

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 303**  
**School Configuration Committee**  
Meeting Minutes

**Date:** February 13, 2013  
**Place:** Board Room – Commodore Campus  
**Time:** 5:30 – 7:30 PM

*Welcome & Update*

Superintendent Faith Chapel noted at the last meeting, committee members expressed the desire to continue discussions in the whole group setting. In addition, several group members expressed the need for greater clarity around the foundation pieces that would guide the data analysis and recommendations to be made through the committee work. To address this need, Ms. Chapel, with contributions from committee member Carolyn Harper, developed a set of guiding principles. Committee members agreed having this tool would assist them in working toward a deeper analysis of the grade configuration data.

*School Configuration “Guiding Principles”*

Ms. Chapel distributed the draft Guiding Principles to the committee, with guiding principles in the following areas: Educational Programs, Educational Research and Trends, Operational Costs, Facility Costs, Short-term vs Long-term Implications, Feasibility, Historical and Geographical Context, and Community Values and Input. She asked the group to review the document while considering the following questions: *Have the items of the greatest importance been captured? Are there items that are not included? Are there items that could be dropped off – or condensed?* It was noted the list of principles needed to reflect what the committee believes is important to consider. Ms. Harper added the principles would be something to help “ground” the committee’s work. One committee member suggested the notion that there are not only opportunities for students, but that students are successful within those opportunities be included. Another suggestion was to make note of the hidden costs such as staff capacity for organizational change, perhaps under the area of feasibility, or short-term vs long-term implications. A rephrasing of the opening statement was suggested to include “analyze and consider the impact on student learning,” as there is a student learning component in each of the guiding principles. Related to the header “short-term vs long-term,” each of those time frames needs to be defined – does long-term mean 10 years, etc. It was suggested “guard rails” or boundaries be added such as time lines related to certain activities, and cost ceilings related to certain actions.

Regarding the question whether there were items that could be deleted or condensed, it was suggested *operational costs* and *community values and input* could be condensed under *feasibility*. Another suggestion was the elimination of *historical* factors based on changes that have taken place in the community making those types of considerations less impactful. Geographical context could be placed under *operational costs*, as that topic relates more to transportation implications. Ms. Chapel asked for a group “thumbs up” regarding the need to consolidate the list of principles. In addition, Ms. Chapel asked for group confirmation of the following edits: a) the issue of organizational capacity could fit under the areas of both *short-*

*term vs long-term, and feasibility; b) be more explicit about the overarching goal of student success and teacher capacity; and c) put educational research and trends under educational programs.* Group discussion suggested the “umbrella” statement (school board charge to the SCC) was inclusive of the “student success” need. Also noted was the rebuilding of the school community, with special consideration of the capacity of those staff that are responsible for a particular area of expertise (ex. Library). The next iteration of the guiding principles will be brought back for review at the next committee meeting.

#### *Analysis of Four Grade Configuration Scenarios Utilizing Framework*

Ms. Chapel noted the committee had been reviewing four grade configuration scenarios: **K-8, Current Configuration** (K-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12), **K-5** (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), and **K-6** (K-6, 7-8, 9-12). At the last meeting, the committee consensus was that the K-8 scenario was not an option and discussed the pros and cons of the configuration. Ms. Chapel took the comments made by the committee and incorporated them into the analysis matrix for the K-8 configuration. She asked the group to review the document, and then share out. It was noted the K-8 operational costs, as well as the “human” costs, rose to the surface as to why this option is not viable. Other considerations (cons) were staffing, schedules, and the impact on after school programs and how those opportunities would be met.

Ms. Chapel suggested the group review the other three configuration model analysis matrixes by looking at one criterion at a time across each grade level scenario. Regarding the **current configuration** (K-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12), under the criteria *educational programs and implications*, committee members commented as follows: **Pros** - a) it is a “known;” b) a great band program; c) a library focused on “tween” literary content; d) it was hoped that the great programs currently provided to students would be translated into another configuration; e) with a decrease in enrollment, if the district stays with the current configuration, what would we have to give up; f) current configuration allows a 5/6 band program within the school day; g) proximity to the middle school; h) intermediate model facilitates horizontal and vertical team teaching; i) gateway to advanced math opportunities; j) the culture of a school would be impacted; k) team teaching model could happen within other configuration models; l) current intermediate model has specific library model; m) playgrounds, lunchrooms, etc., would have to be age appropriate; n) grade-level specific activities (i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> grade assemblies) would be more difficult; o) science labs may need to be adjusted for other grade-level configurations; p) current 5/6 social, emotional intelligence curriculum would need to be adjusted; q) the gradual adjustment from one teacher to multiple teachers can be an advantage; r) narrower grade bands allows more focused activities; s) creating a schedule for a 2-grade student population is easier; t) common core strands are organized K-5, and classroom-based assessments are in fifth grade. **Cons** – a) K-4 is not sustainable (difficult to maintain program without full-time specialists); b) more students are needed in the buildings; c) special needs students are highly impacted by transitions; d) is it possible to make use of available space at the high school; e) smaller economy of scale – not able to offer as rich a program with smaller schools; f) moving to another grade level configuration could bring back overcrowding of schools; **K-5 Configuration** (K-5, 6-8, 9-12): **Pros** – a) common core standards are geared to the K-5 configuration; b) all the schools in the athletic league are 6-8 middle school configuration; c) possible to create a “departmental” model for more collaboration; d) fewer transitions for special education students. **Cons** – a) with the new evaluation system, administrations capacity for additional responsibility; b) possible loss of band

program; c) decrease in special education space in each building. **K-6 Configuration** (K-6, 7-8, 9-12): **Cons** – a) need for science labs in each building; b) would require a change in transportation.

As the meeting came to conclusion, Ms. Chapel distributed the school configuration analysis matrixes containing comments from district administrators (principals, etc.) – pros and cons – for each grade level scenario. The administrative staff concentrated their comments in the area of *educational programs and implications*. Committee members reviewed the documents for each scenario. One committee member noted configuration committees in the past had emphasized the importance of flexibility in the planning process. Ms. Chapel asked committee members to come to the next meeting prepared to address the other topics contained in the analysis matrixes including *number/size of schools, staffing costs and implications, operational costs and implications, political considerations and implications, facility costs and implications, and parent/community values and response*. She asked the group if it were a good strategy to review vertically, each topic across each grade level scenario. The group gave thumbs up on this strategy. Another question was whether the committee should start out with small group discussion or remain in the large-group setting. Committee members suggested they continue in the large group setting for now as many members are still learning about the district’s programs.

**Next Meetings:**

**February 27**  
**March 13 & 27**  
**April 17**  
**May 8 & 22**