

Meeting: Demographic Trends & Facility Planning Committee

Date: April 2, 2020

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: WebEx Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Committee Members:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alicia Arnold	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nic Ashman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Josh Clements*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Margot Dahling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David FitzGerald
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Goings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heather Grant	<input type="checkbox"/> Liwei (Amanda) Guo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anne Hartman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caro Johnson
<input type="checkbox"/> Steven Lowry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeremy Pohlen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travis Schroeder	<input type="checkbox"/> Zoe Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Weichelt
Resource (non-voting) Members:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kim Koller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darryl Petersen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tim Nordin	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil Lyons	

*Chair

Guests: Jake Donze, Jim Fey, Kurt Madsen

Notes: Jennifer Knutson

The meeting was called to order by Josh Clements at 10:03 a.m. Quorum was met.

- **Public Comment**
 - No comments.
- **Approval of Minutes from February 27, 2020**
 - The committee took time to review the minutes.

Caro motioned to approve the February 27th minutes. Heather seconded the motion. All in favor.

- **Reviewed Minutes from March 6, 2020**
 - The committee took time to review the minutes.
 - Since this was a workgroup session without quorum, the minutes did not need to be approved.
- **Review of the Work Session and Short-Term Relief**
 - The goal today is to summarize the plan of the workgroup and other information that was asked for during the workgroup session. The Board is asking our committee to present our recommendations at Monday's Board meeting. Our committee has a general charge to provide recommendations to the Board about student capacity, more specifically short-term relief, which would not entail referendum, and medium to long-term, 5-to 10-year options. In the short-term, how can we move students around between existing facilities to better balance uneven enrollment among several strained south side schools? We looked at changing where people would enroll and shifting seats around without extraordinary measures, such as bringing in mobile classrooms or forcing people. Our short-term relief plan would be an optional solicitation. We would offer existing students the option to switch schools and also direct new students who might be in 4K, going into kindergarten, or not yet enrolled in the school system to attend the relief school. We are hoping to get a few dozen people from each school to shift around to help balance classrooms and grade levels. This is similar to the relief plan for Roosevelt for the area North of 312 from a few years ago.

- The workgroup decided upon 3 choice areas. Choice area 1 is Manz to Robbins. Historically, choice area 1 was originally within Robbins' boundary and moved to Manz in the past. This choice area would be east of Fairfax St., south of Clairemont Ave., west of Hwy 93, and north of Arthur St. Choice area 2 is Meadowview to Manz. This choice area would be east of Cummings Ave., south of Manz boundary, west of Fairfax St., and north of Golf Rd. Choice area 3 is Meadowview to Manz. This choice area would be east of Fairfax St., south of Arthur St., west of Hwy 93, and north of Golf Rd. These short-term relief boundaries may not be perfect but are close for preliminary numbers needed. Families new to the neighborhood, families with upcoming kindergarteners, or alternate school requests in the three choice areas would be personally contacted to discuss enrollment, capacity concerns, and would be given the offer to attend the choice school. For families that agreed to make the switch, the student would remain at the choice school through 5th grade. The 3 areas are prioritized as choice 1, choice 2, and choice 3. In order for choice 2 to happen, we need choice 1 to happen first. We need students to agree to move from Manz to Robbins so that Manz would have room for students from the choice 2 area which would provide some relief to Meadowview. Ultimately, the committee agreed that Meadowview is at a critical point currently and does not have wiggle room. Robbins seems to have a little bit of wiggle room, and Manz is reaching capacity. Shifting students from Manz to Robbins would free up space at Manz in order to shift students from Meadowview to Manz. Choice 3 is largely dependent on how choice 1 and 2 go. If we need to move more kids to Robbins or more kids to Manz then we would implement choice 3. Choice 3 may or may not happen depending on the numbers. The number of children in choice area 1 is more than choice area 2. We are likely to get more movement from Manz to Robbins than Meadowview to Manz. Our goal is to not take a student and make them move. We really want to target new families and honor choice alternate school requests for family convenience, even though alternate school requests are not typically approved due to convenience.
- For Robbins, would we be looking at more sections of kindergarten and would those sections roll through every grade and have a ripple effect through the school? Yes, although if a family moves out of the choice neighborhood then the student would not be able to continue at Robbins. We would guarantee the choice school as long as the family lives in the choice area. Ultimately, is there a target number we are looking for and what are the rights of the kindergartener's sibling to go to the choice school? Meadowview is approximately at 96% capacity. Shifting 40 kids would bring Meadowview down to 86%. I don't know if we will hit that mark, but it would be nice to get Meadowview below 90% capacity if we could. Regarding what happens with siblings, using dual immersion as an example, we try to keep siblings together. An older sibling has the option to attend the same school as a dual immersion kindergartener. If an older sibling wanted to go to Robbins, we would approve that. If a choice kindergartener has a younger sibling and if we are still operating under this choice model when that sibling enters kindergarten, the younger sibling would also have the choice through their 5th grade year. However, if this choice is not still available, we would allow the family to stay together at the choice school only through the older sibling's 5th grade year. The younger siblings would go to their current boundary neighborhood school once the original kindergartener moves to 6th grade. This is similar to the Sherman option for Roosevelt's relief plan.
- If we need to move 40 to Manz, we likely need to move 50 to Robbins, yes? Take the number lightly. If we could get 20 kids at this point it would bring down Meadowview's capacity to 90%. Do we need to move more kids to Robbins than we need to move to Manz? Manz is already quite full, but we don't want to create a problem moving kids to Manz. As we call families and get commitments, we need to watch capacity of all schools. We need to make sure the other school don't become overcrowded. This is the important part of the phases that we built into the plan so that we can't move kids into a school without moving kids out. As a Demo & Trends committee, we really look at capacity. As a principal, where the students fall in the grade level is much more impactful than percentage of capacity. They have to be X number of kids in the right grade levels to provide relief. If we are only providing kindergarten relief than that is only one grade level. Our target is also new families, not just incoming kindergarteners. Did the subgroup talk at all about not making it an option but mandatory? That would be equivalent to a boundary change and would require one-year notice. Choice area 1 and 3 are very transient areas causing more movement and would give us

more options. That is one of the more attractive part about those areas as people move in and out, and it fits with busing too.

- It is important to emphasize that the range of options are not great, and we are doing the best we can with the options of moving kids from one school to another. It addresses the concerns that we may not get people to move from the grade levels and schools that are most constrained, although that is our goal. We are trying to utilize the tools that are voluntary at this point. Also recognize that this is a two-year fix. We will hopefully have a new capacity planned. If that changes, and we don't get new capacity then we may have to revisit this. We are assuming new capacity will be available to handle these constraints and that we would only be using voluntary tools for new students. Hopefully this will give schools a little bit of breathing room realizing that we won't see huge changes and may not get to the comfortable target given how tight the buildings are. Do we have any numbers in the next couple years of growth? Along with the discussion of administrative support, the group discussed counseling support and interventionalist support for students. We do have some preliminary numbers from the City of Eau Claire. Generally, it only shows what developments have been approved for building permits. It does show some developments in Robbins' area, along with other south side school boundaries. Looking ahead may see most development on far west side. Each school on south side will see new dwelling units based on 2019 permits issued. We won't know when people actually move in. This is just within the city limits. No information has been received by the County yet.
- This is a temporary short-term solution for the fall of 2020 until we get a referendum proposal together for long-term relief. We need to get this in front of the School Board as soon as possible for fall implementation. Then we go back and look at long-term solutions. We have put a lot of time and thought into this. The principle is to help the vast overcrowding at Meadowview right now while not overwhelming the other schools. This one has a lot of pros to it, from a transportation standpoint and the transient nature of the area to not disrupt settled families. This is a minimally disruptive solution and has a lot of benefits.
- The workgroup had asked Darryl to do some research on short-term relief plan B to move some mobile classrooms into Meadowview and potentially Manz. All south side principals were asked for their ability to collapse classrooms. Putnam Heights could collapse 1 classroom which would combine two spaces and open up one space. Meadowview cannot collapse anymore. Robbins could potentially rearrange to squeeze in a few classroom spaces, if needed, but it wouldn't be ideal. Manz, based on class sizes and bubble classes might have space or could come up with one flexible spot. This is why Meadowview definitely needs mobile classrooms and Manz potentially needing mobile classrooms if we don't recommend Relief Plan A.
- Darryl reached out to mobile classroom companies. Received feedback from two companies. One company no longer rents units. The other company, Pac Van, only has an 8 classroom pod which is bigger than what we need. Darryl asked about a two classroom setup, but Pac Van said that they did not have any of those available. Lead time and availability is lacking. Unknown as to when the units would be available. Need to look at size and where to place the units on site. We would be responsible for meeting codes. It would be our responsibility to provide plumbing, water, electricity, and waste disposal. Not enough information was provided for a full cost yet but will continue to research. In the past, we had a number of units around our district that were double wide trailers remodeled to meet our needs. Unfortunately, this is too short of notice for mobile classrooms to happen. At this point, it does not sound like a plan B is viable.
- To answer previous questions regarding impact on demographics and services. As a short-term solution, demographics won't affect Title grants for additional staffing or smaller class sizes, as such grants are based on long-term trends. Educational services, such as special education programming and EL programming follow the students, and the staff follow the program. We would ensure the students' needs are taken care of. Commissioner Nordin previously asked if we had considered what might be some other programming that may not necessarily follow the children, for example, counselors. What is the ratio of counseling to

children? Are we offering the same access to those services to all students in all schools? Kim will look up the ratios and where are schools fall within those ratios to provide the answer at the Board presentation.

- For presenting to the School Board, should we present Option B even if it's not viable? It is helpful to know that it is not viable and backs up the committees' potential recommendation and shows how the committee looked at all possible options even if those not viable. Don't necessarily need to refer to them as Option A and Option B. It helps to solidify the recommendation, assuming this goes forward as the recommendation of the committee, as the short-term relief option recommendation with information detailing the other potential options that are not going to work as considerations.

Caro motions to recommend short term relief plan A to the Board as written. Margot verbally seconded the motion. Alicia seconded the motion in the chat. Via a voice vote, all in favor. Motion carries.

ACTION ITEM(S)

- Demo and Trends is on the Board agenda for Monday. Kim will put together a presentation for the Board with some notes. The vote will be in two weeks on April 20th. Josh will help present to the Board on Monday.
- **Review Development Information**
 - Still waiting on development information from County. Will share City development information with committee to discuss next time.

ACTION ITEM(S)

- Josh will forward to the Committee the information he received from the City and will follow up with the County to request their information.

The next committee meeting on April 16th will be a WebEx virtual meeting. We will keep the originally scheduled time of 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Margot motioned to adjourn. Alicia seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.