

Elementary Redistricting Committee

October 18, 2011 Meeting Summary

Thirty five parents, teachers, administrators and school board members met on October 18th to begin the work of the Elementary Redistricting Committee.

The charge of the committee is to:

- Review current and projected enrollment trends as well as classroom space available in each elementary school
- Consider the various elementary grade configurations that could work with our enrollment numbers and available physical space
- Review the pros / cons of various configurations to best support our educational programs
- Present our findings to the Board of School Directors along with recommended attendance boundary adjustments needed for each configuration

During this meeting the committee reviewed current enrollment numbers and enrollment projections for the next 10 years. The current elementary school attendance boundaries were reviewed and potential new construction projects in West Pottsgrove, Upper Pottsgrove and Lower Pottsgrove townships were discussed.

Following the presentation by administration the committee was asked to generate a list of questions that they had as well as identify additional information that would be needed at future meetings.

Questions:

- What data/research is available regarding the educational “soundness” of a K-2 building? A 3-5 building?
- Which option impacts the least number of students?
- If a change is made to a K-2 / 3-5 configuration:
 - What will be the future of kindergarten- full or half day?
 - Will there be a negative impact on teaching/specialists positions?
 - Needs / costs for transportation and travel time?
 - How would this effect parent involvement?
 - What would after school care look like?
- Will there be a transition plan to support families and children on having to change schools?
- Which option will best support fiscal planning without sacrificing educational quality?

- How will the decision be made?
- Have any preliminary decisions been made by the board or school district?
- Where would they have Special Education classrooms, etc?
- Currently “older buddies” are used in the K-5 model. How would this look if we switched to K-2 / 3-5?
- Would it make sense to leave Lower as is and consider shifting boundaries between Rocks and West?
- Will transportation costs play a large role in the decision making?
- Do you foresee the increased availability of charter schools taking a percentage of students out of our 3 schools?
- How many students reside in Cherry Tree and Regal Oaks neighborhoods?
- What are our class size targets?
- Are West and Ringing Rocks equipped for smaller students?
- Why can't we keep K-5 and just move resources as needed.
- Do most kids walk or ride a bus for certain costs?
- How many areas would be affected to keep K-5?
- Are 5th grades all on the same page if in different buildings?
- Is this a temporary or permanent fix?
- Square footage per child?
- Will this committee's decision be taken to the board as a recommendation?
- Will you replace retiring teachers or use this as a means to save money with larger class sizes?
- Is it a good idea to be moving Ringing Rocks students three times within two years?
- Would shifting Cherry Tree and Regal Oaks back to Rocks make everything balance?
- Will students be more anxious with a new configuration?
- What about keeping siblings together and parent push-back?
- How will boundary changes effect the diversity in each school?
- What would be the purpose of a 3-5 center?
- Will class size increase?

Additional Information Needed:

- Cost of center oriented education
- Building capacity/number of classrooms/enrollment
- Number of students in Regal Oaks and Cherry Tree
- Research on K-2/3-5 models (pros/cons)

- New school boundaries
- Mentoring for younger students
- Cost of modifying classrooms
- Cost of transportation
- Enrollment projections
- Other districts with K-2/3-5 centers
- Safeties
- Population map by ages
- Studies on student performance/behavior
- A list of pros and cons of the K- 5 vs. K-2 / 3-5 configuration.