

**Efficiency Task Force 2015
Frequently Asked Questions
March 2015**

NOTE: This document will be periodically updated as additional questions can be answered.

Topic 1: K-4 Boundary Adjustments and Feeder Schools

Q- Why aren't we talking about class sizes?

A - We all agree class sizes are a tremendous concern. The only way they will be addressed is through additional funding either in the budget currently being considered by the General Assembly or via a future referendum. Meanwhile, we have to try to gain efficiencies in operations where we can. We urge you to be in contact with legislators about funding for public schools--specifically Avon. Tell your story right now to your representatives in the hopes of getting relief from being 322nd out of 364 schools in funding per student. For more information see the State of the Schools presentation available on our website.

Q - Why do we need a feeder model?

A- A feeder system creates efficiencies of time across all aspects of the corporation. Currently, intermediate office staff communicate with five or seven elementary buildings as student records are transitioned, to accommodate transition conferences for special needs students, assure accuracy in transitioning plans for English Language Learner students, as well as planning for High Ability students and students on Response to Instruction plans. Reducing the number of schools students transition from decreases the number of interactions needed and reduces the number of meetings required by staff. A feeder system would also provide a clear understanding of how students matriculate through our schools as it is very confusing to new families and for families during transition years. Over time, school personnel and families would be able to get to know each other in a more authentic way and improve communication between home and school while building a strong sense of community.

Q - How many teachers would be moved in the K-4 models?

A - Should the Board adopt Model A or Model B, approximately 11-13 general education teachers would need to shift placement. We would also look at all staffing to assure it is appropriate to the size of each building.

Q - If the Board decided to combine Maple and White Oak into one campus, would it have to be named Maple at the Grove and White Oak at the Grove? Could it be named Maple Upper Elementary and White Oak Lower Elementary or something like that?

A-No the name "The Grove" is not required.

Q - Would there be a "redesign" cost for White Oak and/or Maple for this model?

A - No. Both buildings can house the number of sections needed without change in physical structure.

Q - If combining White Oak and Maple is efficient, why don't you do that between Cedar and Hickory?

A - Increasing the number of sections at each grade level to assist with programming is a unique need of the smaller schools. Cedar and Hickory already have more than 2 sections at every grade level and so this is not an issue at these schools.

Q - If my student moves and is participating in the high ability program, will the program be the same?

A - All special programs, High Ability, English Language Learners and Special Needs are coordinated with district-wide professional development for staff to keep programming on the same page. How students are clustered for each program depends on the size of the school and number of students that qualify.

Q - How will families be communicated to regarding the transition?

A - As has been past practice, building and district level administrators will collaborate to develop an extensive transition plan for students, families and staff. Past activities have included, but are not limited to: student tours during the school day at new building prior to the end of the school year, parent family welcoming nights, ramped up activities at back-to-school events, etc.

Topic 2: Intermediate Boundary Adjustments and Feeder Schools

Q - Will free/reduced and high ability students be balanced between East and West?

A - The free and reduced percentage spread between AIS East and AIS West is currently 4.02%. The feeder system would improve the spread to 0.3%. High ability numbers are determined by the student identification process with students qualifying in math, language arts or both. There is no limit to the number of students as any child that qualifies is served. The number of students identified between schools is similar.

Q - How detrimental is losing Title 1 at White Oak?

A - The federal Title 1 dollars would shift to a school with a lower SES (socio-economic) status. The funds would stay in the district but would no longer be available to White Oak. Title 1 dollars have funded additional instructional assistants at this location as well as intervention programs outside the school day and the Title 1 technology lab. These resources and programs would be moved to a different school in Avon.

Q - Will students that started at one school be able to finish at that school?

A - Historically our School Board has grandfathered students to allow them to finish at their original school if is the last year to attend prior to transitioning to a new level (**AND** parents are willing to provide transportation). In order for schools to plan appropriately for the coming school year an application and deadline for decision has been required. It will be the School Board's decision if this option will be permitted and they will share this decision publically.

Q - Why is Hickory only moving six students?

A - Hickory is just over its target capacity of 500 students and Cedar is below its target capacity of 750 students with a current enrollment of 687. Cedar has more space to accommodate growth from the new housing development, Devonshire. This model shifts the new growth area of the current Hickory district into the Cedar district where six Cedar students currently reside.

Q - If parents are willing to provide transportation may they petition the district to allow their children to attend a different school than the one to which they are assigned?

A - Historically, parents have been allowed to request exceptions to attendance districts (in writing) and the district has tried to accommodate the requests based on class sizes. The Board will determine if this process will continue and will announce the decision publically.

Topic 3: Collaboration, School Start and End Times, and Transportation
COLLABORATION

Q - What is the purpose of the weekly 30 minute delay in Schedule 3?

A- There are two main purposes for the delay. 1 - Standardize time for teachers to collaborate and receive professional development to enhance instruction in our classrooms for students. 2 - Provide consistent additional time for parents and teachers to collaborate

Q - How will 30 minute delay in Schedule 3 impact before school activities?

A- On the day of the 30 minute delay and teacher collaboration, before school activities will be limited because teachers will not be available on those mornings.

Q - If the Board selects Schedule 3 with the 30 minute delay, must it be on a Monday?

A- No. The delay could be on whichever day of the week works best.

Q - Will it impact homework load?

A- There is no anticipated impact on the student homework load.

Q - Will this impact 30 minute SRT at middle schools?

A-The 30 minute delay will reduce the student instructional day by 30 minutes. How that looks at each level will need to be decided. The initial thought is that a few minutes will be taken from each period/block.

Q - Can eLearning days be used instead?

A- eLearning days offer a great potential to find time for collaboration and professional development for our teachers and staff. However, for collaboration to have the greatest impact on learning, it needs to take place regularly each week, which makes eLearning days less practical for this purpose.

Q - Parents prefer a once a month delay. Is that possible?

A- It is possible but not effective. Research clearly indicates that collaboration needs to happen weekly for it to have the greatest impact.

Q - Does Brownsburg use a delay day?

A- Brownsburg dismisses early one day/week (Wednesdays) and find this to be an effective way to obtain collaboration time for their teachers.

Q - Why not dismiss early rather than delay?

A- Early dismissals present supervision problems as students wait for extra-curricular activities to begin. That is why we have used 5 delay days rather than 5 early dismissal days.

START AND END TIMES

Q - How does the "Younger students first schedule" impact collaboration time?

A- The younger student first schedule (Schedule 1) allows the high school and both middle schools to start their student days later in the morning so that teacher can have collaboration time before students arrive. Currently there is not enough time in the morning for collaboration due to the early start times of our high school and middle schools and after school collaboration is difficult due to the many activities offered to our students at these schools.

TRANSPORTATION

Q - Will I be allowed to drive my student and keep him/her at the current school?

A- This will be a consideration for the Board of School Trustees but has not been determined at this time.

Q - Will any of the options provide more bus stops?

A- We do not anticipate adding bus stops in any of the three schedules as this increases rather than reduces costs.

Q - With 3-Tier routing system, will any bus drivers lose jobs?

A- No. We have sufficient natural attrition that the need for fewer drivers would not impact existing drivers.

Q - In the Model that combines White Oak and Maple, would WO & MA ride different buses or together?

A-In Model A, all students attending Maple and White Oak would ride the same buses and function as one school just located in two buildings. This allows older siblings attending Maple to ride the bus with their younger siblings attending White Oak. This is also where some of the savings would come in.

Q - What is the data to support \$350K savings for transportation?

A- Implementing a 3 tier routing system in the areas of our districts where we have neighborhoods in close proximity to our elementary schools will allow the district to combine a minimum of 24 routes to existing 2 tier routes creating 3 tier routes. This structure change would not eliminate the need for the 24 routes but it would eliminate the need for 6 buses, the benefits cost for 3 drivers, and approximately 25% of the annual mileage of these 24 routes. The approximate savings in benefit and operational cost annually is \$110,000.

Combining our K-4 routes with our 5-6 routes and combining our 7-8 routes with our 9-12 routes in the most rural areas of our district will allow the district to totally eliminate a minimum of 16 bus routes. This equates into a complete savings of 4 drivers, the daily

operation cost of 4 buses, and the need for 4 buses. The approximate savings in drivers' salaries and benefits as well as the operational costs of the buses annually is \$250,000.

Q - How will logistics be addressed of same start and end time of East and West?

A- While the schedules list East and West starting and ending at the same time, they will probably need to be staggered by 5 to 10 minutes. If there is a decision made by the board to adopt one of the proposed schedules, the planning for logistics will begin and the exact times will be determine and communicated.

Q - Are adjustments needed to meet the needs of Area 31 students?

A- Avon High School students would still be able to participate in the Area 31 Career Center programs. Our morning students would still be able to maintain 14 credits in a school year like all AHS students and our afternoon students would still be able to get 12 credits, which is the same as our current schedule. If the Board of School Trustees adopts one of the new schedules proposed, we immediately begin working with the Administration at Area 31 and Harris Academy to address any logistical and/or operational issues that arise due to the change in times.

Q - Will students still have 50 minutes or less on the bus?

A- Yes. We do not anticipate increasing our maximum target bus ride of 50 minutes for any of the changes proposed. It is the goal of the ETF to lower the average amount of time students are on the bus.

Q - Are you paying someone outside transportation department to assist with these models?

A- No. We are using our own transportation personnel.

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