

School Configuration Committee (SCC) Frequently Asked Questions

May 29, 2013

The questions in this framework include inquiries written by individuals on 3x5 cards at Community Meetings, the Small Group Reports at Community Meetings, and questions recorded during staff meetings. Not all questions have been included in this current document. Therefore, we will continually add questions and answers. We appreciate your patience and invite you to revisit this document periodically (use the date to determine if you are reading a new version).

We will fulfill our commitment to answer questions submitted. Please understand the process is time-consuming, and it requires a variety of people to provide answers.

BISD is answering FAQs in a factual manner, based primarily on data and information that has already been shared with the School Configuration Committee (SCC).

Note: Many questions are similar, but they were written differently, so individuals may not see the precise wording contained in their questions. However, the topic is included.

Frequently Asked Questions

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BUDGET

- 1. What is the total budget for the school district? What percentage of the budget would be saved if option 2 is selected? Option 3?**

Budgeted revenues for the 2012-2013 school year are \$36M. Budgeted expenditures for this year are \$37.2M.

Estimated savings for Option 2 are \$400-\$450K of general fund expenditures. For Option 3, estimated general fund expenditure savings are \$300-\$350K. These equal 1% and just less than 1% of the budget respectively.

- 2. What are projected savings for each option as a percentage of the 2013-2014 budget?**

The majority of the BISD General Fund budget is dependent on state funding, which is determined annually by the state legislature. Under current legislation, it is required to annually have a budget draft by July 10 and a finalized budget by the end of August. With the state legislature in a second session, we do not have the state budget available, and therefore, BISD does not have the 2013-14 budget finalized.

- 3. What is projected legislature funding for the future especially for 2014-2015?**

See question #2.

- 4. What are the budget projections (revenue and expenses) that parallel the enrollment projections for each future year?**

School district budgets are dependent each year on the state budget as finalized by the state legislature. See question #2.

- 5. How has the district budget been affected by reductions in state funding over the past several years?**

Since 2008, BISD has dealt with a \$3.1M loss of state funding. This includes the loss of:

I-728 achievement funds	(\$1,800,000)
K-4 class size reduction allocations	(\$450,000)
Teacher training days	(\$200,000)
State per pupil allocation due to enrollment drop	(\$655,200)

- 6. Have you explored other sources of revenue and cost savings rather than closing a school?**

With the recent years of budget shortfalls, the district continually has explored other sources through committee and survey work. These include creating other sources of revenue (Bainbridge Schools Foundation) and implementing cost savings.

Samples of cost savings include: new and adjusted facility use fees; food service in-direct costs; Safety Net grant awards; energy audit and utility cost savings; decreases in bus routes; increased athletic fees; staffing reductions (such as, certificated staff to align with enrollment declines; adjustment in central and school administrative staffing; and reduction of stipended extra or co-curricular activities);

passage of a supplemental programs and operations and technology levies; and program reductions (such as, Outdoor Education).

7. **Can we utilize building rentals as income-producing assets?**

This has been part of our strategy for years. Rental revenues total \$175 - \$200K annually. These have been included in annual budgets, and gaps remain.

8. **What will happen when funds from the McCleary Act come to fruition? Is it possible that the steps we have taken to save \$450,000 in operating costs will be unnecessary because the state has provided more funding?**

The McCleary decision came from the State Supreme Court. Currently, the specific amount of additional funding is not known. The Supreme Court took the remarkable and unprecedented step of retaining jurisdiction over the case to ensure that the Legislature met the court's mandate for increased funding by 2018. The State Legislature is in a special session to deal with the state budget, and the McCleary decision is part of their considerations. Therefore, the timeline and budgetary outcomes are not currently known and may come in an extended timeline.

CAPITAL AND FACILITIES COSTS AND COST SAVINGS

1. **Are there savings to be found in energy savings innovation?**

\$1M in the 2009 bond was devoted to energy conservation, sustainability and building longevity. Since the conservation strategies began energy savings have totaled more than \$100K. The district is committed to energy-savings and sustainable renovations that support student learning, reduce operating costs and benefit the environment.

2. **Bonds: If we wait to implement Option 2 to allow voter approval of a bond to pay for complete facility changes, how much money would be lost in the waiting time? (How much savings opportunity would we lose?)**

The lost opportunity for savings in the General Fund is \$400 - \$450K annually. The General Fund covers daily operational costs of running schools, and comes from state and federal allocations. Capital Funds to cover construction or renovation of buildings come from voter-approved bonds or capital levies. By state law, Capital Funds cannot be used for the daily costs of running schools. Finances related to a bond issue would depend on the year a bond is put to voters, and if approved, the schedule of completion for each facility. Again, those monies go into the Capital Fund, not the General Fund.

3. **In Option 1, facilities cost includes replacing Blakely at \$30 M and replacing 100 building at BHS. Would those projects be done in Options 2 or 3? They are not listed as facility costs for these options.**

Option 1 maintains the schedule for replacing or renovating all aging facilities as currently identified in the Facilities Master Plan. Other facilities' needs do not change with the options, but the timelines may.

- 4. Why do Options 2 and 3 not include the replacement of BHS 100 in capital costs? (otherwise it is an apples-oranges comparison)**
Options 2 & 3 do not address all of the facility needs in the Facilities Master Plan. Regardless of any option, the BHS 100 building is in need of replacement. See question #3.
- 5. Bonds: To replicate or improve Commodore Options programs spaces, will a bond measure be needed?**
No. Funds identified in the 2009 bond for essential renovations at Commodore are currently in the Capital Fund. Those funds could be redirected to modify the Ordway building to accommodate the Options programs.
- 6. Where does the money come from for K-5 option related to facility renovations?**
In Option 2, immediate modifications would need to be made at Ordway to accommodate the options programs and at Sakai to accommodate younger students. Temporary portables would need to be added at Blakely, Wilkes and Woodward. These costs (approximately \$3.4M) could be redirected from the current Capital Fund balance. Replacing portables with permanent square footage would require a bond measure.
- 7. How much will it cost to retrofit the schools that are changing the grades they serve? Where will that money come from?**
See question #6.
- 8. Are the costs of changes required at Sakai for younger students factored in?**
Yes, those costs are included in the \$3.4 M estimated costs of short-term modifications. Those funds are available in the BISD Capital Fund.
- 9. Do you know what the costs are to ensure the Commodore options programs fit well into the Ordway space?**
Yes. A portion of the current Capital Fund would be used to create spaces within Ordway that support the options programs. See question #6.
- 10. Does \$400-\$450,000 cost savings include the costs to add portables to Wilkes, Woodward and Blakely?**
The savings are from our General Fund budget (daily operational costs, including staff, materials and supplies, etc.). The cost of portables will come from the Capital Fund (a separate fund, which cannot be used for daily operations, but is designated for facility renovations and replacement).
- 11. How long will it take to break even from the retrofitting and the rebuilding of the schools?**
Calculating a break-even point is difficult given the difference between the Capital Fund and the General Fund. State law dictates that it is not legal to transfer money from the Capital Fund to the General Fund. The General Fund would immediately

recognize an annual savings if Options 2 or 3 were implemented. When we consider the opportunity to minimize the Capital investment in facilities that the FMP (Facilities Master Plan) has identified as needing replacement, the return could be realized in 3-6 years.

GENERAL FUND COSTS (Operational and Staff Costs)

1. Have we looked at ways to improve operational efficiency at Woodward and BHS? (energy efficiency and so on).

Yes, if by operational efficiency you mean improving building systems to increase energy efficiency. See question #1 under Capital and Facilities Costs and Cost Savings.

2. Regarding savings in staffing costs – has the committee looked at the true numbers? Needs to take into account that staff will follow the students.

Yes. The staff savings were calculated based on current student:teacher ratios and according to BISD staffing guidelines at each grade level. Savings are realized by closing a building: principal/administrative staff, custodial, etc.

3. What is the savings “line in the sand” – at what savings level do we move forward?

The SCC has not determined that level. The final decision is in the hands of the School Board which will weigh a wide range of factors including: educational programs; impacts on students, staff, family, and community; enrollment levels; facilities needs now and in the future; and both operational and capital costs. Both Options 2 and 3 would give BISD savings in both the General Fund (daily operational costs) and the Capital Fund (money for construction or renovation of buildings) as bond requests could be lowered if a building is closed.

4. How can money for operations be transferred to programs? Aren't they different pots of money?

If you are referring to major renovations and building replacement, there are different “pots of money.” Refer to questions #2, #10 and #11 under Capital and Facilities Costs and Savings.

COMMUNITY & STAFF ENGAGEMENT

1. Will you survey students?

The Superintendent met with a representative group of students at BHS on May 22, and is planning to meet with students from Eagle Harbor High School.

2. How are BISD staff being engaged in this process?

Four staff meetings regarding the work of the School Configuration Committee (SCC) and the three options were held in April at Sakai, WMS, Commodore, and Ordway. Staff from all schools could attend any meeting that fit their schedule. The SCC has been meeting regularly since October 2012. The SCC includes: seven certificated staff (teachers, counselor), three classified staff (paraeducators, secretary), three principals, two district administrators, and the Capital Projects and Facilities Director. There are an additional 12 community/parent representatives and two ex-officio School Board representatives on the SCC.

3. How are parents and community being engaged in this process?

- Representatives on the SCC
- PTOCC (Parent Teacher Organization Coordinating Council) – Superintendent briefings with PTO leaders
- Four community meetings
- Listserv/Email communications
- Survey

4. How will the community meetings be publicized?

- OpenBook – BISD publication to entire community
- Email Listserv
- Press release(s) to print and online media
- All staff emails
- Reader boards

5. How will you explore and get feedback about staff, parent and community feelings about having an 800-900 student middle school?

Currently, the Community Meetings and the upcoming survey have and will provide opportunity for feedback. There will be more opportunities to offer feedback in the future.

6. Will future community meetings offer more opportunity for Q&A and dialog, or will the format be the same as this evening (first meeting, May 7) with the largest amount of time spent on presentation by the district?

Yes. The presentation length and time was adjusted for subsequent meetings.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

1. Options: Does the 280 student number for Options K-12 include predictions for growing the program? I thought there was discussion to double capacity of options track?

No, it does not. However, the desire is to expand enrollment in the options programs. This cannot be done currently at the Commodore facility, but could at Ordway.

- 2. Options: Has consideration been given to siting the options programs at all the other schools?**

Did the committee consider splitting the three options programs between buildings?

Have you considered disaggregating Commodore Options and placing EHHS at BHS and the Odyssey 1-8 at other schools (i.e. 1-4 at an elementary and 5-8 at intermediate/secondary) Have you considered relocating 1-8 Options into portables until a new permanent home is created (this would still provide a cost savings annually)?

The SCC's initial assumption was that for educational and efficiency reasons, the three options programs should remain together in one facility. Based on questions raised in writing and at community meetings, the SCC asked the district to provide additional data regarding the costs and implications of disaggregating and relocating the three separate Commodore programs (Mosaic 1-8, Odyssey 1-8, and Eagle Harbor High School 9-12). At its meeting on May 28, SCC members analyzed the staffing and operational costs/cost savings and the facility implications of disaggregating and relocating the 3 programs to separate sites. After reviewing the data and discussing program, staffing, operational costs and facility and implications, SCC members voted and determined that this was not a viable option. ...

- 3. Has there been consideration of the value of 5-6 being in a single school?**

Yes, the committee has discussed the value of a 5-6 configuration. Options 1 and 3 continue that configuration.

- 4. Has Principal David Shockley been involved in discussion of what the three options programs would look like if they move to the Ordway building?**

While Principal Shockley doesn't serve on the SCC, he has been involved in discussions about the configuration options. The SCC knows it is critical to engage staff, families, and students in discussion of the programming specifics. If the board votes to move the options schools, a team will be appointed to plan for a smooth and effective transition.

- 5. Options: Is the district planning to grow options programs to ensure Ordway space is maximized?**

Yes, see #1.

- 6. Options: Is options program with 280 students a reflection of space available or desired enrollment in the programs?**

It is a reflection of space available. The Commodore building does not allow for expansion, and there is a wait list for some programs. It is also a reflection of the educational program offered in the options schools.

- 7. Odyssey: Have you gone inside Odyssey to see how kids learn in that environment? It is unique to its space. Go visit!**

Yes, a variety of SCC and School Board members have visited the program.

8. **Options: Was closing Commodore and moving those students to Wilkes and Blakely in a multi-age setting ever considered? (or, to multiple elementary schools?) Why is that option not on the table, and why was it dismissed so early in the process?**

See #2.

9. **Has moving grade 8 to BHS been considered?**

No.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS, DEMOGRAPHICS

1. **Is the demographic report available online? Does it consider the effect of a recovery in housing market on average age on the island? If older empty nesters can finally get a good return on selling a house, will more families move in?**

Yes; please refer to the demographic report which includes extensive demographic analysis. You will find it at

http://www.bisd303.org/cms/lib3/WA01001636/Centricity/Domain/304/Demography%20Report%20Final_072512.pdf (under Programs & Services tab, Facilities link, in the lefthand menu).

2. **How has enrollment declined? How can you be sure it will continue to decline or stay flat? What about the smaller developments being added around the island?**

Enrollment has declined about 10 percent since 2005, dropping from about 4,200 to 3,734 or 426 students.

Our analysis of likely enrollment trends is based on the May 2012 Demographic Report by L. Kendrick of Educational Data Services. Mr. Kendrick provided a range of projections – low, medium and high, which are based on an analysis of many factors. (See question #1 above.)

The report predicts that population and housing growth on the Island over the next 10 years will be less than over the past 10 years (a period of decline).

Total enrollment is projected to be between 3,505 and 3,738 in 2021, compared to the current 3,734.

3. **What is the percentage reduction in enrollment since 2005? (You said it was 426 students).**

About 10 percent – from approximately 4,200 to current 3,734.

4. **Is enrollment continuing to go down, or are we at a plateau?**

Demographic forecasts indicate that we have reached a plateau and that it will remain relatively flat. See question #2 above.

5. **Are there any concerns that consolidating our school populations will effect the district's reputation and further impact future enrollment and families moving to Bainbridge?**

Have we figured in any student attrition rate as a result of a change?

SCC discussed both the potential positive and negative impacts of change on enrollment, e.g. what would happen with an 800 student middle school; would that build the Odyssey 7-8 program.

7. **Have we taken into consideration that if the economy turns we may have an increase in enrollment? (there appears to be a construction boom) and**

8. **Do the projections reflect the city's development projects (high density residential development near Lynwood) and growth plans?**

The projections reflect a number of different sources for data that were available at the time of the study. Included were housing and housing forecasts, pp. 38-44 in the study found at the link in question #1.

9. **If demographic projections are to dip slightly or remain flat, then why go through this?**

The combination of declining enrollment, financial constraints and facility needs have created the purpose for this process and discussion. Like other economically driven change processes that have occurred within the district, the purpose of revisiting school configuration is to consider whether such changes would be beneficial to the students and citizens of Bainbridge Island.

10. **What options or innovative ideas have been considered to increase enrollment? What about a magnet program to get out-of-district students?**

Most recently, the following examples address innovation: the Elementary Programs & Innovations Committee (EPIC) and a subcommittee focused on FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary Schools) are currently conducting research to develop proposals; the Spanish Immersion pilot project; and the STEM programs are in their second year.

In addition, for years Bainbridge Schools Foundation has funded innovations proposed by staff.

Also, with the budgetary goal of keeping funds closest to the classroom and student learning, while working within the ongoing financial constraints, the district has produced brochures, newsletters, and other print information (e.g. press releases), completed a communications audit, all hoping to share and market BISD's excellent educational programs. A targeted marketing brochure for our elementary schools was produced several years ago, and financial constraints impacted the printing of a secondary brochure.

11. **Does the district realize that "options" is confusing for new people coming in to the district to understand and to sign up for? If it was better marketed, enrollment in these programs would increase?**

Although “options” may be confusing term to some, it has been reported in our public meetings that people have moved to the Island because of the options programs. The point of better marketing would apply to all our schools, and with limited financial and staff resources we are continually assessing how we can share information about our remarkable schools. At Commodore, word of mouth seems to be the strongest compelling reason for the wait lists at Odyssey and EHHS. Also, there is an EHHS Catalog for prospective students

12. Are there numbers available by grade as well as by school?

The enrollment history and projections by grade level are in the May 2012 demographic study, “BISD Enrollment Trends and Projects,” on pages 51- 54 at http://bisd303.schoolwires.net/cms/lib3/WA01001636/Centricity/Domain/304/Demography%20Report%20Final_072512.pdf.

13. If enrollment is declining, why not just “open the bridge?” Many BISD families have had to move off-island (to Poulsbo, Suquamish, and so on) and would be happy to have their kids back in BISD?

BISD has open enrollment and has opened our classrooms whenever space has been available. For the current school year, 104 students from off-island are attending our schools.

14. Wasn’t 2005 the record year for BISD enrollment? If you took an average enrollment over a 7-10 year period, what percentage has enrollment declined?

Yes, 2005 was the highest enrollment since 1996 with 4,223 students. Taking the average of the last 8 years into account, the current enrollment has declined by 5%. However, the decline since 2008 is approximately 10%.

FACILITIES USAGE

1. Has the district considered selling some of the land it currently owns and is not using, to reduce the financial woes of BISD?

There are two major funds in school finance: (1) the General Fund, which pays for the day-to-day operations of the schools, that includes all instructional programs & salaries, and daily operations; and (2) the Capital Projects Fund, which pays for construction and capital outlay, such as construction and renovation of buildings, acquisition of land, etc. The sale of property relates only to the Capital Fund. The law is clear that capital funds may not be used to pay for day-to-day operating costs of schools.

2. Portables: How many portables would be added at each school under options 2 and 3?

With Option 2, two portables would be added at Blakely, Wilkes, and Woodward (WMS already has six portables on site). We would not use portables with option 3, because there is not sufficient space on site at Blakely and Wilkes to accommodate the number of portables that would be required in the transition.

- 3. If 6th grade is moved to WMS, what is the vision there with facilities, specifically what about portables – adding more; how many classes would be in portables and how long would they be in them?**

Currently, there are 6 portables on site, which are not being used as classrooms, but would be used temporarily as classrooms under Option 2. In addition, two portables are required under Option 2, for a total of 8 portables. Therefore, we anticipate that 8 classes would be accommodated in the portables.

The number of school years that portables would be utilized as classrooms would depend on when a bond is passed to cover the costs of creating permanent square footage. The shortest amount of time in portables is estimated to be 5 years.

- 4. Looking at the student numbers for options 2 and 3, what would the square footage at Ordway be used for?**

Ordway would be modified to accommodate the needs of the three options programs currently housed at the Commodore building. This would allow the enrollment in the options programs to expand.

- 5. Have any of the discussions centered on taking down the district office, and moving those services to Ordway?**

No. This would not accomplish the goal of relieving the current General Fund budget challenges.

- 6. Would construction to make renovations at Sakai go on while students are in the building?**

Under Option 2, Sakai would be modified to accommodate K-5 students, and the population at Ordway would then move to Sakai. We expect to be able to make the necessary minor modifications during a summer break.

- 7. Would Blakely students and staff have to be at an interim site during rebuilding of the school?**

Like Wilkes, students would remain at the current Blakely building as a new building is constructed.

- 8. What will be done with the Commodore building if the students move to the Ordway building?**

We would close the building, and it would no longer accommodate students. This serves as an opportunity to save tax payers the cost of rebuilding Commodore, which would be about \$24M. A decision about the future of the building has not been made.

- 9. How old are our buildings? When do they need to be replaced? Would buildings be replaced even if we don't change the configuration? How would the district pay for this work?**

We have buildings that need to be replaced, regardless of the configuration chosen. Our oldest buildings are Commodore (originally built in 1948, with additions in 1970 and 1981), and Blakely, built in 1964. Funds to replace buildings are capital funds

and must be approved by Island voters through bond measures. Blakely is considered a top priority for replacement. If Option 2 or 3 is chosen, the district would not need to ask taxpayers to fund the replacement of Commodore. See the chart below.

BUILDING	YEAR BUILT	YEAR REPLACED	Needs to be Replaced/Current Priority on Replacement Schedule*	Estimated Replacement Cost
Commodore Original Building, South	1948		Yes, #2	\$24,000,000.
Commodore/Mosaic	1949		Yes, #2	
Commodore South	1951		Yes, #2	
Commodore Music/Admin/Odyssey 7-8	1970		Yes, #2	
Commodore/Odyssey 1-6	1978		Yes, #2	
Commodore/ Eagle Harbor 9-12	1981		Yes, #2	
Commodore/Commons	2005		Yes, #2	
Bainbridge HS 100 Building	1970		Yes, #2	\$18,000,000
Bainbridge HS 200 Building	1977	2009		
Bainbridge HS 300 Building	1999, 1981			
Bainbridge HS 400 Building	1999			
Bainbridge HS 500 Building	1981			
Bainbridge HS 600 Bldg Music	1989			
Woodward Middle School	1994			
Sakai Intermediate School	1999			
Ordway Elementary School	1978		Yes, #3	\$30,000,000
Blakely Elementary School	1964		Yes, #1	\$30,000,000
Wilkes Elementary School	1955	2012		

*Replacement requires voter approval of bond measures.

NOTE: All data and costs are current estimates. We continue to analyze and refine the data and assumptions.

THE SCC PROCESS

1. What is the earliest that any changes in configuration would be made?

We originally expected the School Configuration Committee to forward a recommendation(s) to the School Board in fall 2013. The recommendation could be any, or multiple, of the options. The recommendation could also be an alteration in the timeline. At the SCC meeting on May 28, it was again affirmed that the timeline will support what is most beneficial “for the students and citizens of Bainbridge Island,” as stated in the School Board’s purpose for these considerations. Also, a foundation has been that the process is done correctly, not quickly.

2. Is it simply money that is driving this discussion?

Yes and no. The district is revisiting configuration because of both demographic projections and financial constraints. As the School Board stated in the purpose for considering school configuration changes: " Like other economically driven change processes that have occurred within the district, the purpose of revisiting school configuration is to consider whether such changes would be beneficial to the students and citizens of Bainbridge Island. "

3. If the least amount of impact is keeping schools configured 'as is', will it really be considered?

The least amount of impact will not be the determining factor. It will be what is determined to be the most beneficial option "for the students and citizens of Bainbridge Island," as stated in the School Board's purpose for these considerations.

4. Who makes the final decision?

The School Board.

5. How has the data you are using been vetted? How can I be certain that the data presented is accurate? Where can I get more detailed information?

All of the data presented in the report by the SCC is found on the district website starting at <http://www.bisd303.org/Page/5824> and in the left menu links, which include detailed data from each committee meeting.

Demographic/enrollment projections were provided by a professional demographer, who has worked with dozens of school districts during his 23 years of educational data research.

The SCC reviewed articles on subjects related to educational programming, such as K-8 schools, impact of transitions on students, and more. These were written by a variety of individuals outside of the district.

We also drew on the experience of surrounding school districts.

Information on building condition, including cost estimates for repairs and replacement, is being analyzed by architects, as well as structural, electrical, and mechanical engineers.

We will continue to update data on the website as this information is made available.

6. Are the innovations committee and the SCC working together to consider how each process will impact the other?

The plan has been to share information at critical junctures in order to understand the process and outcomes of each/the other committee.

7. Has the work of the committee been influenced by any special interest group, such as those involved with the Options programs?

No. The School Configuration Committee has a spectrum of staff from different schools, parent and community representatives, including: seven certificated staff (teachers, counselor), three classified staff (paraeducators, secretary), three principals (not the Commodore Options), two district administrators, and the Capital

Projects and Facilities Director. There are an additional 12 community/parent representatives and two ex-officio School Board representatives on the SCC.

8. What would prevent the district from implementing Option 2 in 2014? Why might it be 2015?

The School Configuration Committee understands and supports the appropriate time to complete this complex analysis and the time required for transition. The time flexibility has been in place so that the process is done correctly, not quickly. If any option other than Option 1 is implemented, time will be required not only to plan for program and staffing changes, but for moving materials, as well as completing facility modifications; see question #6 under Facilities Usage.

Transportation

1. If Ordway is closed, will bus rides get longer?

It depends. If Ordway is closed and moves to Sakai, the bus ride should not impact most students by more than two or three minutes. If Ordway students are moved to Blakely or Wilkes, bus rides will probably get longer as the schools are further from where most of our riders live.