

Meeting #2 Summary – December 19, 2019

I: Welcome and Introductions

Penny Mabie welcomed and thanked members for coming and briefly went over the meeting's agenda.

II: Capacity and Enrollment Challenges

Barbara Posthumus began the presentation discussing challenges the district faces with enrollment rates and capacity limitations, reviewing projections.

Q: Does King County provide birth data granularly? Do you know where in the district these projections are showing growth?

A: King County provides only total births by district, not by school. We have census data to more closely tracks with individual schools, although we have found it not to be an accurate predictor by school.

Q: On the Kindergarten projections, what percentage are coming back of projected births that didn't happen? Is that included in those statistics?

A: We don't track or have information on individual births and whether they end up as individual students. We do track the percentage of overall enrollment to births over time. FLO Analytics will be here next month, and we'll ask them that, too.

➤ **ACTION ITEM: Discuss this item with FLO Analytics at the next meeting.**

In further discussion of the projections, Barbara noted that the data also tracks current and planned housing developments in predicting future enrollment projections.

Q: Does Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Vision 2050 work inform these projections? Are they working with school districts on a plan based on projected need?

A: PSRC works with each city, but the city councils provide guidelines for the cities. Each jurisdiction is responsible for creating 20-year comprehensive plan in order to meet growth targets. Our facilities department and cities conduct annual meetings as required by the GMA and King County Countywide Planning Policies. These are collaborative meetings where districts and jurisdictions can discuss code and zoning change, identify pending and potential development activity, and work on potential areas for school siting and understanding district needs.

Q: Even with all the detail in the projections, it seems new schools are full almost as soon as they're built. Parents in the district wonder how the numbers are so wrong and why portables

are needed soon after a new school is opened. Could the district increase the projected percentage of growth? Do you know why the projections are so wrong?

A: It's not that the projections are wrong; it's because we haven't been able to pass all the bonds to build enough classrooms to support our rapidly growing enrollment. The 2014 long-term task force recommended a plan to build needed facilities through 2030. The financing plan to implement the recommendations provided for four bond measures: 2016, 2018, 2022 and 2026. The 2016 bond passed, the 2018 bond did not reach the 60% approval needed to pass. We're only able to build with what funds we have. It's true that we haven't yet added enough capacity to accommodate all the students. We have had to use short-term measures to solve the capacity challenges, such as adding portables, changing boundaries, changing the standard of service, etc. The Facility Advisory Committee has been formed in order to provide recommendations on how to solve these challenges.

Barbara continued speaking to multiple types of projections and reviewed classroom needs by education level and community.

Q: What about all the new developments that began after these projections were made? What about the ones you may not know about? Are those factored into the projections?

A: Our projections include known developments and then estimated development based on the cities' 20-year comprehensive plans. When a city, such as Sammamish, has a moratorium that delays projects, we update our assumptions.

Q: What were the capacity ideals (school sizes) recommended by the Task Force?

A: We'll have to look back for that information.

➤ **ACTION ITEM: Provide assumptions on school sizes from the Task Force.**

Barbara then reviewed the outstanding questions from the previous meeting, which were:

1. Number of classrooms currently in shared learning spaces.
 - a. Table available on Slide 13 of the presentation.
2. Analysis of projections over time compared to actual enrollment numbers.
 - a. Overview available on Slide 14 of the presentation. Handouts with more details were provided at the meeting.

Q: Do the capacity numbers assume Choice Schools?

A: Choice school capacity is separate from the comprehensive school capacity.

Q: Why do some numbers increase then decrease?

A: In some areas there can be a "bubble" effect of a larger class moving through the years. For example, in Sammamish, looking at the elementary school numbers, the kindergarten and first grade classes are smaller than the fifth-grade class of the same year. Variation can happen between classes and different schools. As incoming enrollment changes, the effect on the bubble can change.



Q: Since Choice Schools are of high interest, is there space being allocated?

A: A Choice School was included in the last bond that did not pass. Adding Choice Schools was part of the Long-Term Facilities Task Force recommendations and this committee can make recommendations on whether to build additional Choice Schools.

Q: Are schools capped as enrollment increases?

A: Our neighborhood schools do not have an enrollment cap per se, but rather we make program moves or boundary changes when feasible to address capacity challenges. Choice schools have enrollment limits as their programs are designed to have a certain number of students. We have two schools where enrollment limits were set due to jurisdictional requirements as conditions of building permits. Timberline Middle Schools and ICS/Community School.

Q: Why is International Community School capacity higher than its enrollment?

A: We will review and provide additional information.

Q: In how many schools are children still eating in classrooms?

A: We can provide that information.

- **ACTION ITEM: Provide information on how many schools don't have a dedicated eating space.**
- **ACTION ITEM: Provide additional information on ICS capacity/enrollment.**

III: Aging Facilities

Brian Buck presented results of the Building Conditions Assessment, including photos of aging facilities in the district.

IV: Portables and Property

Brian discussed and showed information on aging portables and newer portables. He also shared information on undeveloped and underdeveloped property.

Q: How much do green portables cost?

A: The total cost to add a portable, which includes purchase of the portable, permitting, furniture, installation and other fees, is about \$450,000 per portable, though cost can vary depending on site conditions and jurisdictional requirements.

Q: Are the portables secure?

A: All portables have door locks and all are locked while in use.

Q: What's the cost to build an elementary school?

A: 2018 costs are around \$49-\$51 million for a school with 34 classroom spaces. Costs are typically higher for a new elementary and variable based on site conditions.



Q: How do you decide when to rebuild an aging facility or to just remodel the building??

A: Before designing a project, each building goes through a study to determine whether the existing building will be remodeled through major renovation or whether it is more appropriate to construct a new building in lieu of remodeling. That determination is made based on a careful review of the costs of the different options, as well as whether the site has space for a replacement of the existing building. Renovating an old building to bring it up to current safety and educational standards can be as costly or more costly than a brand-new building. The state guidance is that if the cost to remodel is 80% or more of the costs to rebuild, then the state recommends school districts consider replacement.

- **ACTION ITEM: Provide an example of a school that had a state required new in-lieu study**

Q: Is it possible to appeal county restrictions on where schools can be built (e.g. growth boundaries)?

A: We have continued conversation with the county and councilmembers. Other counties in similar positions are having similar conversations.

Q: Can properties LWSD has purchased that cannot be used to build schools be used to benefit the district in some other way?

A: Potentially; there are some properties with restrictions for large schools but could be used for a smaller school. An example is the area that used to be Old Dickinson Elementary. It's outside the Urban Growth Area, so we would need to work with King County to determine what is possible to build on that property.

Comments:

- Though they have locks, the use of portables compromises safety to some degree. Installing portables incurs expenses to support students in a way that's not permanent.
- Having to walk to and from a portable, such as using the restroom, is taking time away from a student that they could be using to learn.
- It seems like there's a lot of additions to schools and portables that are unnecessary to a child's education.
- My children have had classes in green portables and they were very grateful for the comforts that came with it.

V: Recommendations Discussion – A, B and G

Penny facilitated the Committee's discussion of Recommendations A, B and G, while clarifying the purpose and limitations of the Facilities Advisory Committee.



Q: Looking back to the graph on slide 6, what caused the divergence from the projected enrollment numbers and the actual numbers?

A: There is no actual enrollment data on this graph; both lines are projections, one made by the Task Force in 2015 and a newer projection from October 2019. Projections are updated annually to incorporate current enrollment and development information. FLO Analytics is also providing support for this.

Q: Can we discuss what kinds of facilities we want? Some schools have old, lower quality portables but are good schools. I'd like us to value education over luxuries and I feel like that's what we're here to provide.

A: That's something that could possibly be discussed in a smaller focus group, but the role of this group is to look at the Task Force recommendations and deciding what we want to reconfirm.

Q: Has it ever been considered to build larger than expected capacity to have extra room already built for future growth?

A: That was discussed with the Task Force but there was community concern about wasting resources that weren't needed in the moment. The task force did recommend that building design be future proofed by designing buildings for future additions and space for portables. Additional recommendations can be made for a new new bond.

Q: Some newer schools have horrible traffic issues, what can we do about that?

A: We can look at newer construction and learn from them and work with the schools on these challenges.

Comments:

- Long-term projections are hard to predict and I'm impressed with how the school district is doing and how close the projections are turning out to be.
- It's important to remember that this steep growth projection in this district is unlike any other. We need to focus on recommendations and help spread the word that this isn't typical growth.
- The meeting summaries from the Task Force are still available and highly recommend looking at them.
- There may be a change in how community members are feeling about enrollment growth since previous bonds went to a vote. There may be a more positive community response to putting some more effort into building more.
- Only two King County councilmembers live on the Eastside, so I don't feel like they have LWSD on their radar nor that they realize how rapidly growth and demand are increasing.

VI: Wrap Up

Penny wrapped up the meeting by inviting members to send her any follow up questions or comments. The next meeting is January 16 at Timberline Middle School with a presentation from FLO Analytics.

ACTION ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:

- **Discuss projected vs. actual births and enrollment with FLO Analytics at the next meeting.**
- **Provide assumptions on school sizes from the Task Force.**
- **Provide information on how many schools where students eat lunch in their classrooms.**
- **Provide additional information on ICS capacity/enrollment**
- **Provide an example of a school that had a state required new in-lieu study**
- **Send contact sheet via email**
- **Provided a version of updated recommendations worksheet to print as two side-by-side 8.5x11 pages for easier at-home printing**

