



A Community of Learners

Executive Memo: Enrollment Balancing Project Update

To: District 36 School Board
Trisha Kocanda, *Superintendent*

From: Greg Kurr, CFO
Maureen Hager, Enrollment Balancing Project Coordinator

August 16, 2016

Project Overview

To address the current imbalance of attendance patterns at our three elementary schools, the District has embarked upon an effort to refine the forecasting of enrollment trends and to identify future space needs and the best use of facilities to address these needs. The Board approved this project at the June 29, 2016, meeting, and work began this summer to achieve the goals of this project.

The District has engaged McKibben Demographic Research, LLC (Dr. Jerrold McKibben) and Cropper GIS (Matthew Cropper) to develop enrollment forecasts by school and by grade and to analyze the current capacities of the District's schools. This analysis was prompted by a review of the option for extended day kindergarten and the increasing challenge of providing comparable educational programs at all three elementary schools. During this analysis, it became apparent that not only is this imbalance at the elementary level a focus, but it would be prudent to plan long-term given the District's historical enrollment trend.

Steps Taken to Date

In July, McKibben and Cropper GIS visited the District and toured each school accompanied by the building principal to better understand the nuances of each facility. From these visits, as well as District provided information, McKibben and Cropper have calculated building capacities and developed a profile of potential space utilization. In addition, to develop a more robust and sophisticated forecast for enrollments, information has been gathered from the Village of Winnetka, Cook County, the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Census Bureau, and District 36 archives.

At this time, [an initial demographic report](#) and companion [capacity report](#) are available for Board review, the highlights of which will be shared with the Board at the August 16, 2016, meeting. As this report will help inform the decisions regarding the long-term needs of the District, it is an important stepping off point prior to engaging the staff and community in opportunities to provide their input.

Project Components

The project is anticipated to occur in two phases. Phase One will address the need to balance enrollment among the three elementary schools and the implementation of an extended kindergarten school day and program, with recommendations for both to be implemented for the 2017-18 school year. Phase Two will address a long-term plan for District facility use to best support and enhance our educational programs and efficiently manage District facilities and resources.

To allow for timely Board action on Phase One, a community advisory process will convene in September. The charge of the Advisory Committee will be to use all data and available information to develop an informed recommendation for the Board. Action on a recommendation is targeted for the February/March timeframe.

Both community and staff will have multiple opportunities to provide input on the recommendation. Surveys, focus groups, and public input at Board meetings will be available to the community. Superintendent input sessions, internal communication tools, and surveys will be available for staff.

Next Steps

Throughout the fall and winter, a number of activities will occur. The following highlights the anticipated timeline.

September, 2016	Community and Staff survey and invitation to participate on the Advisory Committee; choosing and convening the Committee; Committee meetings begin
October, 2016	Committee Meetings and Study
November, 2016	Committee Meetings and Study resulting in options
December, 2016	Community Survey for input on options
January, 2017	Focus Group opportunities to introduce options to greater community for feedback; analyze feedback and present recommendation to the Board

February, 2017	Possible Board action on Phase One or further discussion
March, 2017	Board action on Phase One
April, 2017	Launch Phase Two of project

This timeline results in the Board deciding Phase One no later than its March 2017 meeting to allow for implementation for the 2017-18 school year. Phase Two of the project will address current capacity and the most advantageous use of current facilities to serve the educational program. A second recommendation will be forthcoming to the Board for action during the 2017-18 school year regarding a longer-term (five to ten year) plan for facility use.

[Click here](#) to view the presentation to the School Board.

Attachments:

[Demographic Study](#)
[Capacity and Utilization Study](#)