

School Boundary Study Committee Report to the Superintendency

A committee of district staff, parents and community members has been meeting since November to study potential adjustments to school attendance areas for students in grades K-8. The boundary adjustments are necessary to relieve enrollment overload in some schools and better utilize available space in others.

The group studied current enrollment data and the limited projected growth in the district. In February, the committee hosted three public forums and posted an on-line survey to receive feedback on preliminary proposals. During the course of the boundary study, thirteen map options were considered by the committee.

The committee developed and applied the following criteria as boundary adjustments were studied, refined, eliminated or retained for further examination:

- **CAPACITY** – Establish boundaries that consider the enrollment capacity at each building. Use space efficiently.
- **PROXIMITY** – Establish boundaries that take into account the location of the neighborhood in relationship to the assigned school. Consider natural barriers such as major streets. Attempt to preserve neighborhood integrity.
- **RESOURCES** – Use all resources – people and financial – efficiently. Consider costs associated with new boundaries such as transportation and staffing
- **STABILITY** – Establish boundary lines with long term stability.
- **BALANCE** – Balance class size in the schools. Consider the special education students who are in general education classrooms for specific subjects. Minimize capouts wherever possible.
- **IMPACT** – Consider the number of students and families impacted by a boundary change. Establish boundaries that are family-friendly and minimize disruption. Consider the potential for retention and recruitment of district students.

The School Boundary Study Committee recommends adoption of map Option A5.

This is not a unanimous recommendation, but it does reflect the opinion of a strong majority of the committee members present at the February 28, 2007 meeting. Also, this recommendation is consistent with the rating for the five leading map options based on the criteria listed above.

The committee also prioritized a number of items related to the implementation of boundary adjustments, including the following:

Grandfathering -- allowing students to stay at their current school for a designated time, regardless of boundary changes.

Voluntary transfer – a student who lives in our district, but outside the boundary area for the school he/she attends. Voluntary transfers are approved by the receiving school principal for one year, subject to available space in the classroom.

Open enrollment – a student who lives outside our district and applies for enrollment in our district. Open enrollment is approved for our district; school assignment is subject to available space in the classroom.

The School Boundary Study Committee did not reach consensus on the details of implementation.

A significant majority of committee members present at the February 28 meeting, support “live there, go there” – giving first priority for attendance in 2007-08 to all students who live in the boundary area approved by the Board. Other committee members favored “have a seat, keep a seat” – giving first priority for attendance in 2007-08 to all students

currently attending a school. The Superintendent is asked to consider the many accommodations currently made for district families as they enroll students in our schools and to prioritize grandfathering, voluntary transfer and open enrollment situations accordingly.

Opportunities for Public Comment

The Superintendent will host a public forum to receive feedback on the committee recommendation on **Monday, March 5 at 5:30 p.m. in the gym at Fairmeadows Elementary School**. After receiving input and discussing the committee's proposal, the Superintendent will present a recommendation to the Board of Education.

The Board will hold a public hearing to hear comments on the Superintendent's recommendation on **Monday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Learning Resource Center**, just prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The Board will again hear comments on **Monday, March 26 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Learning Resource Center**. It is anticipated the Board will deliberate and take action on a boundary recommendation at a special meeting on Monday, March 26 following the public hearing.

Updates on the recommendations will be posted on the district web site as information is available and, if possible, communicated in school newsletters,. Questions and comments may be directed to your school representative on the Boundary Study Committee or to Kay Rosene at 633-5023.