



Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee

Feb. 2, 2017

Reconnect and Overview - Rob McElroy/Steve Clarke

Co-Chair Rob McElroy thanked everyone for attending today's meeting and made a brief overview of today's meeting.

Review/Approve Jan. 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes – Rob McElroy

Rob asked that a few minutes be spent reviewing the minutes from the Jan. 26, 2017 meeting. A motion was made by Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Bob Kuehl to approve the minutes as written; the motion was seconded and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

Respond to Inquiry Questions – Team

There was one inquiry question submitted at the Jan. 26, 2017 meeting:

1. Can we see the middle school numbers for the proposed elementary school change?

Rob clarified that the tile changes that were looked at for elementary changes last week will not impact the middle school attendance areas at this time; however, our proposed recommendations would have Shuksan students attending both Bellingham High School and Squalicum High School.

Debrief Questions/Concerns and Leadership Deep Dive Into Priority Elementary and High School Scenarios – Team

There was a meeting held yesterday (Feb. 1, 2017) that included all of the principals of the schools that will be impacted by the proposed changes. Other representatives in attendance at the meeting included Executive Director of Capital Projects and School Facilities Ron Cowan (representing maintenance), Director of Transportation Rae Anne Thon, Director of Special Education Mike Haberman and Executive Director of Communications and Relations Tanya Rowe.

Rob then reviewed the proposed changes to the elementary scenario. A spreadsheet was provided with numbers of students in the tiles that are being considered in the elementary and high school scenarios. He then asked the impacted elementary principals to share with the committee any concerns that they have about the proposed elementary scenario. Alderwood principal Micah Smith stated that he does not expect much of a change in enrollment due to the proposed changes. There was a question from a committee member regarding whether the students from the Villa Santa Fe migrant housing development will attend Cordata or Alderwood. Under this recommendation, they would attend Cordata and not be bussed to

Alderwood. Another question was whether the difference in total numbers on the spreadsheet is due to students attending a school outside of their attendance area. Parkview principal Mylo Allen stated that he is comfortable with the Bridges program remaining at Parkview for the short term, with the possibility of adding a portable at some point in the future if needed. Northern Heights principal Pam Pottle is not in attendance at this meeting, but she was not worried by the proposed changes and agreed that Northern Heights could accommodate the additional students, with the potential of an added portable if needed.

Rob asked that everyone take a look at the consideration factors from Policy 3130 and rate the proposed elementary scenario based on those individual criteria. The results were as follows:

- Criteria 1: Mostly thumbs up
- Criteria 2: Thumbs up
- Criteria 3: Thumbs up
- Criteria 4: Equally thumbs down and neutral
- Criteria 5: Thumbs up
- Criteria 6: Thumbs up
- Criteria 7: Thumbs up
- Criteria 8: Thumbs up

When polled, all were in favor of sharing the proposed elementary recommendation with the community to gather feedback, prior to a final recommendation to the superintendent.

Steve Clarke, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Teaching and Learning, next reviewed the proposed changes to the high school attendance areas. He asked that the high school principals share their feelings about the proposed scenario. Squalicum High School Principal James Everett, talked about the slow phase-in. He believes it is a good move, in part due to the difficulty for families to participate in evening events because they live so far from Squalicum. Bellingham High School Principal Linda Miller likes that the enrollment at Bellingham High will be more than 1,000 students, although she recognizes that it could take a couple of years for the enrollment to reach that number due to the phasing in of students. She is excited to receive students from Shuksan Middle School, but knows that it might be challenging for the Shuksan students to now be feeding into two different high schools. Linda is also looking forward to learning about and welcoming the new families that will be at Bellingham High School.

Steve shared that he had talked with Shuksan Principal Amy Carder about Shuksan students potentially feeding into two different high schools, and Amy believes the students and families will be able to make that adjustment. There was a question regarding whether this change will designate Squalicum athletics from AAA to AA? James answered that it would bring Squalicum to AA in size, but because we will be in the middle of the four year rating cycle, it would require an appeal to make the change a couple years from now. With the projected growth in the Squalicum neighborhood, it may not be prudent to make that appeal to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) at the current time. It was pointed out that school district buses will not pick up students in the Birchwood neighborhood for transportation to Squalicum if they choose to remain at Squalicum on a transfer, although they may be able to get on the bus at another Alderwood/Squalicum stop if there is room on the bus.

Steve then asked that the proposed high school scenario be rated based on the eight consideration factors from Policy 3130. The results were as follows:

- Criteria 1: Thumbs up
- Criteria 2: Thumbs up
- Criteria 3: Thumbs up
- Criteria 4: Mostly neutral
- Criteria 5: Thumbs up
- Criteria 6: Thumbs up
- Criteria 7: Many thumbs down, splitting Shuksan is not ideal
- Criteria 8: Thumbs up

When a poll was taken to decide if this scenario should be moved forward for feedback from the community, most agreed that it should. Some committee members stated that they were neutral, as they are worried that there are not enough students moving from Squalicum High to Bellingham High in light of projected future growth.

Timeline and Process for Gathering Input from Families Impacted – Team

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Simone Sangster shared the communication plan and next steps leading up to a formal recommendation to the superintendent. The high school recommendation is urgent due to registration for classes beginning on March 6, 2017. There will be a parent input meeting at Birchwood Elementary on Feb. 15, for the purpose of sharing the proposed scenario with affected families and gathering input. The parent input meeting for the elementary scenario will be held on March 9, 2017 at Cordata Elementary. Staff and families will also have the option of providing input via a survey. There was conversation and some concerns expressed regarding the accelerated high school timeline. Ideas were generated that would help to support students and families as the process moves forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.