

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, November 28, 2007

Present: Eric Christianson, Alan Braun, Kathy Ludowise, Edna Vega, Jose Guzman, Bertha Campos, Mary Lamping, Jules Gaudin, Sarah Bankhead, Tom Vick, Zenaida Figueroa, Bill Anderson, June Maguire, Brian Luosa, Donaldo Batiste, Amy Clark, Jon Ashworth, Karen Ashworth, MaryFran Troha, Rob Proce, Sandra Wideburg, Kenneth Swanson, Susan Greene, Rita Jedkins, Anita Hanna, Lynn Kretlow, Julie Ahern, Richard Jenkins, Ray Vukovich, Pat Vukovich, Mark Pfister, Cathy Colton, David Stiver, Jolie Bor

1. Brief review of project, last meeting's minutes, and goals for this meeting.
2. Look at maps and data provided by First Student Bus Company based on our current monolingual address boundaries.
 - a. A map shows what the geographic boundaries look like with dots marked indicating students in grades 1 through 5 who attend Waukegan non-magnet schools.
 - b. We saw charts indicating how many elementary students currently live further than 1.5 miles of their school (2478) and compared that if students were reassigned to their home school (1264). These charts do not take into consideration bussing for hazardous routes.
 - c. We saw charts indicating where students from the two magnet schools are drawn from. Lyon draws students from the south side and Cooke draws students from the north side.
3. We discussed current rules for transportation and transfers.
 - a. We saw charts on how many students are transported to or from other locations besides their home address. At elementary about 50% to home, 25% to other locations, and 25% walk. At middle school about 72% to home, 7% to other locations, and 21% walk.
 - b. A discussion was held on tightening rules of where we allow transportation to go if babysitter is outside school zone and not allowing as many parent voluntary transfers. Ideas were brought up of having parents pay for transportation if they are outside the zone or allowing it for licensed daycares.
4. We brainstormed a list of variables to improve neighborhood schools and then started to discuss their feasibility. Essentially determining "sacred cows." NO decisions were made, only discussion on what would be important to consider was conducted.
 - a. Babysitters
 - i. Save money on transportation by eliminating routes to babysitters outside of a school zone
 - ii. Would be very inconvenient for parents
 - iii. Possibly pay fee to ride bus.
 - b. Bilingual and Special Education
 - i. All schools now have bilingual and special ed classrooms in their building, but not at all levels and types.

- ii. By keeping the students strictly to their zone, there will be some very small classes and extra teachers needed.
 - iii. Thoughts were to look at how we provide services:
 - 1. Update in order to provide a smaller class size
 - 2. Have traveling teachers
 - 3. Partner schools
 - 4. Strive for continuity in the schools.
- c. Magnet programs
 - i. Both magnet programs do not have address zones and are physically located on the south side, where more classroom space is needed to keep everybody within walking distance to school
 - ii. Overall sentiment was that it is very important to keep the magnet programs
 - iii. Thoughts were shared as to moving the program(s) to a north side school
 - iv. Sharing a magnet program in a building that also has students attending by address, or keeping them as is.
- d. Gifted programs
 - i. Possibly combine with magnet school so that fewer schools require bussing across town
- e. Whittier Kindergarten Center –
 - i. Possibly change to a K-5 school and return kindergarten classes to all elementary buildings.
 - ii. Help because they would be with siblings and have older children to help mentor, wouldn't have to transition to a new building for 1st grade, and students could walk to school.
 - iii. Program was created to help with space issue and has since helped improve kindergarten curriculum because all teachers are together and also helps assure that all kindergarten students get a similar, strong background to start their school career.
- f. Other issues that we did not have time to discuss included:
 - i. Using pre-school sites (funded by a grant, would not cover any other grades to house at those sites).
 - ii. “Grandfather in” students to stay at current school if change boundaries.
 - iii. Feeder schools to middle school or geographic zones.
 - iv. Allow students to go to a school that sibling is at.
 - v. Choice – Parent Voluntary Transfers and NCLB.
 - vi. Change Lincoln Center to an elementary school.
 - vii. Change schools to be K – 6 and change 1 or 2 middle schools to elementary.
 - viii. Add crossing guards for hazardous intersections to limit need for busses.
 - ix. Build a new school.
 - x. Look at capacity to add on to existing schools.
 - xi. Change the bell system to have 2 start times instead of 3.

5. Discussion was held on having a standard set schedule and having a set committee.
 - a. Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Lincoln Center Board Room, starting on January 16, 2008.
 - b. Eric Christianson, Dr. Lamping, and Mr. Gaudin will create committee membership guidelines along with an application process for the next meeting. All meetings will be open to the public with input from any who would like to attend, but voting and creation of the school board proposal will come from the official committee.
 - c. Minutes, handouts and maps will be available on the district website.