea to look at parks and pools as another consideration when drawing boundaries, and a desire to create more diversity between the schools in the northwest and northeast regions.

A couple themes emerged in the large conversation. First, many groups reported their thoughtfulness around feeder patterns and transitions – both from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. There was some agreement around both transitions being difficult, but that splitting up kids does not end friendships – particularly in this region and in the digital age we live in. Many groups talked about the importance of discussing the feeder patterns to high schools. Phil noted that that discussion is coming, and the committee can continue to make adjustments when we get there, but it is too much to take on all boundaries and feeder patterns at the same time. The decision was to start with elementary to middle school then tackle middle to high school. Additionally, Phil previewed that next week Harium Martin-Morris will share research on transitions, which may better inform and frame the committee’s thinking on that issue.

A second theme was the consideration of the River Run/West Hills areas. Only one scenario of the three considered brings students from that area into a middle school in the northwest region. A few groups and comments asked that there be more options to consider with students from that area being added to the northwest region. Phil noted that this area can be revisited as the committee continues to refine the boundaries and to expect some revising of boundaries as we move forward.

Since different scenarios were preferred by different groups – and a few groups said they could not come to consensus around one – Phil took a poll of the committee, first asking



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• which one should be removed. The results showed 76% preferred to remove C, 20% for B, and 4% for D. Phil asked if the people who chose to remove B would be okay with eliminating C. While a few members had an affinity for C, the general consensus was to remove it. Phil then asked people to vote for their preference between B and D – 77% chose D and 23% chose B. The conclusion was to move forward with scenario D as an initial starting point, recognizing that it was not complete or final.

CLOSING NEXT STEPS

Phil closed by saying that all initial scenarios are imperfect, but the committee now has a starting place for each region in the district. As the committee has been going through this process, people are growing into experts and the conversations are becoming more advanced.

Several people have mentioned wanting to approach scenarios differently and think about boundaries in a new way. Phil offered that if members have additional or different approaches to scenarios that now would be an excellent time to share them with the leadership team. He asked that any thoughts or “what if” scenarios be posted on Base Camp for the group to see and then Craig will work up the data and offer responses and viability. Craig is already looking at scenarios focused on high school feeder patterns, so that can be added into our discussions.

The next committee meeting will look at the three scenarios the group has moved forward, and the committee will start refining them with focus on where they connect. Dr. Anderson will give an update to the group on the draft Legacy (grandfather) policy, and Haruim will present research on school transitions.

The next committee meeting is Thursday, May 28, 6:30-8:15 p.m. **NOTE: This meeting and meetings going forward will be extended by 15 minutes. We again meet on Zoom.**

ADJOURNMENT:

7:58 p.m.