

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

Date: March 13, 2013

Place: Board Room – Commodore Campus

Time: 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Welcome and Update/Review of February 27th Minutes

Superintendent Faith Chapel welcomed the committee and asked members to review the draft minutes from the February 27th meeting for any corrections, additions, or omissions. As there were no suggested changes, the minutes will be posted on the district’s website.

School Configuration “Guiding Principles” (Final)

Ms. Chapel distributed the final version of the School Configuration Committee Guiding Principles for review. She noted this version of the guiding principles had been sent to committee members prior to the meeting, and she had not received any additional additions or suggestions. Following committee review, the guiding principles will be posted on the district’s website.

Continued Analysis of Grade Configuration Scenarios Utilizing Frameworks

Ms. Chapel distributed the most recent version of the School Configuration Analysis Matrix(s) based on the projections for 2014-15. The three matrixes provided for committee review included: K-5 Configuration (Elementary (K-5), Middle (6-8), High School (9-12), Options (K-12); K-6 Configuration (Elementary (K-6), Middle (7-8), High School (9-12), Options (K-12); and Current Configuration (Elementary (K-4), Intermediate (5-6), Middle (7-8), High School (9-12), Options (K-12). Ms. Chapel noted the previous version of the K-5 and K-6 scenarios assumed a school would be closed, with that assumption’s data reflected in the section titled *number/size of schools*. At the last meeting, it was suggested those scenarios include data for both a 6-school configuration, and a 7-school configuration. Calculations for both those scenarios have now been added. In addition, the “pros” and “cons” from last meeting’s discussion were also included. The process of filling in the pros and cons comments will be continued at this meeting. Following up on a question from the last meeting regarding whether the district could maintain its current configuration and still close a school, Ms. Chapel explained the only way to be able to do that would be to create two K-4 schools with student enrollments of 582 and 583. This scenario would also impact transportation as bussing students from the central part of the island to Blakely & Wilkes, or from the south part of the island to Ordway and Wilkes, would increase costs and travel times for students.

The question was raised when the committee would deliberate the pros and cons of each configuration. Ms. Chapel mentioned the pros and cons generated by district administrators that had been submitted to the committee at a previous meeting. She explained these comments, combined with more data, would be part of group work to come. It was noted the committee would work toward consensus on the pros and cons. Another question was asked about facility costs related to Commodore, specifically what area of the campus was included in those estimates. Ms. Van Winkle explained the cost implications related to Commodore focused on the main building (at 60%) and did not include the surplus space.

Ms. Chapel distributed an updated cost and staffing matrix for 2013 - 2014 that included collated data from Human Resources, Transportation and Facilities incorporated into a one page document (per request from the committee). She noted after further review of the data from the last meeting, a formula error was

found in the staffing cost scenarios. With the revised document, General Fund costs were provided for each grade configuration, taking into consideration both the seven school scenarios and six school scenarios. The data was separated into staffing and operational costs, with the capital costs to be presented later in the meeting. The staffing costs for each scenario included the following: Maintaining 7 Schools – 1) Current configuration estimated total savings of \$102,000; 2) K-5 configuration estimated total savings of \$242,550; 3) K-6 configuration estimated total savings of \$191,150. 6 Schools Scenario (closing one school) – 1) K-5 configuration estimated staffing savings of \$498,151, transportation estimated savings to close Commodore of \$20K and a cost of \$8500 to close Blakely, facility operational cost savings to close Commodore of \$81K, to close Blakely of \$60K, and to close Ordway of \$56K; 2) K-6 configuration estimated staffing savings of \$498,756, transportation estimated savings to close Commodore of \$0 and a cost of \$8500 to close Blakely. The facility operational cost estimated savings would be the same with this scenario. Ms. Chapel clarified the staffing cost savings of \$102K under the *7 school scenario* for the current grade level configuration was related to the projected decrease in enrollment for the 2013/14 school year. As the group reviewed the data, a question regarding the cost reductions related to the librarian staffing. It was noted there may be a need to actually increase librarian services with a larger elementary school. Ms. Chapel explained how the staffing costs were generated, and noted that while other specialty areas could require adjustments as well, the data was an aggregate overview. She suggested a subcommittee could meet with Cami and Peter to work through some of the data.

Ms. Chapel gathered input from other districts that have closed schools and the information from those districts suggested estimating savings at 60%. Central Kitsap reported a savings of \$750K for closing a school, and North Kitsap has estimated a \$350K savings when they close a school. The question was posed if the district kept the current configuration, could the district afford to maintain current programs. And, if the McCleary decision facilitated additional state funding to schools, could the district hire staff for those areas that are currently understaffed? Ms. Chapel noted that would be challenging, as demographics have indicated continued enrollment decline, and it would be harder to maintain current programs with smaller schools. It was noted that without Bainbridge Schools Foundation donations of \$1 million, the district could not maintain its current program. The optimal budget planning would be to build a budget based on actual revenue so the Foundation's donations could be used for program enhancement. Other committee members suggested there may be the funds to maintain the current configuration if that was the desire of the community. Ms. Chapel added that while no specific savings target has been generated from the board, the driver has been the educational program and opportunities for students. Additional comments noted there is a growing number of property owners without children in the schools that may have concern about the declining enrollment. It was also noted the topic of grade configuration has been a focus of conversation for a while, and this is the opportunity to discuss these possibilities. At the conclusion of this discussion, Ms. Chapel noted a small group would be put together to review the staffing to assure there is no over or under estimating. Committee members agreed the one page data sheet was a good format.

The group moved on to a discussion of the configuration options in terms of their impact on facilities. Ms. Chapel explained a little about the capital costs that have both short term and long term impacts. Director of Capital Projects and Facilities Tamela Van Winkle provided an overview of one scenario – a K-5 grade level configuration. She worked with a small group of committee members to develop the scenario. This first scenario, Option 1/Phase 1, was based on a Commodore closure, with a Blakely Elementary replacement. This would be implemented in the fall of 2014 with a General Fund savings estimated at \$579,228. Commodore students would be moved to Ordway, and Ordway students would move to Sakai (now a K-5) with renovations made to that school to accommodate the Options School and Kindergarten students. The other schools include Blakely at K-5 (2 portables added), Wilkes at K-5 (2 portables added), and Woodward at 6-8 (4 portables added). This “jumpstart” option would involve facility changes in the short term as follows: a) vacate and close Commodore; b) renovate Ordway to accommodate Options School; c) Sakai becomes K-5 school; d) Sakai is renovated to accommodate 4 Kindergarten

classrooms/Pre-K; e) portables added at Blakely and Wilkes to accommodate K-5 grades; and f) portables added at Woodward to accommodate grade 6-8. The short term capital costs would be \$3.1 - \$3.3 million (2009 Bond). Completion of this option would require a future bond. The immediate (2014) General Fund savings would be \$579,228. Phase 2 of this option would involve the replacement of Blakely, and new permanent square footage at Wilkes and Woodward. Option 2 would be more long term, with no “jumpstart” and would require passage of a capital bond. This option would involve Commodore students being moved to Ordway, Ordway students moved to Sakai (with renovations), replacement of Blakely, and construction of permanent square footage at Wilkes and Woodward.

At the conclusion of the presentation, it was noted the 2009 Bond funds included \$10 million for essential renovations, which would cover some of the capital costs. Further, a future bond could also address the facility needs for such things as the Bainbridge High School 100 Building. Patty Fielding also underscored the board’s commitment to keep taxes stable for the community. She noted the District’s Master Plan contains the overall plan for future bonds. Summarizing the presentation, Ms. Van Winkle explained other options would be added to the template for review at future meetings.

Ms. Chapel asked the committee to move into small groups to discuss the different scenarios and the initial option for a K-5 configuration. She asked folks to review each configuration matrix and determine if the information they contain is accurate. The question was posed whether the goal should be to narrow the options from three to two. The group discussed the number of meetings remaining, the need to provide the opportunity for community input, and the importance of the committee coming to consensus regarding the options to be presented. Committee members reviewed the data related to the K-6 and K-5 configurations and discussed the various aspects of both options. At the conclusion of the discussion, committee members agreed to set aside the K-6 configuration, narrowing the configurations for further depth of analysis to the current configuration and the K-5 configuration. The group moved into small groups to review the data, with each group was asked to appoint a scribe to record notes.

Ms. Chapel called the group back together to share the comments from each small group. It was noted most small groups got only as far as analysis of the pros/cons related to the educational programs and number/size of schools. Group scribes were asked to turn in their notes for incorporation into the next iteration of the analysis matrixes. At the next meeting, the committee will receive additional information about facilities, talk about political considerations, and engage in more small-group work. In terms of public input, before the committee reaches final recommendations, it would be extremely important to bring the narrowed options to the public, have them understand the pros and cons for each scenario and weigh in on the related rationales. It was noted that by the first meeting in April, the committee needs a polished group of documents to present to the public. Committee members raised the issue of the April meeting to be held on the 17th and whether it was scheduled too late in the month. Following a brief discussion, the committee agreed to stay an additional hour at the meeting to be held March 27. The group also talked briefly about other ideas being generated by the committee, better understanding programs such as Sakai’s 5-6 grade configuration, issues related to different configurations and how those issue would be mitigated, development of a survey to be given to the community, terminology used in presentation documents, and whether the timeline for the process needs to be extended. At the conclusion of the conversation, folks were asked if committee members were available to meet April 10 rather than April 17 to allow for community input later in the month. An email to the committee will be generated to gage availability.

Next Meetings:

March 27
April 10 (changed from April 17)
May 8 & 22