

Appendix A

Phase One Recommendations

Cordata Elementary Attendance area recommendation

The Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee was charged with analyzing the significant current and projected development and growth within the Cordata attendance area and creating a short-term recommendation to respond to this challenge. Currently, Cordata Elementary is full and some students are being transferred involuntarily to Alderwood Elementary School. After much study and deliberation, the committee created a recommendation to adjust certain attendance area adjustments.

The Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee shared a draft proposal of attendance area adjustments with Alderwood, Cordata, Parkview and Northern Heights families on February 15, 2017. Information, a survey and a map of the proposed adjustment were mailed and emailed to families in these areas. The adjustment would send some students from Cordata Elementary School to Alderwood, Parkview or Northern Heights elementary schools starting the 2017-18 school year. The survey remained open until noon on March 10. A public meeting was held on March 9 to gather additional feedback. Parents/guardians and community members in attendance were given the opportunity to provide verbal and written feedback. Feedback shared at the public meeting was generally consistent with the feedback highlighted below.

Evaluating the Elementary School Attendance area recommendation

(a) Feedback from Community Meeting

Five families attended a public input meeting at Cordata on March 9.

At the public meeting we heard concerns from families mostly focusing on the neighborhood just west of Aldrich and east of Northwest Avenue. They access their property off Northwest, and report walking access to Cordata. Families were also concerned about loss of friendships for their children.

(b) Feedback from Survey

A total of 51 individuals took the survey. They identified themselves as:

- 50 Parents/Guardians
- 0 Students
- 2 Staff (*One respondent identified as both parent and staff member*)
- 2 Community Members (*Two respondent identified as both parent and community member*)

The majority of the respondents (74 percent) were affiliated with Cordata Elementary School, then Parkview Elementary School (22 percent) and Northern Heights Elementary (4 percent). No respondents were from Alderwood Elementary School.

The grade levels represented by the respondents were varied from PreK to fifth grade with the highest number of respondents having students in the first grade (33 percent).

What do you like about the recommendation?

41 people answered the question. Common themes emerged from their comments including:

- Likes that recommendation includes keeping students in close proximity to their school
- Like that student may be attending an IB school next year
- Likes that the district is trying to plan ahead for future growth in the north side of Bellingham

What are your concerns about this recommendation?

45 people answered this question. Common themes emerged from their comments including:

- Concerns about overcrowding and class size at Alderwood, Parkview and Northern Heights

- Concerns about students who have already moved due to attendance area changes having to move schools again
- Wondering why Sunnyland, Columbia and Birchwood were not included in these recommendations
- Concerns about students experiencing anxiety or stress due to moving schools

What are your questions, information needs or suggestions?

37 people answered this question. A variety of questions and suggestions were submitted. They can be summarized by the list below.

- Will these changes impact middle and high school attendance area boundaries? Is the committee considering future growth in these plans?
- Concerns about an increase in class size at all impacted schools
- Why weren't other schools included in this, particularly Birchwood, Columbia or Sunnyland?
- Current fourth graders should be allowed to remain at their current school
- Questions about what the class sizes are at other schools

(c) Committee Evaluation

The committee dedicated a meeting to identifying major themes in the feedback and discussing how these influenced their thinking on the draft recommendation. These are summarized above. Particular attention was given to the specific neighborhood west of Aldrich and east of Northwest Avenue. A couple of families reported they are close enough to Cordata to walk, although there is not a designated safe walking route. Considering the longer term development plans for this area, the committee agreed that it made good sense to keep that larger neighborhood together who access their homes off Northwest. Furthermore, several issues surfaced that were either misperceptions or questions that need further communication. For example, concern about class size, why other schools were not involved in this adjustment (Columbia, Birchwood, Sunnyland), plans for new road construction, etc. The committee appreciated the efforts being planned by Northern Heights, Parkview and Alderwood to welcome and transition new students and families to their school community.

This recommendation was arrived at through a consensus model with the recommendation receiving unanimous support at our last meeting on March 16, 2017.

In the recommendation:

- Cordata students who live in area **A** outlined in the attached map would attend **Alderwood** Elementary starting in August. School bus transportation to and from the neighborhood to Alderwood will be provided.
- Cordata students who live in area **B** outlined in the attached map would attend **Parkview** Elementary starting in August. School bus transportation to and from the neighborhood to Parkview will be provided.
- Cordata students who live in area **C** outlined in the attached map would attend **Northern Heights** Elementary starting in August. School bus transportation to and from the neighborhood to Northern Heights will be provided.
- Students who have moved into the new **Villa Santa Fe** housing complex off Bakerview Road near Cordata are currently under an involuntary transfer to attend Alderwood until more space is

available at Cordata. In this proposal, Villa Santa Fe students would attend Cordata starting in August.

As part of this recommendation, transfer requests are likely to be approved *only* in unique circumstances. For those requesting a transfer to remain at Cordata, school bus transportation would not be provided. Requests should be submitted using [this special form](#) (posted at Bellinghamschools.org/attendance-areas-committee or at school offices) by April 14.

In looking at which neighborhoods to select for this adjustment, our committee considered feedback from stakeholders, Policy 3131 criteria and proximity to other elementary schools and schools with available space. Students living in these areas could make this adjustment together. North Bellingham is growing and projections show more adjustments will likely be needed in future years to create more space at Cordata, Shuksan and Squalicum.

