

Elementary Schools Redistricting Project

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Topics

- Rationale
- Decision-making Process [*Vote requested*]
- Guiding Principles
- Major Milestones and Timeline- draft
- Level of Effort, Communications, and Resources Required
- FAQ

History

- The last time the District formally conducted an elementary school redistricting [aka re-zoning] project was in 1996-1997 in connection with opening the Floral Street Elementary School
- It is a lengthy and time-consuming process
- It requires a significant effort in detailed planning, making growth projections, and communications...and more communication
- **Students and staff adapted very quickly to their new school environments!!**

Rationale

- The new Major Howard W. Beal School will open its doors for students in grades K-4 in the fall of 2021—less than two years from now.
- The size of the school was predicated upon:
 - Providing universal full-day kindergarten [tuition-free] to all students
 - Changing our elementary schools to a K-4 grade configuration
 - Reducing the enrollment at existing elementary schools so as to provide equitable and dedicated space allocations for Art, Music, Special Education, and English Language Learners

Decision-making Process Options

- Typical decision-making process methods:
 - Administrative function with recommendation to School Committee
 - Sub-committee of School Committee forms team and makes recommendation to full School Committee
 - School Committee forms an ad hoc, composite group of people to include school committee representation, administration, parents, and consultants
 - Hybrid of above

Decision-making Process

- Recent survey of Massachusetts school districts found that majority used an ad hoc committee, with a clear definition of their role to study, assess, and make a recommendation to the full School Committee for a decision. The ad hoc committee was given **Guiding Principles** to adhere to in making their recommendation.
- Survey also found that all districts hired outside consultants to assist in the enrollment and housing growth studies and more quickly and visually formulate options using GIS tools
- Redistricting recently completed or underway in:
 - Arlington, Billerica, Brookline, Lexington, Newton, Sharon, Wellesley, Weymouth

Guiding Principles

- In the near future, it is important for the School Committee to develop and agree upon Guiding Principles for the Redistricting Process to issue to the team to utilize in formulating recommended options.
- Some **examples** from other districts that the School Committee may consider:
 - Geographic proximity of home to school [fostering neighborhood schools]
 - Maximize transportation efficiency and walkability whenever possible
 - Align with other District priorities (i.e. school start times)
 - Attempt to keep identifiable community entities intact (apartment and condominium complexes, clearly segmented neighborhoods/subdivisions etc.)
 - Minimize the number of student moves, while considering redistricting goals
 - Be proactive for future potential growth if at all possible
 - Balance demographic diversity. Maximize the socio-economic diversity of schools with any redistricting change whenever possible.

Major Milestones and Timeline-draft

	School Year 2019-2020			
	<i>Jul-Sep</i>	<i>Oct-Dec</i>	<i>Jan-Mar</i>	<i>Apr-Jun</i>
Decision-making Process Finalized	Sep			
Request for Proposals Developed for GIS & Demographic Consultants		Oct		
Conduct Procurement Process		Nov		
Award Consultant Contract[s]		Dec		
Gather Required Data for Consultants			Jan-Feb	
Consultant Develops Preliminary Options Based Upon Guiding Principles and Data				Apr-Jun
Meetings to review options				Apr-Jun

Major Milestones and Timeline-draft

	School Year 2020-2021			
	<i>Jul-Sep</i>	<i>Oct-Dec</i>	<i>Jan-Mar</i>	<i>Apr-Jun</i>
Meetings to review options		Oct-Dec		
Committee or Superintendent Recommendation to School Committee		Dec		
Decision on the Plan/New Boundaries			Jan	
Communicate, Communicate, Communicate	ONGOING			
Open 2021-2022 Bus Registration				April 1st

Major Milestones and Timeline-draft

	School Year 2021-2022			
	<i>Jul-Sep</i>	<i>Oct-Dec</i>	<i>Jan-Mar</i>	<i>Apr-Jun</i>
Devise New Bus Routes	Jul-Aug			
Open New Beal School	Late Aug			

Level of Effort, Communications, and Resources Required

- Current student data
- Current total town census/demographic data
- New housing projects in permitting/planning pipeline
- Demographic study
- Geographic Information Systems [GIS] expertise

Using Geographic Information Systems [GIS] is Imperative and Supports Communication

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Phase 4. Baseline Attendance Boundary Proposals Development / Background Report Development

To expedite the process and empower the community, it is best to begin with a series of baseline boundary adjustment options.

Baseline options will be developed before boundary team meetings begin.

Option 1 Redistricting: Marion Community Unit School District No. 2

Option 2 Redistricting: Marion Community Unit School District No. 2

Option 3 Redistricting: Marion Community Unit School District No. 2

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FAQ

- Will my child be assigned to a different school than s/he currently attends?
 - Plans have not been devised yet so it's too early to know. Certainly, some students will be assigned to a different elementary school and some will remain in their current school.
- When will we know what the new elementary school districts [aka zones] are?
 - The current, draft timeline calls for a decision on the new elementary school districts in January 2021 with implementation starting in the 2021-2022 school year.

FAQ

- How is this decision being made?
 - The School Committee will vote upon a plan after a thorough consideration of options. Guiding Principles will be developed by the School Committee and potentially a committee will be engaged to study the issue and make a recommendation.
- Will there be a lottery for full-day kindergarten seats when the new Beal School opens?
 - No. The District will transition to a full-day kindergarten program for all students and there will no longer be a need for a lottery.

Questions?
