

MEETING NOTES

Date: October 22, 2024
Meeting No.: Community Engagement Forum #1 – Cedaroak Park Primary School
Project: WLWV School District Small Schools Task Force
3J No.: 24968

WLWV Small Task Force

Table Notes – Forum #1 – Cedaroak Park Primary School

All notes taken by hand at each table were collected at the end of the meeting. Some notes were not grouped by table and were given directly to District staff. The following groups of notes may be transcribed out of order, or not appropriately grouped with the table where the note taker was seated. All notes have been transcribed below with minor clarifying information added in brackets. Scanned images of the hand-taken notes are available to be viewed by any member of the public on the WLWV School District website at:

<https://www.wlwg.k12.or.us/cms/lib/OR01001812/Centricity/Domain/100/SSTF%20feedback%2010.22.24.pdf>

Notes from Table

- How was 350 people determined [as the threshold for small schools]?
- How much decline is projected at Cedaroak Park over [the next] 10 y[ears]?
- Is there a task force that focuses on re-enrolling the 900 students that have unenrolled?

Notes from Table

- No voting for the [passage of] bonds in the future if schools close.
- Private schools if these schools close.
- We don't mind older/smaller [schools].
 - We want safe [schools].
- What will happen to the buildings if schools close or consolidate?
- What can we do to encourage enrollment?
- What is the cap on out of district enrollment? Can we increase the cap?
- Let's increase reach out to families in the district. Info nights at preschools.
- Neighbors (homeschool and private) will not be attracted back [to the District] by this type of change for kids.
- Bolton-campus [is] set up for inclusion, openness, and community for introverted kids or isolated children.
- So many kids on IEPs but succeeding.

- By the second week, every adult in Stafford knew my child's name and that made a huge difference to her transition.
- We moved here because we felt safest here.
- What renovations do we need?
- Preschools?
- Estimates for future projects
- Academic performance is higher [in] small schools.
 - How are you analyzing this?
 - Has the district looked at data from schools that have closed schools?
- Neighborhood experiences
 - Walking/bussing to school.
- Moved here after 2020.
- How do we get a pulse on the qualitative data?
 - What have other people done to quantify qualitative data?
- Project 43.
- What are the "trade off" options?

Notes from Table 5

- Community members rooted in school history.
- Long bus rides, urban footprint, safety up the hill.
- Metrics around walking.
- Sense of belonging, connection, emotional safety, being known.
 - Panoramic survey data.
 - Bullying incident, suspension referrals.
- Where is the highest density of low income, how can we ensure best access?
- Kids who are dispersed with struggle to settle in especially 4th and 5th graders in a new social and physical environment.
- Revise capital budget needs – no gym for Cedaroak, revise security budgets.
- Birth rate data – did you pull data through 2023?
- Huge class sizes would lead to leaving. This is why some of us picked houses zoned to Stafford over Trillium.
- Children who are gifted and talented and people of color as myself thrive in smaller communities since West Linn is not ethnically diverse.
- Blended classrooms are a trade-off.

Notes from Table

- Academic performance is higher in our smaller schools than large schools. How are you analyzing academic performance for traditional and differently abled kids. And are you prepared for over all school ratings to go down? Also attendance?
- Has the district reviewed data from other districts that have closed schools and how kids , community and overall school attendance has been impacted?

Notes from Table

- How are you collecting and analyzing academic performance?
- How are you collecting and analyzing academic data of kids with disabilities?
Because [this is] higher in small schools.
- Will we get renovations cost at LRPC Nov meeting?
- What is funding[per]student vs actual cost of operations[per]school?
- Why old capacity numbers vs new ones, truly at max?
- What are budget ramifications for increasing class sizes and capacities including added costs for bussing?
- What is cost of additional classrooms – where will kids go?
- Are you investigating marketing to recover enrollment?
- What revenue options like charging out of district transfers?
- Home value-academics-attendance
 - Has the district reviewed data from other districts that closed schools and impact on kids, community?
- Walking to school/save transit money.
 - Higher attendance when closer to homes.
 - Academic performance.
 - Security for children.
- It's small size. As long as it's breaking even, it doesn't need to make money for the district to stay open.
- Not as many bullying opportunities.
 - Not as many kids struggling academically/falling through the cracks.
- Not providing less teacher attention.
- Subbing in house.
 - Cheaper maintenance contract.
 - Educational adequacy renovations.
 - Closing district building.
 - Willing to fundraise for necessary renovations
 - Give the cost.
- Class sizes increasing – academic performance declining due to high capacity.
- Doesn't overcrowd their school.
 - Further take down their academic record.
 - Doesn't decrease their attendance record.
- Displacement data from out-district during/after pandemic?

Notes from Table 8

- Younger families have moved into neighborhoods, older generation moving out, not reflected in census study?

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- Many more students now walk to school with new sidewalks – recent investment by city.
 - Budgeting at district level, admin staff salaries were increased. Can this be placed on hold to allow for school operating costs?
 - Let's charge people who want to transfer into the district? Other districts do this (i.e. Lake Oswego)
 - Disruptions for children, especially current 4th graders who already had to deal with Covid [in] school.
 - Or, phase out [the] school, just don't enroll anymore kindergartners.
 - Important for kid's emotional status that they go somewhere they are known. Our principal knows all students names and greets them daily.
 - Changing school would create substantial emotional distress.
 - Closing a school would make larger size 4th/5th at school is already at 28, this is huge!
 - Blended classes is a better solution than closing schools.
 - Closing schools would break up friend groups, this would be hard for children.
 - Since everyone knows everyone here, there is a lot of social/emotional assistance for anyone that needs it. A large school couldn't serve this need.
 - Cedaroak has the staff to help with social/emotional learning and care about the kids.
 - Cedar Oak is ADA accessible as a single level school
 - Be more transparent about budget shortfalls and possible solutions so [the] community can provide input, propose potential solutions.
 - If selling Oppenlander, what will district do with proceeds?
 - Can't this help with budget shortfall?
 - Could we have a bond to keep small schools open instead of capital improvements?
 - This helps all our kids and our community.
 - Central to the neighborhood, gathering location for kids. How many kids walk to school?
 - Extra curricular involvement. How many kids come to different activities? How involved is the community?
 - Neighbors without children in Cedaroak are also upset with the idea that it may close.
 - Parents move here because they wanted their children to go to Cedaroak given its reputation.
 - Small schools can support IEPs (Individualized Educational Programs) – Meet students where they are.
 - Teacher retention – particularly of experienced teachers could be challenged by consolidating schools [and] reassigning teachers.
 - How will the funds of Oppenlander be used?
 - If more homes are built on Oppenlander, where will all those new students go?

Notes from Table

- Why is facility equity so important? We care about education and academic performance, and those points we excel. Convince us why that is so important.
- Survey new parents and why they moved to Robinwood.
- Impact of Vision 43.
- West linn – our schools, our community, our city are not stagnant but I get the impression the school board does not know this. We need to advocate to tell them plans need to be given.
- When was the meeting with West Linn Planning Department? Basing Wilsonville building/planning on 20 year plans. Why not same treatment for West Linn?
- The state/district becomes average if our schools feed into bigger schools/any of these schools fundamentally change. Oregon does not need more average. West Linn Tidings school beat keeps reporting on the outstanding achievement of Bolton, Cedaroak...this should be celebrated.
- Open a full time preschool – increase enrollment
- What other funds besides money are being considered – cost to educating (best performing in district).
- Bolton and Stafford are 130 years old – Cedaroak since mid 20th century (How are the key points examined in 3 months before all the data is verifiable?) – adequate to take 3 months.
- 3J Consulting how might profit from this? What is their expertise to run this process?
- Who is writing the report for the Board -3J Consulting?
 - That again seems biased
 - \$50k for 3J when out changes at schools and cut teachers
- A 3 month process doesn't seem like a genuine process. No time to look at other factors.
- Change boundaries, bond, liaison, when families coming to neighborhood.
- Stafford at 340 [students] beginning of year – a number of students joined since then. Not even sure if under 350 anymore.

Notes from Table

- How does this play into the city's long range planning? (43 Vision).
- The social emotional impacts to our children.
- What are the impacts of becoming a bussed school?
- Would bus rides lengths be extended? How does this impact students?
- How to know the turnover of older generations (selling/moving) to younger families.
- While birthrates are declining, many young families move to West linn from Portland and California – for the schools!
- Cedaroak enrollment is actually increasing (since Covid) and our neighborhoods are some of the most affordable in West Linn.
- The teachers here have built a community too.
- Transfers from other districts – reopen this and charge a tuition.

- Could 6th [grade] get bumped back to primary school? 9th grade to middle school?
- Families choose smaller schools, especially for their kids on IEPs.
- Can the West Linn High schools be split evenly instead of an opt in for Riverside?
- Why is Riverside not being considered? (As a small school)
- 2020 was the last census – how accurate was this?
- What is most important about Cedaroak:
 - Everyone knows everyone (Students, parents and staff).
 - Every student is supported.
 - All levels of learning and needs are supported (IEPs and special needs).
- Language immersion programs – cut? Move to smaller schools?

Notes from Table

- Class size.
- Individualized attention.
- Openness.
- Everybody knows everybody.
- Campus.
- Graduations rates.
- Attendance rates.
- Project 43 raises housing – West Linn.

Notes from Table 1

- No introduction from Steve Faust about his tie to 3J.
- 3J have ongoing contract with the district?
- Are SSTF presenting to 3J or LRPC (3J writing the report, can SSTF edit this?)
 - More transparency around chain of command?
- The demographics shift in this area.
 - Data shows that it is stagnant/declining.
- Vision 43 not included in data.
- Flo report shows down then up, flat – not declining enrollment.
- Split West Linn/Wilsonville school district?
- Redrawing district lines? – Allowing market to decide (in-district transfer).
- Our smaller schools outperforming other attended schools.
- Factors to consider
 - Sense of belonging, sense of community, connection
 - Higher property value with well-performing schools
 - closing a school affects our businesses, homeowners, city coffers.
- Struggle
 - Allocation of teachers at school with number of enrollment students.
 - Schools have to allocate teachers.
- Why is there a sense of urgency?
 - Bond about upgrades.

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- We need current estimates of upgrades.
 - Do we know which schools receive the upgrades lately? Why were they put off?
 - Were they put off because our priorities?
 - What are the alternatives being considered for offsetting repair/upgrade questions.
 - Is this transcribed verbatim? Non edited national trend to leave cities for small city feels.
 - District could be more flexible [with] allocation of teachers given the specifics of each school.
 - Targeted money has come to an end, fire some positions.
 - Cost of closing a building...you will still be sending kids to other schools.
 - What are the enrollment numbers coming from?
 - My K class is not small.
 - Is there an interest in maintaining class size?
 - We need cost estimates, and list of projects.
 - You can't get a bond with voters who don't know what the costs are.
 - Closing school -> bond measure
 - The saved money would cover the current deficit.
 - Need a prioritized list.
 - We don't need equal schools, not a qualifying cost.
 - How many houses are in each school boundary?
 - Are they drawn in a way that is equal housing?
 - 400-500
 - Who decided 350-50 (400-500) was target enrollment?
 - What review is being done about school districts that have chosen to close a school and the impacts on school attendance?
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- Sense of lack of transparency in the process coupled with short timing and sense of urgency creates frustration.
 - Estimates and priorities around upgrades related to future bond.
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- Overall sense of lack of transparency, sense of urgency is shocking.
 - For factors SSTF consider –
 - Connection (sense of belong)/community that comes from small school, property values, effect on houses if closing a school with the uncertainty
 - For actions might School District take –
 - Redoing school boundaries, advertise preschool and out of district transfers
 - For trade-offs –
 - Non security building “upgrades”.
 - Vision 43 – increase in population.
 - Modify teacher allocations preschool, weighing younger and immersion.
 - Clear answer to maintaining class sizes throughout district.

- We want upgrade cost estimates.
- How are the boundaries defined? How many schools are in each?
- For actions might School District take -
 - Out of district transfers, better marketing.
- For What is the value of small schools for your children and community? Is there a way to measure that value?
 - Immeasurable.
- Nov 20th next LRPC meeting will have estimates.

Notes from Table

- Population/census data
 - Based on pandemic anomaly?
 - Updated yearly data.
 - Vision 43 projections?
- Up efficiency/curriculars and consolidation for resources.
 - Library resources and staffing.
 - Spanish.
- Private funding out of district control
 - Lake Oswego, California schools, dormant West Linn fund
- What would separation of West Linn/Wilsonville districts be a possibility? What would that look like?
 - Include revenue and expenses per school.
- What is the number [of] houses [per] boundary area for each school?
- Problem or option of doing interdistrict transfers into the district?
- What does consolidation mean? What is the capacity of each of the current schools on the small schools list? Can we make 400 students/school work? Class sizes at good.
- What is the renovation/construction costs that lead to a \$35mil/school price tag? If we prioritize safety upgrades, but not cosmetic, what does that price drive down to? What are the plans, the must haves, and the extras?
- What has this looked like at other districts, in and outside of Oregon? What is the tipping point for them? We don't need to reinvent the wheel.
- What is the breaking point on individualization for students who are not in the middle/average?
- How small is too small? 1 grade [per] class? 2 grades [per] class?
 - Separating bullies for example.
 - Meg knows every kids name. When would that breaking point hit?
- What is the money we are spending [per] student now at each school on the list?
- What is the cost of additional bussing? And time cost?
- Value of easy social play.

- Construction/traffic on 43 with consideration of closures of Bolton and Cedaroak
- Educational impact – is consolidation beneficial or harmful?
- Where are these debt projections coming from? How confident in this are these? Treasurer office resignation...How would the deficit be balanced by consolidation?
- Consolidations on school ratings? And that impact on these considering moving to the area.
- Cost of maintaining empty building/vacant property
- 1. Verification of data.
 - Concerns about reliability, up datedness, confidence in budget or population data.
- 2. Pulse on qualitative data .
 - Surveys.
 - Previous data.
- 3. What have other school boards looked at when faced with similar choices?

Notes from Table

- Why are you asking us about the value of our school? You should know this...you're the educators!!
- 1. What problem are we trying to solve? Clearly define...if it's a budget gap, define a target.
- 2. What cost reduction measures have been completed in the last two years? How effective were they?
- 3. What is the national average for district overhead as a total portion of expenses? How does our district stack up.
- 4. Why isn't there a list of potential cuts/changes that you are offering up as feedback?
- 5. Why can't this conversation be a part of a longer range plan? 90 days is ridiculous.
- 6. Please provide examples of 3 other districts that have previously faced similar challenges who have successfully navigated. What did they do?
- 7. Why didn't district staff engage at the tables with the community they serve?
- 8. Why haven't you done a survey to parents about what your plans are should consolidation process? Parents will pull kids.

Notes from Table

Overview

- Premise of meeting is off.
 - You have defined Cedaroak, Bolton, Stafford as "small schools" because enrollment less than 350 people what determined to be small.
 - 350 seems arbitrary and does not have to be a problem that is solved.
 - It feels like the problem is a budget shortfall and there are lots of ways to address a budget shortfall, including cutting costs or raising money.

- Finding solutions is a challenge and we appreciate being allowed to provide input, but we also feel the district's job to provide alternatives beyond closing schools, but we haven't heard any alternatives.

Alternatives

- What are the alternatives?
- Can we limit transfers between schools?

Notes from Table 11

- The premise of this meeting seems off.
- Why short-term solution for data that forecasts long-term and seems inconclusive?
- What is the problem with less than 350 person school?
- Why is 350 people considered small?
- How do we compare against budget from before Covid?
- Are we getting rid of preschool at Cedaroak?
- What schools are under-utilizing their building?
- Have you considered traffic/vehicle miles traveled?
- Why do we not limit transfers and have everyone go to their local school?
 - Cedaroak is one of the largest.
- Shouldn't language immersion be counted separately?
- Can Trillium dual language move to Bolton?
- What are the alternatives to closing schools?

Notes from Table

Answers to questions:

- a. The Value is the personal attendance to the kids, safety, the ability to walk to school (saving environment, good for health, less air pollution).
- b. It is the heart of the community - the entire neighborhood is circling it and using the field.
- c. The small school is providing all services needed!
- d. What are the trade-offs? We don't need new facilities – they need to be structurally safe but not more.
 - We don't need fancy AI stuff or computers – the river is good enough for creativity, learning about nature.
- e. Closing the school will impact my decision.
- f. School closure/consolidation will remove families from the district (homeschooling/private schools) this will reduce enrollment further.
- g. How can we estimate the impacts if we don't have any numbers?