

## 2013-14 Happy Valley/Lowell Attendance Area Committee

### November 19, 2013 – Meeting #4 Minutes

1. Rob McElroy welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 3:30 p.m.
2. Rob presented the minutes from the November 5, 2013 meeting, and they were approved by the committee.
3. Ron Cowan went through additional handouts/updates:
  - Revised Scenario Student Counts – the numbers haven't changed drastically, but they are updated numbers. Note: at the bottom of each page, there is a phrase "all current blue slips ..."
  - Scenario Data Summary (handout).
  - Detailed Scenario Maps – "big picture" of the changes for each scenario. Ron reviewed each scenario briefly, and then reviewed the descriptions of each scenario.
  - Walk Route maps for both Lowell and Happy Valley, which contain an overlay of sidewalks. Most students who currently walk to Larrabee will be within walking distance of Happy Valley or Lowell. Ron explained a point system used to determine whether a bus should be provided for students within a walk route (whether there are sidewalks/shoulders, volume of traffic, speed of traffic, etc.).
  - Attempt of a New Scenario (goal of increasing the free/reduced lunch rate at Lowell without including Varsity Village). This proved to not be practical as free/reduced lunch students are small in number and scattered throughout the current Larrabee attendance area.
  - Additional Staffing for Each Scenario (handout).
  - There was discussion about what the capacity/square footage of a Happy Valley rebuild will be.
4. Rob took the pulse of the group after the review of the scenarios. The hope is that after this meeting we can be down to a couple of "top" scenarios, which will be presented for input outside of this group. Rob talked about how we all should be advocates, but also balance with open-mindedness, and reminded the group that wherever students attend school next year, they will be warmly welcomed into and loved by that school.
5. Rae Anne Thon provided some transportation information, and Ron asked her to walk through the information. The goal is to provide safe, efficient transportation. Rae Ann reviewed the buses that currently serve the three schools (2 for Happy Valley, 1 each for Lowell and Larrabee). Within each scenario, how can that one bus currently assigned to Larrabee be utilized?

- Draft Option A – the one bus would cover Happy Valley, with no additional bus being needed for either Happy Valley or Lowell.
- Draft Option B – A bus would likely need to be added for Lowell.
- Draft Option C – Most likely would not need an additional bus assuming students living in Varsity Village would walk to Lowell.
- Draft Option D – Would necessitate adding a bus.

Ron thanked Rae Anne for the information that she presented, and reminded the committee that this is one more piece of information that should be taken into consideration.

6. Rob asked the committee if they've had a chance to individually process the scenarios, and the committee indicated they had. Rob asked if the committee felt they needed small group time, and no one indicated that this was needed.
7. A question was posed by a committee member: Is there a hard-cap number for class sizes across the district? Ron responded that, no, schools have varying solutions for different class sizes.
8. Kate made the following observations:
  - Varsity Village families want to be engaged in the school community.
  - There is not an on-site manager at Varsity Village to help provide services to the families.
  - Attempts to facilitate a walking school bus from Varsity Village in the past were not successful.
9. Comments/Input from Committee regarding each draft scenario:

#### **Draft Scenario A**

##### Strengths:

- Provides a high socio-economic neighborhood to Happy Valley.
- Not adding a bus is a plus.
- This scenario keeps numbers a little lower for Lowell.

##### Challenges:

- Disconnects the neighborhood a little bit.
- For students going to see friends, they may need to cross a major road – it's broken apart in an odd way.
- Wonders if that is too small of a number of Larrabee students going to Lowell?

### **Draft Scenario B**

#### Strengths:

- Fewer new kids for Happy Valley.
- Keeps some students within their neighborhood groups, with more clearly defined boundaries.
- Returns a former neighborhood to Lowell and does not require them to attend a third school within just a few years.

#### Challenges:

- More students for Lowell – mainly for primary.
- A bus would likely need to be added.
- More affluent pockets go to Lowell.

### **Draft Scenario C**

#### Strengths:

- Increased social economic diversity at Lowell.
- Class sizes – the numbers across the board are better for Happy Valley, more balanced.

#### Challenges:

- Higher class sizes at the primary grade.
- Students who are financially impacted the most would not attend the closest school and will not be provided a bus.
- It might separate a community (walking at night), families and students may not be as attached to the school because of the distance (families who don't have cars).

### **Draft Scenario D**

#### Strengths:

- Keeps neighborhoods together, with natural boundaries.
- Chuckanut neighborhood used to be Lowell before the last attendance area change.
- Condenses the Happy Valley attendance area.

#### Challenges:

- Could be a third change of schools for some families.
- Very spread out for Lowell.
- An additional bus would be needed.
- Separates Happy Valley neighborhood (not all natural boundaries).
- Higher numbers at Lowell.
- Most affluent pockets would go to Lowell.

#### General Comments:

- Whatever scenario is chosen is not scary, all students will be fine and happy in their newly assigned school.
- All 3 schools are great schools.

A poll was taken to get an idea of what the committee thought as a whole of the four scenarios:

<b>Draft Scenarios</b>	<b>Red (not favorable)</b>	<b>Yellow (undecided/not sure)</b>	<b>Green (favorable)</b>
<b>A</b>			11
<b>B</b>		9	2
<b>C</b>	7	4	
<b>D</b>	8	3	

Comments:

- Are Draft Scenarios A and B (8 kids affected) different enough to get input on?
- Public opinion would vote for Draft Scenario B.
- For Draft Scenarios C and D, some of the fear may be that we are separating more kids (the McKenzie line).
- Are we tied to only presenting two of the four options, versus three?
- Concern for Draft Scenario D – 338 total students, with an average of 28.5 kids in K-1-2. Would that necessitate bringing in a second portable? If so, where would it go?
- Long term concern for Draft Scenario D – less potential for strong family involvement.
- Would HCL being located at Happy Valley bring more involved families? Karen indicated that having HCL pull-out at Happy Valley does not bring family involvement.
- Draft Scenarios A and B do not seem different enough for a choice between those two. Perhaps take Draft Scenario C off the table and present the other 3 scenarios?

10. Tanya engaged the committee in discussion about how many scenarios they want to propose to the Larrabee population and options for gathering input:

- Tanya talked about the differences between putting out two or three options.
- If the committee were to put out one scenario, they likely would get many “have you thought about this, this, this” questions. The committee would then need to process all of that data and those questions.
- Tanya reviewed a draft Communication Plan. If the committee were ready to move forward, an update would be prepared for all three schools – where we are, what process we would use (not sharing scenarios yet).
- An upcoming committee meeting could be moved to 6:00-7:00 p.m. for input from Larrabee families (with at least a sub-set of the committee listening to the families).
- The Communications Department would compile feedback (online survey and paper survey).
- Data would be summarized for the committee so they can then review and consider the input from families, and use it to form a recommendation to the Superintendent.

11. Tanya also reviewed the minor policy updates regarding attendance areas.

Comments/Questions:

- How would families be transitioned? Will the decision be made in time to welcome families to their new schools?
- How would that recommendation be made? A memo to the Superintendent? Inviting Superintendent to a meeting? (Rob stated that typically a written recommendation would go to the Superintendent). Ron added that the Superintendent would decide if he needs additional input, etc.
- A recommendation was made that the committee keep the process moving so as to not stall during the holiday break.
- Ron would like to see a high level of involvement from this committee in a Larrabee community meeting – as well as help facilitating the meeting.
- Discussion at Larrabee between draft Scenarios A and B would be valuable.

Ron asked the committee if they were comfortable presenting draft Scenarios A and B to the Larrabee community? There was discussion regarding the benefits of presenting more than one scenario.

There was discussion about presenting one, two, or three scenarios. Everyone agreed that draft Scenario A is the top choice, and it should be brought forward to the Larrabee community. Heidi, Shelly H, Rachel and Angie will help Ron and Rob to work with Tanya about next steps.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25.

**Next Meeting December 3, 2013 3:30-5:00 pm**  
**Central Services, Room 212**  
**(subject to change)**

\*Note: Following the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, members of the committee expressed an interest in having another meeting prior to presenting scenarios to the Larrabee community. It was decided that the committee will reconvene on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the regular meeting time to finalize the draft scenarios prior to asking for public input.