



A Community of Learners

Information Memo: Redistricting Timeline Recommendation

TO: School Board

FROM: Trisha Kocanda, *Superintendent*
Administrative Team

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Background

An imbalance in elementary school enrollment among the three elementary schools necessitated a review of school attendance areas in 2016. At that time, the community experienced the widest disparity in elementary school student enrollments in over 50 years. Crow Island educated 45% of K-4 students in the District and was deemed over capacity. Greeley was under capacity and Hubbard Woods near optimal capacity. Due to this disparity in elementary enrollment, anticipated future enrollment levels at each elementary school, and a commitment to equitable educational programming and services, a shift in school attendance boundaries is required.

Redistricting alone does not ensure equitable programming. School facilities also influence how and when programming is offered. Therefore, the School Board expanded the enrollment balancing initiative to include a facility review. With a recently approved Educational Master Facility Plan, we now have a commitment to maintain the neighborhood school model with (3) K-4 schools and (1) 5-8 school campus and are able to re-engage in the redistricting work to find the best possible solution to a very complex and emotional challenge.

Recommended Process & Timeline

Effective planning requires broad recognition and collaboration around complex issues related to changing elementary school attendance boundaries for students, families and community. The solution must provide confidence in long-term viability and facility readiness to equitably and effectively accommodate current and projected enrollments. The timing of decisions is a critical factor for families, as is the need to recognize the District's concurrent work to define a potential

Phase I Facilities plan and (if approved) the implication of a two to three-year design and construction process.

The goal is to progress as efficiently as possible while committing to the highest-quality solution that will negate the need to move families multiple times. We want a plan that we can commit to with confidence and clarity; this takes considerable planning and communication.

To provide a viable and minimally disruptive Redistricting Plan, we must carefully consider timing and evaluation of:

- Attendance zones that have reliable school-aged student populations - requires thorough analysis with support of demographer and the study of potential new development (e.g., One Winnetka)
- Safe and secure travel options for students (walking, biking, bus, car) - may require Village modifications, financial investments, and the study of upcoming infrastructure projects (e.g., repair of Cherry St. bridge); and rebuilding traffic management plans for pick-up/drop off
- Special accommodations for students and families impacted, especially for those Crow Island-area families impacted by short-term kindergarten plan (e.g., defining options with considerate choice)

It is recommended that the School Board support the following timeline:

- **November 2018 - August 2019** - Engage in evaluation and decision-making process (see annotated timeline)
- **September 2019** - Review recommended revised boundary maps with family accommodation plans and associated communication at School Board meeting
- **October 2019** - Approve new boundary maps with family accommodation plans and associated communication at School Board meeting; Confirm and communicate school assignment, transition, and potential transportation plans with families
- **October 2019 - January 2020** - Collect choice decisions from families on school attendance
- **Fall 2020** - Implement new boundaries

In addition, it is recommended that the kindergarten program will remain at Greeley and Hubbard Woods Schools in 2019-2020. Crow Island will remain a grade 1- 4 school until 2020-2021 when kindergarten returns. See Kindergarten-specific memo for more details.

There was a strong sense of urgency on behalf of the administration and the School Board to implement the redistricting plan for Fall 2019; however, when examining the scope of the work, the necessary collaboration with Village and Police, and timelines for any necessary

infrastructure adjustments to Village roads/intersections/tunnels, it was determined that the ultimate outcome risked compromise if planning was accelerated. Specific examples of benefits from recommended timeline include:

- EMFP Phase I depends on a community-approved referendum. If approved, construction schedules will be finalized and taken into account in redistricting plans.
- The Village may need to upgrade infrastructure or signage to support new boundaries. The Village’s budget cycle runs concurrent with the calendar year. Therefore, any upgrades need to be budgeted in the next budget cycle.
- Some families who are impacted will have choices to consider. We need to afford them the appropriate time to consider options and support the transition.
- Schools need to prepare for revised school schedules, facility use, and staffing shifts.
- The recently-approved One Winnetka development may impact enrollment projections.

The recommended timeline is supported by Administration, Village, and Police officials. We are confident the recommended timeline will produce an outcome that will be long-lasting, considerate of impacted families, and respectful of necessary school planning. **It will ultimately reduce the possibility for families to be moved multiple times, which has been the most common concern.**

Redistricting Annotated Timeline

An update on the plan and process will be included in School Board meeting materials and posted online. The following timeline gives more details of the required work, collaboration, and financial planning. The timeline does not include *all* discrete steps in this process, rather, it provides improved clarity.

October 23, 2018	School Board approves EMFP - Commits to K-4; 5-8 grade configuration
November - December 2018	Review Enrollment Balancing Project materials and data, including enrollment projections and fall 2016 boundary scenarios Update Cropper GIS with current enrollments - Analyze K-4 boundary scenarios (ex. review historical patterns to determine most reliable enrollment zones) Update Village and Police officials with current status and review Enrollment Balancing Project materials and Cropper analysis; Examine <i>One Winnetka</i> potential impact Update parents and community on planning; develop Redistricting Fact Sheet Principals examine building schedule changes for projected enrollments

	(ex. When specials are offered, staffing needs, etc.)
January - February 2019	<p>Evaluate K-4 boundary scenarios and projected enrollment impact with Village and Police for traffic considerations and safe walkways to schools; determine needed modifications (ex. Stop signs, walkway maintenance) for each plan and any incurred cost</p> <p>Evaluate K-4 boundary scenarios with bus company for routing and needs</p> <p>Principals examine building schedule changes for projected enrollments (ex. When specials are offered, staffing needs, etc.)</p>
March - April 2019	<p>Narrow K-4 boundary scenarios with Demographer, Village and Police based on best practice and district guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate specific students and families based on impact (ex. Identify those impacted by short-term kindergarten plan). - Refine school schedules and staffing based on remaining scenarios. - Determine appropriate family accommodations and choice scenarios. - Evaluate traffic patterns and routes; safe walkways to schools. - Evaluate specific impact on number and location of households District-wide <p>Collaboration with PTO leadership on guiding principles for positive transition planning</p>
May - August 2019	<p>Demographer, Village, Police and District rank remaining K-4 boundary scenarios in accordance with all considered factors.</p> <p>Village commits to any necessary roadway and walkway improvements; builds into FY20 budget.</p> <p>Determine timeline and budgeting needs for temporary classrooms at Crow Island and specific implication of the design and construction process/timeline (with community-approved referendum).</p> <p>Align redistricting patterns with overall Phase I Facilities Plan design and construction timeline (with community-approved referendum)</p>
September 2019	<p>Present redistricting recommendation to School Board and community for input and consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New attendance boundaries - Special considerations and choice for various family profiles - Communication plan (includes residents without current students)

October 2019	Approve redistricting plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New attendance boundaries - Special considerations and choice for various family profiles - Communication plan (includes residents without current students)
November 2019- January 2020	Administration implements transition plan; works with PTO's to support communications and engagement with parents in planning for fall 2020 implementation.
August 2020	Proposed Implementation

Redistricting Guidelines

To guide the redistricting decision-making, the following are based on best practice from industry standard, community feedback, and data obtained in consultation with Cropper GIS, the District's demographic consultant:

- Minimize the overall number of students and households impacted
- Consider geographic proximity when assigning students and households
- Define boundaries in logical order and recognition of prominent infrastructure or geographic features such as major roadways, railroads, or bodies of water; pedestrian walkways or cycling pathways
- Maintain natural boundaries defined by neighborhood makeup, subdivision or association
- Whenever possible, maintain class size guidelines of grades K-2: 17-20 and grades 3-4: 17-21
- Optimize use of facilities and balanced enrollments to maximize human resources, programming and physical amenities
- Minimize disruption, number of transitions or **removing students from current school assignment**
- Utilize demographic projections and adhere to optimal space use recommendations to support current educational programs

Key Clarifications

In recent PTO meeting visits, the following questions were asked in an effort to clarify understanding of this process. It is helpful to share with all.

Who will determine the new attendance boundaries?

The School Board has the ultimate authority to adopt new attendance boundaries. The recommendation will be informed by the District's administration, demographer (Cropper GIS), Village/Police officials, and relevant work from the 2016 Enrollment Balancing Project.

When will I know where my child will be attending school (in Fall 2020)?

Current families, including those with incoming kindergarteners, will be notified of their child's elementary school assignment and optional accommodations when the redistricting plan is approved in October 2019 (anticipated).

How will the District determine which families receive optional accommodations?

Every student and family assignment impacted by redistricting will be reviewed for optional accommodations, especially those impacted by the short-term kindergarten solution for Crow Island School. **Every effort will be made to allow students currently attending a school to remain at that school.**

Will all elementary schools be impacted by redistricting?

Yes. The redistricting plan will be evaluated at a holistic level to ensure we have a viable, long-term plan. All elementary schools will likely experience some shift as a consequence to change in elementary attendance boundaries.

How many children and households are expected to be impacted by new boundaries?

The preliminary estimates shared with the School Board during the EMFP process in June 2018 were the following:

- Number of households impacted (est. 5/18) - **50-80**
- Number of students impacted (est. 5/18) - **65-110**

When can I learn more about the proposed elementary attendance boundaries?

The School Board will review the Redistricting Plan in September and October 2019 during regular board meetings. There will be opportunity for public input during these meetings as well as e-mail communication at any time.

Why was the Enrollment Balancing Project put on "hold" during the Educational Master Facility Planning process?

This process began in 2016 with the Enrollment Balancing Project, which included community involvement and feedback, and was postponed during the Educational Master Facility Planning process. The School Board was considering multiple grade-level configurations in the Educational Master Facility Planning process. Each grade

configuration was associated with its own, specific enrollment target. Therefore, as soon as the School Board approved the EMFP and grade configuration in October 2018, the District immediately re-engaged in the long-term redistricting work with confidence.

Next Steps:

Once the School Board agrees to timeline and plan, the District will immediately launch communication to current D36 families, incoming Kindergarten families, community-at-large, preschools, and realtor groups. Communication plan will include:

- New D36 webpage dedicated to redistricting; updated regularly
- Update D36 [Redistricting Fact Sheet](#) as necessary
- Regular updates at Board Meetings with corresponding updates in District communications (ex. Principal newsletters, *Winnetka Wire*, etc.)
- Outreach opportunities with key constituents, such as current parents, local preschools, realtor groups, etc.