

MINUTES

Special Meeting of the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
EQUITY COMMITTEE
Corvallis School District 509J
1555 SW 35th Street
Corvallis, OR 97339

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cathi Alden
Rae DeLay
Cyrel Gable, Board Chair
Sara Gelser, Board Member
Heather Jager
Deb Kadas
Lynn Lahey
Nell O'Malley, Board Member
Laverne Pitts
Blake Rodman
Marc Rosegold
Anne Schuster
James Wickman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Lynn Lahey
Nell O'Malley, Board Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Kathy Rodeman, Business Manager
Jeanne Holmes, Assistant to Superintendent
Kim Patten, Recorder

I. INTRODUCTION

The committee reviewed the handouts distributed, including an email from Julie McCann, a summary of the homework submitted from our last meeting, and input from the leadership team. After the committee reviewed the handouts, Jeanne Holmes reviewed the agenda.

Dawn Tarzian spoke to the committee about the open enrollment window change the committee has been considering. No matter what the date is for the beginning and end of the open enrollment window, it requires planning to enable the schools to schedule and organize open houses, visitation windows, etc. Our principals are concerned that if this committee changes the open enrollment window for this year, parents will not have the opportunity to make informed decisions because it is already too late to schedule the necessary open houses, etc. Allowing more time will give the committee ample opportunity to

evaluate every aspect of the change and what it will mean to parents, and gather community input as needed.

The committee discussed the possibilities of easing into a new timeline for the enrollment window. Suggestions were made to set the deadline for June 1st for 2003/2004 and then move it to the permanent date in 2004/2005; to make a recommendation to the board that the enrollment window be reconsidered and asking them to have staff consider it and make an announcement to the community by November 2004; to spend time as a committee to look at specific dates to propose to the board; and to make a committee sub-group (members who are also employees) to evaluate the dates and report back to the committee with specific dates to be recommended. The committee tentatively voted to make a recommendation that the district administration set the date. Vote: Abstain – 2 Administrative Decision – 6 Sub-group Recommendation – 4 This recommendation will be finalized when the committee can review it in the context of other recommendations it plans to make.

II. OPEN ENROLLMENT

The committee reviewed each possible recommendation that was brainstormed at previous meetings and identified what problem was addressed (See Addendum A.) The committee then began working thru the list to see which statements the majority of the group could agree with. This work will continue at next week's meeting. Jeanne will see if this work could be forwarded through a homework assignment. The committee also will clarify which of these represent equity issues to stay within the scope of the committee's charge.

The committee reviewed the homework result summary and how many committee members voted to prioritize or discontinue discussions on each possible recommendation (See Attachment B.) The committee agreed to remove the recommendation regarding "keeping siblings together" from the list. This is already in policy and the committee will not take any action to change it. No action was taken on any other recommendations yet.

III. BOUNDARY REVIEW

Kathy Rodeman updated the committee that the boundary sub-group is still working on the review of the boundaries. She said that any boundary changes that the Equity Committee recommends would not be timely enough to implement this school year.

A committee member raised a concern that there was an error made during the last boundary changes on the Jefferson boundary. It was noted that Jefferson has an enrollment of 298 students, 40% who are transfers in from outside their enrollment boundary. It was requested that the boundary sub-group consider this.

IV. NEXT STEPS

The committee agreed to schedule four more meetings – February 5th & 19th and March 4th & 18th. In addition, they agreed to begin half an hour earlier at 2:00 PM. Public comment was discussed, and it was decided that the committee would wait to hear public comment until we are closer to making a final recommendation, as previously agreed.

Attachment A

DRAFT

Possible Recommendation/Problem Statement

(The committee is still in the process of developing this.)

1. Equalize kindergarten and middle school offerings: Offerings are not equal at all schools
2. Save room for people to move in to neighborhood: Wrong to not be able to go to school you live across the street from
3. Explore transportation options for transfers: Currently, not all families have equal access to choice because of transportation.
4. Keep siblings together as priority in transfer policy: Families fill up slots in schools limiting equal access (the committee agreed to remove this from the problem statement and the corresponding recommendation from the list of possible recommendations)
5. More centralized information to parents, including Spanish translations about school choices: Parents make decisions based on perception and assumptions, creates a situation where transfers are based on misinformation; also not everyone knows all of the options.
6. Central kindergarten enrollment: Parents signing up at more than one school; kindergarten enrollment imbalances, not having right balance of half day vs. all day fee-based programs; losing families to private schools; may not be serving families well with current process
7. Work toward voluntary diversification of programs to attract new families to lower SES schools: Socio-economic stratification
8. Re-examine reasonable capacities at each school: Overcrowding, principals accepting unlimited numbers of transfers
9. Enrollment floors for schools: Unstable population in some school – insufficient number of students decrease program offerings, results in lower quality learning opportunity.
10. Other funding options than the current one where money follows students: Funding moving with students makes schools unstable.
11. Enforce current policy on balancing student populations in choice schools: Imbalance in student population/socio-economic stratification
12. Have acceptable reasons for transfers: Population moving between schools
13. Transfer window: Dismantling a program because enrollment decreases after budget is set based on spring figures; diminishes funding; problem for staffing and budgeting

Attachment B

Homework Summary

RECOMMENDATION	DON'T CONTINUE DISCUSSION	PRIORITY TO FINISH FIRST
1. Equalize kindergarten and middle school offerings	XXXXX	XX
2. Save room for people to move in to neighborhood		XXXXX
3. Explore transportation options for transfers	XXXX	XXX
4. Keep siblings together as priority in transfer policy		XXXXX
5. More centralized information to parents, including Spanish translations about school choices	XX	XXXX
6. Central kindergarten enrollment	XX	XXXXXXXXX
7. Work toward voluntary diversification of programs to attract new families to lower SES schools	XXX	X
8. Re-examine reasonable capacities at each school	X	XXXXXX
9. Enrollment floors for schools	XXX	XXXX
10. Other funding options than the current one where money follows students	XXX	XXX
11. Enforce current policy on balancing student populations in choice schools	X	XXXX
12. Have acceptable reasons for transfers	XXXX	XXX