



FPS

The fine art of education

School Board Round Table

*November 11, 2008
Woodland JHS Library*

Today's Work Session:

Planned High School Size and Future Growth

Susan Norton, Chief Information Officer

Ginny Wiseman, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Schools

Kathy Deck, Director, U of A Walton College Center for Business and Economic Research

Topic as suggested by patrons:

- District growth projections
 - At what point does a district go to two high schools? Should we set a target size?
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- District personnel presented 2000-2009 enrollment data. Kathy Deck presented regional population growth data and employment data. While the population and employment growth data are somewhat correlated; population and student growth data are not. Student growth is relatively flat. One conclusion that can be drawn is that even though people are continuing to move into the area, they are not necessarily bringing school age children. Kindergarten classes are always larger than subsequent grade levels.
 - Building capacities are in flux due to changing programmatic requirements. Adjustments to room use have altered "building capacities" (up and down). This is a moving target and needs to be reassessed on a regular basis.
 - A "rule of thumb" in the past is that when 85% of a building's capacity is reached, it is time to begin thinking of a new building.
 - How will the district make a larger school feel and function smaller ?
 - Small learning communities (SLC's) (e.g., current middle schools)
 - In High Schools, SLC's operate similarly as the middle school model, except for combined-group classes (e.g., music (large enrollment) or specialty (AP language))
 - Size: Not a specified consideration in any subsequent decisions. While it may have been implicit when discussing 1 vs 2 schools, some patrons expressed the belief that the advantages and disadvantages of small and larger schools were not fully explored.



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- 9-12: Question the connection / acceptance of 9-12 if only one school, because of size concerns. Separation of discussion of the number of schools and grade configurations simplified discussion, but it did not focus on the interdependence of the 2 issues.
- 1 vs. 2: Size issues/concerns were raised. Also concerns of budget/staff additions for supporting two buildings.
- Location: Given the FHS Select II committee's recommendation for building elsewhere, that committee's decision on the current site may have been altered if 9th grade were included at current site.
- Visits to other high schools:
 - What are criteria for selecting sites to visit? Effective education programs, academic success, others. These will be enumerated at the November Board meeting.
 - Bentonville: why has the District not visited this site?
- History of education and success reporting often tied to passion. A passion in belief that a new system will help students, is often opposed by a passion to stay the course.
 - Examples of issues influenced by passions: open classrooms at elementary schools, block scheduling at high schools
 - The community and district must find a common ground to benefit the students. Also must obtain input, buy-in from teaching staff. All of this must be done in a way to generate passion for the project from the citizenry, not a top down approach.
- District should provide achievement data from small learning communities (and other newer education initiatives).
- Define the 21st century curriculum
 - What parameters are used to measure progress? (graduation rate, AYP, benchmark scores, EOC exams (e.g., literacy), development of employer-ID'd skill sets, etc.). District and/or state measures many or all of these parameters, but which are used as the most important for measuring success in our HS, or a HS we select to visit?
 - The following questions were posed (after the meeting) to District staff member Linda Auman, and her responses follow each question.
 - **As we move into our new curriculum are we going to focus on graduation rate? Yes. In fact, this is one of the reasons we need to redesign our curriculum and instructional model. We must use multiple sources of data as the basis for our decisions. In curriculum/instruction circles, there is a norm of "no data-free discussions" when we are making decisions that impact student learning.**



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- One of the numbers the state uses was derived from the number of students entering 12th grade and the number of students completing the 12th grade. Can you refresh my memory on what that was? As I understand it, that used to be the method of determining the drop-out and/or graduation rate. At one time, schools and districts used different measures to determine drop out/graduation rates. It was like comparing apples/oranges.
- Which one does the state focus on? The state now focuses on the graduation rate and drop out rate methodologies used on the state report card; NORMES computes the rates based on the data received from information ADE requires districts to provide.

Comments from Patrons (general topics)

- Elementary rezoning after HS decision is made; doing it first or in the middle of requesting a millage will harm effort.
- Grade configuration changes: will that trigger an elementary rezoning?
- What happens if millage fails? In the millage campaign, the District should articulate, in terms of both the curriculum and facilities issues at the high school, what will happen if the campaign fails.
- Virtual tours to other high schools possible? Could we purchase or obtain tour of other schools without going there?
 - District is providing virtual tour of schools that they go to schools



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Topics for future board round table sessions

- From Previous Meetings (only items already addressed are removed)
 - Recreation of FHS campus
 - Cooperation among governmental and educational entities.
 - Assessment trends
 - K-12 education: what value is it to a community? To a patron after their kids graduate? For patrons without children?
 - Greenland Schools: impact of consolidation (or not): facilities, staff, students, economy.
 - Tracking the 9th and 10th graders who were in the first pre-K group. How have they performed? Pre-K
 - What is the short and long term future of NWACC agreement?
 - What is all this testing in the District (all levels)? Remediation? Where is my free time? NCLB
- New Ideas
 - Transitions from school to school: Are there too many? Does the statement of value of our middle school concept (2 grades) contradict the statement that too many transitions are hurting test scores?
 - What will be the impact of academy, charter, private schools in or near Fayetteville on rezoning elementary schools, grade configuration changes at the high school and the high school construction decision making process? Is this being considered, and/or a cause for concern?

Next Round Table Meeting will be Tuesday, December 9th

- TOPICS
 - Round Tables 2009: Where do we go from here? Discuss need for the meetings, recommend changes for future meetings.
 - Timelines: District requested to provide a gross (estimates only) timeline for high school construction, rezoning, implementation of pre-K, grade configuration recommendations, elementary school construction projects. Provide public with the issues facing the District, and an intended time frame to address the issues.



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Did you know?

Every patron has 3 representatives on the Board

- Zone 1: Steve Percival
- Zone 2: Howard Hamilton
- Zone 3: Tim Kring
- Zone 4: Becky Purcell
- Zone 5: Tim Hudson
- At-Large: Susan Heil
- At-Large: Jim Halsell

Board members are citizen volunteers elected to a 5 year term.

Board Round Table Notes on www.fayar.net

<http://www.fayar.net/schoolboard/roundtable.html>