

## **Boundary Committee Meeting 5**

February 8, 2012

District Office, 1432 N. Andover Road

**Attendees:** Tim Hayden, Keturah Austin, Dr. Andy Koenigs, Nancy Kirkendoll, Les Mangus, Roger Elliott, Amy DeGarmo, Matt Hobbs, Shari Rooks, Jody Baker, Mark Cross, Kim Bishop, Ali Darnell-Nielsen, Kaylene Allison, JoAnne Wreath, Julie Clopton, Cheryl Hochhalter, Amy Rech, Chris Steward, Kim Beleira, Jill Hodge, Brett White, Craig Gray, Bob Baier, Terry Huelskamp, Kier Stamp, Thane Bulmer, Michelle Peckham

**Guests:** Emily from the ACHS newspaper, WES Principal Elton Armbrister

**Notes:** Dr. Koenigs called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He discussed that the half day kindergarten proposal would be going to the board this month due to the need for parents to know about it at kindergarten round-ups.

He discussed the need to provide fair and balanced rationale to the proposed recommendations. He would like to do a community forum. He also handed out the recommendations that were developed at the last meeting.

He handed out information regarding using the turnpike as a north/south divider and how that would affect student numbers. It would not relieve Wheatland overcrowding and would shift too many north students to the south side. However, by adjusting that line to make Central as the divider and then following K96 on the west side of district, this would better balance numbers and also help Wheatland's overcrowding. The Committee was split into 4 groups to work on the final recommendations.

Group 1: Recommendation 1

Group 2: Recommendation 2

Group 3: Recommendation 3

Group 4: Recommendation 4

Director of Transportation Julie Clopton was asked about potential issues boundary changes could create for buses. It really depends on both numbers and start times. New subdivisions going to different schools than other neighborhoods in the area could create some busing issues.

Groups separated to work on both detail/rationale and pros and cons for each plan.

The groups came back together at 7:45 p.m.

## **Group 1: Recommendation – No boundary changes at this time.**

**Rationale:** No hard data (enrollment projections) showed that we need to do something right away. The district had very little growth this year (+28), and is not expecting much more next year. The group would like to consider doing “something” when a building reaches 90% of absolute capacity – maybe have a standing committee look annually at growth and numbers.

### **Advantages:**

1. The largest classes are already in middle school. High schools felt they could ride that out without going over capacity.
2. Kindergarten attendance centers would help elementary overcrowding, especially at Wheatland.

### **Disadvantages:**

1. There is some growth in new housing, and most of that is Monarch Landing, which goes to WES.

## **Group 2: Take volunteers to balance enrollment.**

**Rationale:** Volunteers could be sought from the north side to attend schools in the south to help relieve overcrowding. Voluntary transfers would be available for elementary students on the north side only. Priority would be given to Wheatland families first. Transfer requests must be submitted by May 1 - but approval may not come until Aug. 1 depending on enrollment numbers. Once they have chosen to go to the south schools, they will remain there for middle and high school. They will not be allowed to return. Family members may be grandfathered in. Transfers would be determined by a lottery system (to avoid teacher shopping) and a south elementary school would be selected for them – where seats are available. This would be a permanent, one-time transfer. Transportation must be provided by the parent.

### **Advantages:**

1. No forced boundary changes in any neighborhood.
2. Some families will have a chance to go to a closer neighborhood school.

### **Disadvantages:**

1. No guarantees with voluntary transfers. Might not be enough, or might be too many.
2. Doesn't address WES overcrowding because moves are purely voluntary.

### **Group 3: Reassign New Neighborhoods (new subdivisions) to Balance Enrollment**

**Rationale:** As new developments or phases of new developments are started, reassign them to balance enrollment. Any platted lots that have not begun construction would be eligible. Phases of new developments, not entire developments, could also be reassigned. Transportation would be provided. Students would be assigned to the closest enrollment center that needs enrollment growth.

#### **Advantages:**

1. It could provide more flexibility to establish boundary lines.
2. It would continue precedent set by Prairie Creek addition and others the board has previously reassigned to help with overcrowding.
3. Would help to balance enrollment in long term.
4. Would not require existing homeowners to move schools.

#### **Disadvantages:**

1. This could be a busing and transportation nightmare.
2. Safety issues for kids walking.
3. This plan undermines neighborhood schools concept.
4. This solves nothing for the long term.
5. It could be a while before some of these developments are built.
6. There would be ongoing communication issues with realtors, etc.
7. Ongoing maintenance of determining where new developments will be assigned.

### **Group 4: Move Boundary Lines to Balance Enrollment**

**Rationale:** The board should consider looking at Central as the north/south boundary line west of Andover Road all the way to K-96. Then use K-96 as the north/south boundary line. Before making that decision, new numbers should also be reviewed and consideration given to how free and reduced numbers might be impacted with such a change. Consider changing boundary lines only when a building(s) reaches 90% absolute capacity. Only elementary families would be moved due to this boundary change. Consider sending these students to Meadowlark if space allows. If the family has kids in middle school or high school, they would be exempt as would any of their elementary students. These exempted families would not be provided transportation. East of Andover Road, the north/south boundary line would remain the same. It would be a good starting point for the board if boundaries had to be moved sometime in the future.

**Advantages:**

1. Addresses overcrowding at AMS, AHS, and Wheatland.

**Disadvantages:**

2. Uproots families from their neighborhood schools.
3. Still a short term solution as the north side grows faster than the south side.

It was suggested to not move any special programs at this time. It was pointed out that moving these kids can be very disruptive. Also, many of their rooms are specially designed. It would be more of an option at the elementary level. The rooms are more specific at the middle and high school levels.

The plan is to present the recommendations to the Board of Education in March. Committee members are encouraged to attend, and Dr. Koenigs would like some help from members of the committee to present this proposal.

Forums with the community will take place prior to the March board meeting. It will be good to have at least one forum to get input from the community and take their feedback to the board as well. We would need to have good attendance from the committee. Monday, Feb. 27 is a tentative date for the forum. It will be held at Meadowlark Elementary in the Cafetorium at 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

Dr. Koenigs thanked the committee members for their thoughtful work and time commitment. He encouraged them to participate in the forum and BOE presentation. He also asked that the notes from each group were left on the table.

The committee was dismissed at 8:23 p.m.