



Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee

Jan 12, 2017

Welcome Back - Rob McElroy/Steve Clarke

Co-Chair Rob McElroy (Executive Director) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Co-Chair Steve Clarke (Assistant Superintendent, Department of Teaching and Learning) led a conversation regarding reflections that the committee members have had since the Jan. 5, 2017 meeting.

Review Jan. 5, 2017 Minutes – Rob McElroy

Rob asked that everyone spend a few moments reviewing the minutes from the Jan. 5, 2017 meeting. Brad Swanson, parent, made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Ron Cowan, Executive Director of Capital Projects and School Facilities, seconded the motion and there was a unanimous affirmative vote to approve.

Respond to Inquiry Questions – Team

Rob directed everyone to the inquiry questions at the end of the Jan. 5 meeting minutes. The team of Rob, Steve, Simone Sangster (Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations) and Chris Behee (City of Bellingham Planning Department) took a few moments to respond to those questions:

1. Of the approximate 950 students at Bellingham High School, 252 students reside in Sudden Valley. It is not known how many of those students qualify for free/reduced lunch.
2. All students within the attendance areas of Alderwood and Birchwood schools are also within the attendance area of Squalicum High School (approximately 600 students).
3. Simone shared that the district receives poverty funding from two sources: Title I is federal and Learning Assistance Program (LAP) is state. Those allocations are based on the district-wide percentage of poverty. A clarifying question was asked regarding whether any recommendation made by this committee could impact the amount of funding received by the district? Simone answered that the number of students receiving free/reduced meals in a school affects Title funding, but that is beyond the scope of the work of this committee.
4. There are schools within our district that are located outside of the city limits and do not receive the same level of city services (sidewalks, police, etc.) that schools within the city enjoy. At this time, there are no plans to change school attendance areas due to annexation.

5. As far as potential changes to the Ferndale School District/Bellingham Public Schools attendance area changes, there are no plans to change the school attendance areas at this time.
6. We believe that diversity adds value to a school. The team is not aware of research comparing the effectiveness of these two strategies to address equity. Rob noted that the Bellingham Public Schools administrative team is currently reading "[Our Kids – The American Dream in Crisis](#)" by Robert D. Putnam, which examines the equity gap. This may be good reading for this group at some future date.
7. All Shuksan students live within the Squalicum attendance area and all Fairhaven students live within the Sehome attendance area. Some Kulshan students are within the Bellingham attendance area and some are within the Sehome attendance area. Some Whatcom students are within the Bellingham attendance area, while some are in the Squalicum attendance area.
8. It is not known at this time what the families who we think we are helping with equity think about our future recommendation, but that will be a topic of discussion throughout the process.

Revised Norms – Rob McElroy

Rob reviewed the edits to the Team Norms that were suggested at the Jan. 12 meeting. Parent April Barker made a motion to approve the revised Team Norms and Brad Swanson seconded the motion. There was a unanimous affirmative vote by the group to approve. Executive Director of Communications and Community Relations Tanya Rowe added that the Communications Department can help to support the process by providing talking points for PTA meetings, community meetings, etc.

Overview of Current and Future Development in the City of Bellingham – Chris

Behee/Simone Sangster

Simone shared that that the maps that the group will be looking at contain information regarding where students live, using December 2016 data. She explained that the district is divided into "tiles." Simone's [power point](#) gives some detailed information regarding how the information will be used. There was a question regarding whether these are current students (yes) and also a question regarding whether future development projects are included (yes, the ones that are known to us).

Chris spent time demonstrating the functionality of the maps and talked about the information that is contained in the maps (student enrollment, free/reduced percentage numbers, tiles, housing projects in or near development). He discussed the housing rates in the City of Bellingham for single family and multiple family housing and shared a map that displayed developable land in the city. Steve pointed out that there is very little predicted growth in the Bellingham High School attendance area. Some of the developments that will make an impact on enrollment at Cordata, now and in the near future, are a housing development (located on June Rd.) and the Santa Fe migrant housing development (located on Bakerview Rd. near Northwest Ave.). There was a question regarding whether much development will occur outside of the city limits but within the Bellingham Public Schools attendance area. Chris answered that there is not a lot of housing growth, as much of those areas are watershed areas, flood areas and already built-out areas (Lake Samish).

Rob asked if there were any questions, and Eric Alexander asked if it would be possible to have the free/reduced numbers for the elementary schools available for a future meeting, and these will be provided. April noted that it is interesting that last week this group valued the criteria related to socio-economic balance the highest and wonders if we value that in our own lives.

Questions – Rob McElroy/Steve Clarke

Rob requested that any questions be written on the note cards provided. At the next meeting, the committee will start looking in a more detailed way at the Cordata Elementary attendance area. There will be information provided regarding possible capacity at the five elementary schools that border Cordata.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Inquiry Questions:

1. Will possible future attendance areas of a King Mountain elementary school be considered while balancing Cordata to create less change in the future?
2. Is there a metric to locate middle and high income families? Considering those income levels may help our balancing of schools. Is only using the free and reduced numbers wise for balancing socio-economic balance?