

# Reconfiguration

## *Question and Answer*

1) Why do we need to change our school configurations?

**Answer:** Growth. In 2007, we served just over 5,000 students. In 2019, we are serving over 6,200. Growth is expected to continue at a rate of 1-2%.

2) Why not just make schools bigger?

**Answer:** There are sizes of schools that are more efficient than others, as far as scheduling for specialists, administrators, office, and custodial support. For example, a district can serve 2,400 elementary age students in several different ways: Have 8 schools with only 300 students each, 6 schools of only 400 students each, 4 schools of 600 students, or 2 schools of 1,200 students. All of these sizes can be found in school districts. It is my recommendation, as well as that of our planning architects and school administrators, that elementary schools in the 500–600 range efficiently use support staff and are within a size range to support strong teams and a positive, caring culture for students.

3) Why was the grade configuration of K-6, 7-9, 10-12 chosen?

**Answer:** This configuration was chosen out of over 14 different grade configuration options for the following reasons:

- It is the most effective use of our community's tax dollars through efficient use of our current facilities.
- It allows all students in grades 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> to have equitable access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and options to earn high school credit in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- It decreases a school transition for students. Reducing school transitions has a positive effect on student success.
- It eliminates a junior high school with only two grades in it. This was noted as not an effective grade configuration for such a critical time in the life of our students.

# Reconfiguration

## Question and Answer

- 4) Why keep the high school with only 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades, when the norm for high schools is 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades?

**Answer:** There was an overwhelming opinion among Eastmont residents, alumni, and community leaders to keep our current 10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> grade high school configuration. It was shared that having the two different secondary levels provides additional leadership opportunities for young teens that are not available in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> high schools. This includes elected positions in FFA, ASB, Senate, clubs, and other organized groups. It also offers teens a second fresh start during what can be some very challenging years.

Another reason was a continuing recognition that seniors and freshman have greater differences developmentally than sophomores and seniors when grouped together to socialize and do schoolwork.

- 5) How will K-6 Elementary schools' attendance areas be determined?

**Answer:** Eastmont Board of Directors has a long-standing goal of working to ensure equity in schools with comparable grade levels regardless of their neighborhood. This goal effects allocated staff, administration, budgets, and even playground equipment. The district has begun studying our growing community and has started drafting new attendance areas. The community will have the opportunity to see drafted plans and give input late Fall 2020. These new attendance areas will go into effect August 2021. The following are guiding principles being used to determine new attendance areas:

- Current facilities that are as equitable as possible with student enrollment and demographics.
- Maximized state and federal funding at each school.
- Maximized use of space in each building.
- Maximized neighborhood walking schools to promote efficient transportation systems (including length of bus trip with students) and ease of access for students and parents.
- Minimal disruptions of student placement.
- Safe routes to school.
- A feeder pattern that allows as many students as possible to continue together from one school level to the next.

# Reconfiguration

## Question and Answer

- Reduce fluctuations in enrollment at schools.

6) Is funding effected by configuration of schools?

**Answer:** Yes, both state and federal funds allocations for Eastmont are calculated based on free and reduced rates, and the age of students.

7) To be able to prepare, what construction is happening in our District and how is it funded?

**Answer:** Construction grants funds are also available for Eastmont at up to 60% of certain costs for projects that meet state criteria for longevity (30+ years), and if a district is experiencing student growth. Currently, we are receiving \$10,000,000 in construction grants to help add the 20 classrooms that are part of this project. Prior large construction projects to modernize existing schools or build new schools have also received State grant funds.

Twenty classrooms and 4 cafeterias are being added to our Elementary Schools. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2020 and conclude in August 2021.

8) When will the reconfiguration occur?

**Answer:** It has already begun, as we no longer enroll kindergarten at Sterling. Current plans have reconfiguration fully implemented in the 2022-2023 school year. Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.eastmont206.org/construction-b5496b61>