

Neighborhood Schools Committee

Wednesday, March 19, 2008

Voting Members Present: Julie Ahern, Bill Anderson, Eric Christianson, Zenaida Figueroa, Jose Guzman, Kathy Ludowise, Carol Plizga, Rob Proce, Janelle Roth, Rebecca Voigt, Ray Vukovich, Jonathan White; Absent: Nicole Fishman, Anita Hanna, Norma Jensen, Tanika Strawder

Others Present: Abby Avellino, Dr. Donaldo Batiste, Alan Braun, Bertha Campos, Julie Clark, Jules Gaudin, Janine Gruhn, Dr. Mary Lamping, Brian Luosa, June Maguire, Tom Vick, Ruth Shirley

Maps were redone on legal size paper – it is the same information, just easier to read.

There is a new page that shows what schools have kids that can walk to school. W means most can walk – S means some students can walk.

Capacity – surveyed schools to find classrooms that hold 28 (regular) or 15 (special ed) students and put capacities on the list. These numbers assume there are no band rooms, art rooms, etc.

Problems Discussed:

We need to decide the elementary zones and what schools we are going to put them in. Once this is decided we can go forward - after we decide the building, and grade configurations we can do the boundaries for the zones. We can also tweak the boundaries to consider hazardous routes. No matter what we do we will have bussing.

It was brought up that the magnet school attracts kids from the area – for music, art, etc. in the elementary grades. We are focusing on space – not programs. When we discuss changing a magnet school, it is for space only – not eliminating a program, the decision may be made to move the program to a new location or redistribute it to all the buildings.

Another concern was possibly having a different building be the kindergarten center so it is not right on a busy road. There is a concern that some of the areas are unsafe for kindergarteners.

We are looking for direction on what two or three scenarios would work best. All scenarios are being considered for space only. There is a shortage of elementary classrooms south of Glen Flora Avenue. There will still be bussing – there will still be overcrowding.

We are trying to do this in actual space. In a perfect world we would love to build another school but we cannot do that right now. We are crunching numbers. We are still overcrowding. This can be combined with a grade configuration.

Bussing. There is a concern that some busses only have 10 kids on them. Combining these routes as an option may run the route over an hour. Possible option is to have distance Mile and a quarter to walk to school. Some of the students (Special Education) will need to be bussed but there are those who will be able to walk to school because they are in a neighborhood school. Home daycare is another issue. It gets kids bussed to their home even though they can walk to school. Let's check the efficiency of the bus system.

Another concern brought up regarding members voting was “Are they picking it because it is most logical or because it is what they want.”

Some of the school report card information is not clear in terms of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – Cooke does not have the subgroup of spec ed. Those scores go to other schools because they are not neighborhood schools. Glenwood and Washington are very good schools and their scores are actually higher than Cooke. All this should be looked at. Some at the meeting are very uncomfortable when these aren’t considered. It has been asked that at the next meeting to have some of this information to compare like sub groups. Cooke has special education – but not all of their scores are applied to Cooke schools. That isn’t going to change in a neighborhood school plan. We should not realign boundaries based on test scores. That is not part of this group’s responsibility. Some are looking at the program and not looking at the reasons for us getting together.

Most parents pick a magnet program because of the teacher history and program not necessarily because of AYP. Parents choose the school no matter where it is located.

How do we keep the resources that we have and accommodate the people and students not get rid of programs?

People at the meeting were asked to break up into small groups, look at one of the eight different options, write down the pros and cons, then go to the next scenario. Attendees were then asked to choose which program they would prefer. After all options were looked at, the group got back together as a whole and discussed what was written down.

When this was done, the voting members voted on which options they would like to be considered. Members voted with yes, no or blank; Y=1, N= -1, Blank=0. Answers were tabulated in a spreadsheet and the options are bolded below.

1. Magnet programs remain in current locations

- a. Positive
 - i. Cooke has the fine arts facilities for the designated program (the "goodies")
 - ii. Lyon can be neighborhood and Magnet at same time (most are from neighborhood already)
 - iii. May still need magnet for desegregation
- b. Negative
 - i. Neighborhood school would not work due to hazardous routes.
 - ii. No classroom space on south side
 - iii. Many more zones being bussed
- c. O=8, G=8

2. Eliminate magnet programs

- a. Positive
 - i. Less buses due to neighborhood schools
 - ii. students nearer to Lyon/Cooke
 - iii. Neighborhood space
 - iv. All students may excel
- b. Negative
 - i. three schools will have overcrowd students
 - ii. what will attract potential families to move into Waukegan
 - iii. lose programs- become too disjointed
 - iv. McCall -Oakdale, lots of space
 - v. Will more kids excel if eliminated?
 - vi. Families will leave district
 - vii. still will need to bus to Cooke doe to location

- viii. will not be racially diverse at Cooke
 - c. O=5, G=0
- 3. Eliminate Lyon magnet program
 - a. Positive
 - i. More Space
 - ii. Eliminate some south side crowding
 - b. Negative
 - i. still fills south schools
 - ii. Lyon magnet are south neighbors
 - iii. McCall –Oakdale, lots of space
 - iv. higher bussing
 - c. O=5, G=0
- 4. **Relocate Lyon magnet program to Oakdale**
 - a. Positive
 - i. Magnet school on North side
 - ii. Opens up Lyon building as a neighborhood school
 - iii. 2nd least with bussing and overcrowd
 - b. Negative
 - i. bussing still an issue
 - ii. staff buy in
 - iii. Will Lyon students transfer for program or want to stay at Lyon because of neighborhood
 - iv. Oakdale neighbors have to go to McCall
 - c. O=5 G=6
- 5. Relocate Cooke magnet program to Oakdale
 - a. Positive
 - i. Least bussing
 - ii. least overcrowding
 - iii. keeps program
 - iv. gain space
 - v. greenwood and Glenwood gain space
 - b. Negative
 - i. Oakdale gym is small
 - ii. does not have space for program
 - iii. \$ to remodel fine arts needs
 - c. O=0,G=2
- 6. **1-5, Current configuration**
- 7. **K-5, Add Whittier as K-5 building (add 600 seats, 550 students, net gain of 50)**
 - a. Positive
 - i. More in neighborhoods
 - ii. Middle Schools still 6-8
 - iii. Less Transitions
 - iv. Lower Bussing issue
 - b. Negative
 - i. Still overcrowded south side
 - ii. Need to bus North
 - iii. having kinder in building
 - c. O=0,G=0
- 8. 1-6, Add Abbott and Webster as 1-6 buildings (add 1600 seats, 1300 students, net gain of 300)
 - a. Positive
 - i. Gain Space

- ii. Elementary not as crowded
 - iii. Room for move in students
 - iv. More social events
 - v. 6th graders too young for middle school
 - vi. 2 years in middle school
 - vii. 6th graders role models for younger grades
- b. Negative
- i. strange range - usually K-6 or K-5
 - ii. Only two years in middle school
 - iii. Webster and Abbott have students from far away
 - iv. \$ to convert to elementary
 - v. Middle schools very full
- c. O=2, G=0

9. K-6, Add Abbott, Webster, Whittier as K-6 buildings (add 2200 seats, 1850 students, net gain of 350)

- a. Positive
- i. Social
 - ii. Live within their neighborhood
 - iii. easier transition for K's into 1st
 - iv. Keeps magnets
 - v. Peer tutoring - older help younger
- b. Negative
- i. More bussing
 - ii. losing two middle schools
 - iii. 6th graders too mature for elementary
 - iv. negatively affects academic programs
- c. O=2, G=0

Vote on Grade and Magnet Configuration to pursue,

CONFIGURATIONS		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Y	N
K - 5	5	n	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		N								7	2
K - 6	0	y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N						6	6
1 - 5	-1	n	Y	N				N	N	N	Y	Y	Y						4	5
1 - 6	-5	n	N	N				Y	N	Y	N	N	N						2	7
AS IS	4	y	Y	N	Y	Y		Y	N	Y	Y		N						7	3
NO MAGNETS	-3	n	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y							4	7
RELOCATE LYON MAGNET	-3	n	N	N	N	Y	N		N	N	Y	Y	Y						4	7
RELOCATE COOKE MAGNET	-9	n	N	N	N		N	Y	N	N	N	N	N						1	10
ELIMINATE LYON MAGNET	-10	n	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N								0	10

Next Meeting is Wednesday, April 16, 2008, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

All information will be available at www.waukeganschools.org/neighborhoodschool