

Summit Feeder Pattern Committee Meeting
February 4, 2021
Minutes

- I. **Welcome & Introductions**
 - a. Dr. Cantu provided a welcome and provided an update about the Summit Feeder Pattern and the new committee. A recommendation for the Summit Feeder Pattern School of Choice went to the board last February and was not well received. Based on the feedback, District leadership realized that MISD needed to stop and listen—and then COVID-19 hit. The plan that was presented a year ago will not go forward, we are starting over and starting over together. We are here as partners and we are listening. The plan from a year ago does not exist anymore, there are no plans to close Cross Timbers Intermediate School.
 - b. Dr. Cantu introduced Dr. Sean Scott & Donald Williams who thanked committee members who were participating both in person and online. Mr. Williams and Dr. Scott also introduced and thanked principals, campus administrators and other staff for supporting the committee.

- II. **Review of Committee Selection:** Recommendations for membership came from MISD Board of Trustees and Campus Principals. An email soliciting volunteers was also sent to the community. All those who expressed interest in joining the committee were invited to join. The committee represents a broad cross-section of the Summit High School Feeder Pattern stakeholders, which includes students, parents, community leaders, teachers, campus administration and district administration.

- III. **The Elephant in The Room:** There are rumors out there and the District wants to dispel those rumors from the start. Mr. Williams and Dr. Scott shared several rumors that have been circulating including: grade configurations will change, Cross Timbers will be closed, the committee is just for show and the District already has a plan—none of those rumors are true.
 - a. Dr. Scott and Mr. Williams asked how many participants had also heard those rumors and asked the group to share additional rumors that may be circulating in the community. Committee Responses:
 - i. Rumors that an elementary school is closing
 - ii. Discussion about are these actually rumors—these were all ideas that were included in the February 2020 proposal. When the district decided to stop the plan, the community was not informed. The community has had a year to worry about it, we did not know that the district had stopped planning.
 - iii. We heard about the global academy but didn't hear when it was not going forward. The community isn't talking much about things as of yet.
 - iv. Cross Timbers parent reported that many parents are saying nobody cares about us, we are not being heard.
 - v. Online comment- yes, the community feels they are not being heard!
 1. Mr. Williams responded that the District's intent is that the plan being created is the community's plan

- vi. This is not anything that's new, we've been looking at minor tweaks for years including rezoning and minor changes. This is a long term issue for the district. My oldest child went to CTIS and the campus was so crowded. Our populations are changing and kids are moving out. The real root of what we need to do is rezone Summit. Rezoning can fix everything.
 - 1. Dr. Scott shared that the committee can ask for facilities studies to examine this kind of data.
 - vii. Heard that several teachers from TA Howard and CTIS did not renew their contracts because of what was presented at the board meeting
 - 1. Campus Principals responded that while there were retirements and departures last year, they could not definitively say that these were solely based on the plan presented in February 2020. There are many other reasons that impact staff changing roles, campuses, retiring. The previous plan presented may have impacted some to move sooner than planned but was not the sole reason.
- IV. **Review of Committee Charter:** Based on the charter, the committee is tasked with working together to achieve two main purposes:
- a. Address and enrich the climate, culture and trust of all Mansfield ISD stakeholders.
 - b. Fulfill the promise of Guiding Statement #5 of Vision 2020 by making recommendations concerning the creation of a school of choice in the Summit High School Feeder Pattern.
- V. **Word Wall** (see PowerPoint) created with all of the feedback, questions and comments submitted by committee member ahead of the meeting.
- VI. **Committee Questions & Feedback Responses:** Committee members were asked to submit questions and comments related to the charter. Dr. Scott and Mr. Williams then reviewed each item submitted and provided answers and updates to the group.
- a. What is the role of the committee?
 - i. Listen, research, develop a plan, collect feedback and ultimately make recommendations to the board
 - b. How will a 'school of choice' address the not great culture at _____? Will rezoning be considered from the south to boost enrollment and create a more diverse campus, or will the politics of 'old' Mansfield block such an action?
 - i. We're trying to build culture and strong climate in all schools. Rezoning is complicated.
 - c. Frankly, my main concern is that we are not used as a club to force a decision that has been pre-made by Administration, and then tell the community, "well we talked to this committee." It is clear that the community was never consulted on the original decision and I feel we are nothing more than a speed bump to you doing what you had planned to do all along. I have zero confidence that the administration will do the right thing. My goal is to bring the voice of the community in South Arlington to the Board and make clear that CTIS closing is not an acceptable decision. A school of choice is fine, but not at the expense of closing a neighborhood school.
 - i. That's why we are here—with time and by coming together, we hope we will show you that this is not just a club to force a decision. We are not closing CTIS or any school. There is no plan in place, this committee will make the plan.

- d. Until we get a bit further in the process, my main concern regarding all of these questions is if the thoughts and recommendations of the committee will be given weight and consideration. Sometimes the decision has been made, and a committee is formed and multiple meetings are held without real input. I just want to make sure the committee members are heard and their input is valued.
 - i. The point of the engagement and conversation is to ensure that committee members are heard and valued. The committee's thoughts and recommendations will absolutely be given weight and consideration, that's why we are here.
- e. How will MISD relay relative information to ALL of the stakeholders that live or work in the Summit Feeder Pattern's school of choice? Will the Executive Council and the MISD School Board agree with the plan that this 2nd committee ultimately comes up with? What is the new timeline to implement a school of choice?
 - i. As far as relaying information, we will be talking with the committee about how to collect the feedback. We want you with us, we have wanted everyone to be in the room face to face in small groups being able to build relationships and talk but we are currently managing in the midst of a pandemic—hence the delay in convening the group. We will be asking the committee to go to schools with us to collect feedback. We want you to hear it, see it, feel it. In addition, Dr. Scott & Mr. Williams will be meeting with all Summit Feeder pattern campus staff beginning tomorrow.
- f. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* The lack of communication has been challenging. What is the plan to communicate with parents that the plan was stopped? This was not communicated to families and it's confusing to parents.
 - i. We can address that immediately and let people know that we have set the reset button, we will share an update with Summit Feeder Pattern families to update them on where we are in the process.
- g. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* How will we be communicating in every language to our families in the Summit Feeder Pattern, which is very diverse?
 - i. Communications can partner with campus administrators to strengthen that communication and insure that it is occurring. This committee will also be meeting again, this information will be posted online and shared with the community.
- h. What timeframe will this be performed? How can it attract and retain the best and brightest staff with these demographics already frown upon?
 - i. The timeline will be established by the committee and the process that this group lays out. We will take the time needed to create the plan. As far as attracting staff, MISD is a destination district and a great place to live, learn and teach. We do have some of the best and brightest staff, we are a continuous improvement district and will continue to work on areas that we need to improve.
- i. *FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE COMMENTS:*
 - i. Not a question, a general comment. Our demographic is precious and valued.
 - ii. That last question and statement is frustrating. Other people do frown upon our feeder pattern because of our fantastic diversity.
- j. How or where will funding come to help achieve this?
 - i. That will be a part of the recommendations and a factor in the work that we do together

- k. *FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE COMMENT:* PTA and other campus involvement.... how does staff build relationships with parents? If we build relationships, people will be more available and more willing to
- l. Hopefully, we can get beyond the desires of a few to do what's best for the WHOLE district.
 - i. The district is currently focusing on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI). We are in the midst of an audit, looking at our blind spots about what's happening within our system. We've hired a Director of DEI to lead this work, with a scheduled presentation to the Board this month. DEI work will continue to bring our community together. We are not a perfect district but we are committed to the journey and the process to do great things for our students. We will make mistakes but the key aspect is that we are committed to working through the process together.
- m. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* It was relayed to TA Howard staff that student count will reduce in numbers in the upcoming years. How is that projected from all the apartment complexes that are zoned for TA Howard?
 - i. Demographer gives us a report and HR gives us a report on student trajectory. Most recent board reports show increase, followed by a decrease and increase again. Our district's highest grades for enrollment are 8-11th grade. The staffing model changes based on the age of children in the community. As was mentioned in a previous comment, some communities are aging out and no longer have young children. I don't know exactly what will happen over the next few years.
- n. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* Have we discussed the option of opening enrollment to students in all areas of Mansfield ISD? I've personally had conversations with parents looking to move to the district but are worried about diversity. Our feeder pattern is the most diverse. If low enrollment is an issue for elementary is open enrollment available for these campuses?
 - i. One of the ways that we can do that is our branded schools are open to other students around the district, if there is room. (Tarver Rendon is an example) Anyone in the district can request a transfer, that is a current option—there needs to be space at that campus and a solid reason. Schools/Programs of Choice create that "open" enrollment opportunity for students in the District.
 - ii. *Committee Follow Up Comment:* I'm not sure that a lot of the community is aware of that. If we need more elementary students and do not want to lose teachers, we need to make people aware of that.
- o. There is no climate of trust in South Arlington towards the MISD. That you think there is illustrates how out of touch you are.
 - i. Thank you for the feedback, that's what we're here to work through.
- p. Please take time to review all of the suggestions that the committee comes up with. Do not rush the plan (just to meet a date) for the school of choice as was presented at the Regular School Board Meeting in February 2020.
 - i. We are committed to spending whatever time that we need to in order to make this happen for students and parents of the Summit Feeder Pattern committee.
- q. I don't have any questions more so comments. It seems the areas of MISD with higher tax bases and more expansion gets the immediate remedies. While this Summit project continues to get delayed. It doesn't seem very enriched. Since parents in this area do not speak up the squeaky will gets the oil. How will it engage the parents & community?

- i. We'll need the committee's help and guidance on this topic.
- r. I hope that all sides or views concerns, questions, comments can be considered and prepared for before they can be asked by the stakeholders. It would show, in my opinion, that everything has been as thoroughly examined as possible.
 - i. All views will be considered. It's going to go beyond this room—we're going to visit campuses, you will go talk to your friends and family. As people get more comfortable, we may do a Facebook live. We're not going to rush the process; we will do everything we can to engage the community.
- s. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* It starts with the perception of schools in Summit Feeder Pattern. Perception is that they are bad and it's not. I think it starts with the board and works its way down. I hope that we stop referring to this part of our community to the northern schools—that needs to stop. School Board needs to stop saying that. We have great fine arts and things coming out of our community and we need to change the perception.
 - i. We are not using those titles anymore, if you look at the committee name, we are being more intentional about the names we use and the perception it may have.
- t. Creating division between the North side and other "sides" will create an already greater disparity between MISD students and staff. Students will not have the same access to resources and experiences as the other students who benefit from the unique experience of middle school. 5th and 6th grade students will not have the same experience as the students in other schools. Some students will get to go to intermediate- while the student across the street will have to stay in elementary.
 - i. We are actively changing this description. Grade configuration changes will not be happening.
- u. Will the committee shape the decision of the school of choice or has the decision already been made?
 - i. Yes, absolutely the committee will shape the decision, there has not been a decision made.
- v. Will ALL recommendations be considered or does the district already have a plan they wish to have approval on?
 - i. Yes, all recommendations will be considered. Ultimately, this committee will make a recommendation. There is no current plan.
- w. Closing CTIS is a non-starter. What's your Plan B? Because your plan A is unacceptable.
 - i. CTIS is not closing. Together we will be creating Plan B.
- x. How will the committee ensure that pursuing guiding statement #5 doesn't negatively affect guiding statement #4?
 - i. If this is a grade configuration related question, we will not be changing the grade configuration.
- y. Will the committee be presented with data and evidence about how the proposed changes will benefit student learning?
 - i. Yes. My assumption is that the committee will have lots of ideas and will have several areas that they want to look at. We'll do research and look at implications of those options.
- z. Is the committee going to be presented with school of choice options from the District, or will they be part of the process in creating the school of choice options?
 - i. The committee will lead that process and the district will serve as researchers and facilitators.

- aa. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* Has this info (CTIS staying open) been communicated to the teachers at CT and TA Howard?
 - i. We are committing to do a better job of the continuity of communication getting taken care of. Please help hold us accountable, send us suggestions. We will send written communication to the feeder pattern with an update (and meet with staff via campus meeting meetings and PDC)
- bb. Will there be a GT school for all of MISD in the SHS feeder pattern?
 - i. We don't know.
- cc. What parameters from the Executive Council and MISD School Board does our committee have to work within?
 - i. We don't have a set plan.
- dd. What is the goal of the school? How will It accept students? Test scores/application based etc. Will it be a school with a particular focus?
 - i. This will be cultivated as we create the new plan together.
- ee. How has it worked in other ISDs and what has been taken away from those experiences and molded into a more enriched environment for our ISD?
 - i. Historically we have gone out and found the best examples of things in other districts and spent time working with those districts to learn from their experiences. From there, we spent a year building the curriculum and developed a full plan. This occurred with Jerry Knight STEM, Early College High School, and Jandrucko.
- ff. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* Does the district have a plan to address the possible loss of students from the new for profit (Great Hearts) charter school?
 - i. One of the reasons we started looking beyond neighborhood schools was the passage and allowance of charter schools. Our greater threat is districts around us with open borders who openly market to our students. Part of the strategy is to provide students the best possible education. When you look at our ratings there is no question that we are offering high caliber education—this has not prevented parents from taking their students to other places. In response to that, we've created choices in our own district. We have no specific plan for Great Hearts—their plan is actually very similar to what was presented to our school board in Feb. 2020 (global liberal arts)
- gg. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* Other districts have open borders, when my son was at Carol Holt an entire class left to go to a charter school. Do we market our schools to charter schools?
 - i. We do market to students in our own district. We don't have access to charter school rosters. We do not take students who don't live in our boundaries.
- hh. *FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE COMMENTS:* Parents are only hearing negatives out in the community.
 - i. When you are talking with those parent and hearing negativity, where are is it coming from? Where are they hearing negative things?
 - ii. COMMITTEE COMMENTS- From the charter schools, other district parents and rumors.
- ii. *FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE COMMENTS:*
 - i. The reputation and rumors are out there. I love this community, I moved here for the education. Summit is the best school. The negative perception is in the community, community members (not associated with the schools) talk negatively about our schools.

- ii. I echo those sentiments, when we tried to move, our realtor pushed us to move to another place in the district.
 - iii. It's going to be a hard cycle to break, it's been around for years. I usually tell people, go speak to someone who went there.
 - iv. We need to advertise how awesome this district is to overcome the reputation problems
 - v. District Response: we need to do a better job of telling our story. We need the committee's help in that, we have to do it together. We do have students who are applying to come back into the district this year, that is also a positive sign for us.
 - jj. *FOLLOW UP QUESTION:* I have a 1st and 4th grader, I'd love to hear the good news from other schools in my feeder pattern. I'd love to hear the good things and I don't know about the good things unless I talk to other parents.
 - i. That's a great suggestion, thank you.
 - kk. How can the committee create a school of choice without restructuring the entire North Side? Add a school of choice without sacrificing the experiences of the North side students.
 - i. This will evolve as we work through the process together.
 - ll. The committee should have input and receive information about how facilities limitations will be solved regarding school of choice options.
 - i. Whatever choice and decision we have to make; we'll have to look at the capacity for the program. A lot of it may be determined by space, design, and function of the space.
 - mm. Please do not implement the previous school of choice that was presented at the Regular School Board Meeting in February 2020.
 - i. We are creating a new plan moving forward.
 - nn. How will this school deter the students who are unfocused or distractions?
 - i. We love all of our kids and are grateful to have them in our district. The purpose of the creation of schools of choice is to help students have an avenue to find the best fit for them.
 - oo. Creating a school of choice should not negatively impact every 5th and 6th grader in the North side.
 - i. We are not changing the grade structure; this will not happen.
- VII. **Committee Planning: Breakout Groups-** virtual participants split up into 5 breakout groups with a Principal facilitating each virtual group. In-person participants formed an additional breakout group. Each group was asked to answer the following to questions, take notes on all responses and report back their top responses to the whole group.
- a. What recommendations do you have about how we should involve the Summit High School Feeder pattern and broader community in the process?
 - b. What do you think the next steps in the process should be?
 - c. Breakout Group Responses:
 - i. **Group 1-**
 - 1. Report Out-
 - MISD needs to make a compelling case about why we need to make a school of choice
 - Seek input from our Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - Engage staff and get staff input

- Send out survey for parents to find out about what choice means to them and what do they want.

2. Notes-

- Campuses must tell their stories – what’s working well, highlighting students, staff, programs, etc.
- The district should make a compelling case for why we need a school of choice in this feeder pattern, as opposed to just enriching what’s already on our campuses.
- Involve teachers in the process; they have insight that other stakeholders do not.
- Seek input from Danyell Wells, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Survey parents to see what choices they want for Summit Feeder Pattern Schools
- Cantu/Communications should send out a video to Summit community so that everyone is aware that the original plan has been scrapped and the committee is working on a new plan with stakeholder input.

ii. **Group 2-**

1. Report Out-

- We want data and want research. How many students have applied for choice schools who have not been accepted? How many have been accepted and then go?
- The board should set aside money to be prepared for this
- Student and parent survey

2. Notes-

- Different parent from different schools
- Various languages
- More community information about what is going on in feeder pattern.
- Include information about committee in campus newsletters, website.
- Get information out to people who didn’t know about committee or about stopping the old plan
- Data in regard to how many kid are in our feeder pattern are applying to other schools of choice and getting in or rejected.
- Which school of choice is most sought out?
- Board needs to set aside money to prepare
- What programs are available? What are other districts doing? How many seats are available and how many apply and get in?
- Does the data show a strong need/desire?
- Does MISD have info about other districts, complications, how well it turned out? Is it needed? Desired?

- What back up designation needs that particular curriculum?
- Student survey- interest, what do they wish they had or didn't have? Include MS and HS.
- What's the plan for upper grades?
- Research curriculum needed and an articulation of college prep opportunities so that students have advantage and scholarship opportunities
- Heard the new plan to counter charter schools- "we are sitting ducks"

iii. Group 3-

1. Report Out-
 - Consistency in leadership, multiple principals in 15yrs
 - Create branded school
 - Showcase great things on the marquee
 - Points of Pride newsletters
2. Notes-
 - Consistency in Leadership- Teacher at Howard has taught there for 15 years and has had 7 principals.
 - Change perception of our feeder pattern.
 - Branded School
 - Fine Arts
 - Sports
 - Academic Focus
 - Points of Pride Newsletter
 - Social Media
 - Message played while you are put on-hold
 - Top 10 points of pride on a card to handout to parents

iv. Group 4-

1. Report Out-
 - Survey for families about benefits and perceived challenges, changes that they'd be open to
 - Transparency of data, need to communicate that a decision has not been made.
 - Small focus groups from families who have left
 - Survey about what program of choice would engage students the most. Medical field? STEM? Programs/options need to be available for both at younger and older age.
2. Notes-
 - Do a survey geared toward the benefits, perceived challenges, possible changes. Utilize online survey to compile data
 - Find out what kind of school the community want
 - Release data openly from the survey
 - Some feel the decision is made. Show the data so it is transparent

- Find out why families are choosing to go to charter schools. Possibly pull together smaller focus groups to find out this information- groups should be accessible to multiple languages
- What programs of choice would draw the most? Maybe something only on this side of town? Most valuable program that will draw families from other sides of town.
- School of choice needs to be focused toward medical field, technical industries, career-focused, STEM, something technical or college focused
- Don't want students to travel
- Neighborhood
- PTA's need to be very involved
- Involve students at middle and high school in the process
- Make sure that the community is aware
- 2-fold approach- need something for elementary and intermediate but also something at Summit
- Athletics & STEM together on this side of town
- Don't want to limit choice. If a student chooses STEM, don't limit access to other programs like athletics
- Need a program to be open for foreign language, like dual language
- Questions/Concerns:
 - Can we get a clear picture of what grade levels the school of choice would be?
 - Need to me more public about how great our feeder pattern is

v. Group 5-

1. Report Out-

- Newsletter high school down and elementary up (Mr. Taylor already sends a letter, share with lower grade schools)
- Meet with teachers and find their passion—maybe that can that fuel the direction of school of choice?
- Surveys for parents
- Additional meetings

2. Notes-

- Community and teachers were not aware that the first proposal was "scrapped" /paused
- Internal marketing is needed to promote Summit Feeder schools.
- Survey the community to see what "School of Choice" is wanted/if any.
- Survey the staff to see what they are passionate about before determining a "School of Choice".
- Include staff and community in all future meetings.
- Present the final proposal to committee and community before taking it to the school board.
- Summit HS newsletter should be sent out to feeder school principals so they can share information/news with their community.

vi. Group 6-**1. Report Out-**

- More community meetings and communication, utilize flyers
- Meet with HOA's and Faith Based Groups
- Share the good news through the feeder pattern—newsletter or alumni letter sharing the good news from all levels with the entire community

2. Notes-

- We really need to be out there. We have families who do not have internet and don't get the information that goes over internet. Emails, flyers, meetings at the schools—we have more people coming out. We need people seeing our leaders out there.
- Communication. Its needs to happen at a level of these schools knowing that CTIS isn't going to split, the grades won't change. Lost trust in February. Communication needs to be more transparent to rebuild trust.
- Teachers need to be communicating with parents
- Electronic flyers are not the way to reach families—we have families with no internet and no computer at home.
- Mailers to homes, use parent volunteers to drop off information-lean on PTA and council to support
- Summit is economically diverse and ethnically and religiously diverse. Reach out to churches, apartments and HOA's to help promote the district more.
- Feeder pattern communication to connect the community and share good news (Timberview does this)
- HOA annual meetings- please send a district rep (please send us the date for these)
- Focus on engaging apartment complexes
- Our job is to partner with the parents who have set expectations and assist students who haven't had that expectation set
- Survey community that might be able to raise ideas—online is not enough, we need paper copies, mailed home, in front offices
- We need people in front of us to talk about the feeder pattern—before you do that, you need to have some framework, if you go open ended it is too broad for the full community (develop a menu, pause, go out and share it)
- As we get feedback, it's important to identify where the feedback is coming from. If we only have a few campuses represented, we are missing schools
- We need your help in figuring out how to engage people who aren't here
- Committee needs to establish norms, what is the overall goal and objective? We need to know what it is our committee is trying to get to so that we can get information and disseminate appropriately. (Dr. Scott & Mr. Williams will bring back proposed norms for the group)

- Get input from staff, they know our kids and our needs. How are you engaging them and asking for their recommendations?

- VIII. **Next Steps:** Mr. Williams & Dr. Scott reviewed the committee's next steps
- a. Meeting minutes will be emailed to the committee and posted to the district website.
 - b. Summit Feeder Pattern campus staff meetings.
 - c. Additional committee meetings will be scheduled.
 - d. All suggestions will be thoroughly discussed and weighed by the committee.
 - e. Committee recommendations will be presented to the Board of Trustees.
 - f. District staff will review all calendars and send out the next meeting date

IX. **Meeting Adjourned**