

Enrollment and Capacity Management Advisory Committee (ECMAC)

2019-2020 Year-End Review Notes

Overview

The Enrollment and Capacity Management Advisory Committee (ECMAC) met 8 times during the 2019/2020 school year to continue to work on making observations and recommendations about enrollment and capacity related items. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred starting in March of 2020, the final two ECMAC meetings of the year did not occur. This resulted in the inability to collaboratively create a final Summary of Progress (SOP) for the work that occurred, as was done in previous years. Therefore, this document is intended to summarize the work that occurred during the year in lieu of a formal SOP.

Purpose

The purpose of the Enrollment and Capacity Management Advisory Committee (ECMAC) is to increase community trust in long-range planning for enrollment and building use. The ECMAC analyzes information affecting enrollment, capacity, and building use, and generate observations and recommendations to be communicated to district administration.

Guiding Principles

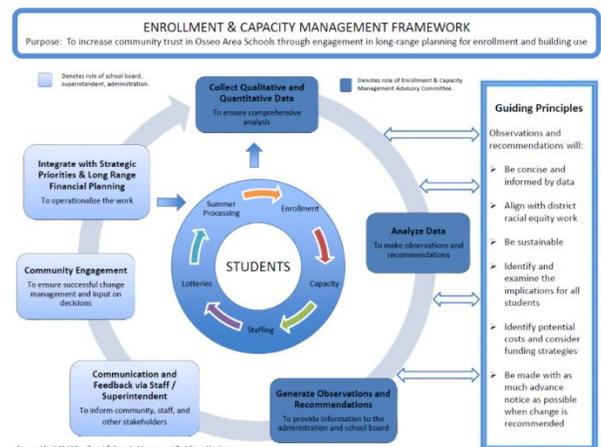
Observations and recommendations from ECMAC will:

- Be concise and informed by data
- Align with district racial equity work
- Be sustainable
- Identify and examine the implications for all students
- Identify potential costs and consider funding strategies
- Be made with as much advance notice as possible when change is recommended

ECMAC Background

With the intent of increasing transparency and communication between Osseo Area Schools and the communities it serves, a task force of parents, school district staff, and community members was assembled in 2015 to create a framework to identify, analyze, and communicate issues related to enrollment and facility management and use.

After an 18-month study of the elements that affect facility use, the task force recommended the district adopt the framework illustrated in the figure to the right.



Integral elements of the framework are:

(1) the establishment of an Enrollment and Capacity Management Advisory Committee (ECMAC) to study facility management and report observations and recommendations to administration, and (2) the creation of “Guiding Principles” upon which ECMAC would rely. The district adopted the framework in the spring of 2016 and the first ECMAC meeting was held on August 22, 2016.

In April 2019, ECMAC presented a final Summary of Progress report to Interim Superintendent Jim Bauck. This report included observations and recommendations that emerged from ECMAC’s third year of work to study enrollment management and building use. ECMAC made several recommendations related to enrollment and capacity, including the following elements:

- Have staff continue to determine and evaluate the impact and implications of the options that were identified to address over-capacity conditions at the elementary level
- Have staff research and design option(s) to address over-capacity conditions at the secondary level
- Have staff continue to work with the City of Maple Grove to better understand the timing of the future housing development in the NW area of the school district

As part of the comprehensive Integrated Facilities Planning Process that was developed by the district in the spring of 2019, ECMAC was charged with bringing forth observations and recommendations to address over-capacity conditions at buildings across the district by December of 2019.

ECMAC 2019/2020 Review

Throughout the 2019/2020 school year, ECMAC conducted eight meetings to meet the Integrated Facilities Planning Process deliverable timeline. The 19/20 year membership included 24 community members, 12 staff members, 2 school board members and an industry expert from Wold Architects (Appendix A).

Throughout the course of the meetings, extensive data analysis occurred. Elementary and secondary assumptions (Appendix B) were created by the district’s teaching and learning team in conjunction with building leadership. These assumptions were applied to each building to determine the overall capacity. In addition, based on school board direction at the August 13, 2019 work session, a standard calculation using “targeted class sizes,” which is the same method used in staffing allocation, was determined for all capacity calculations.

As part of its district-commissioned work to assess the district’s magnet school programming, Magnet Schools of America (MSA) also studied the feasibility of an option that had been

identified by ECMAC as a potential solution to over-capacity conditions at the elementary level. That option was to move the STEM program from Weaver Lake Elementary to Oak View Elementary, and make necessary boundary changes. In a presentation to ECMAC on September 23, 2019, as well as to the school board at the October 8, 2019 work session, MSA recommended leaving the highly successful STEM program at Weaver Lake Elementary and consider other options to address over-capacity conditions at specific elementary schools. As a result, the option to move the STEM program from Weaver Lake Elementary to Oak View Elementary was removed from consideration.

The data that ECMAC uses to determine which schools are over or under capacity is based on November 1st enrollment of each year. There are several sets of data that ECMAC reviews, including enrollment variance from year to year, enrollment variance from projections, enrollment versus capacity, and enrollment compared to the MDE recommendations for core space capacity (Appendix C). Through this data analysis, ECMAC and district staff developed options to be considered to address over-capacity conditions at identified schools.

As options were identified and reviewed by ECMAC, specific data was analyzed and observations were made. The data provided for each option included the potential number of families impacted, the estimated cost associated with each option, the construction and implementation timeline of each option, and the potential funding source (Appendix D).

ECMAC Observations

The data analysis process resulted in a number of observations and findings. At the elementary level, Rice Lake continued to be over capacity based on enrollment data from 19/20 and throughout the 5-year projection. While Basswood continued to be over capacity, the enrollment projection showed a decline and the school is predicted to be below capacity within the 5-year projection window. Garden City Elementary is currently below capacity and the projection has it slightly over capacity within 5 years, but not to the level that would require an immediate consideration of relief. Finally, Fernbrook Elementary is expected to be over capacity within the 5-year projection when the estimated new housing growth is factored in.

At the secondary level, Maple Grove Senior High is currently over capacity, and is projected to remain there throughout the 5-year projection. In addition, all three comprehensive senior high schools are projected to be over capacity for cafeteria space according to MDE recommendations. Park Center Senior High is projected to be over capacity for media space according the MDE recommendations.

As part of the data analysis process, ECMAC reviewed funding mechanisms for the various options they were considering. If an option were recommended that included an addition(s) at the

elementary level, either bond referendum proceeds or lease levy funding could be utilized. For the secondary solutions as well as building a new elementary school, a bond referendum would be required.

Along with the observations and findings, ECMAC had a number of questions and some feedback related to the options they were considering. A Q&A document was developed and distributed to ECMAC members at their December 9, 2019, meeting (Appendix E) for both elementary and secondary buildings. In addition, a number of questions surfaced that were outside the scope of the work of ECMAC, including concern about the base assumptions and how the unique needs of a building are addressed (specifically Garden City Elementary), what career/tech ed will look like in the future and how that may impact capacity, and how media center spaces will be used in buildings and how that might affect capacity. These concerns were forwarded on to working groups and district administrators that are working through some of those same questions.

ECMAC Recommendation for Building a Better Future

ECMAC considered four options to address over-capacity conditions at Rice Lake Elementary School and Fernbrook Elementary (Appendix F). They also considered one option to address over-capacity conditions at the three comprehensive high schools (Appendix G). For each option considered, ECMAC members made observations about what they liked about the option, what were the drawbacks/challenges, how the community might respond to the option, how the option aligned with ECMAC's guiding principles, and what alterations they would recommend to strengthen the option. These comprehensive observations for the elementary and secondary options are included in Appendix G.

After observations were complete, ECMAC used the December 9, 2019, meeting to determine recommendations that would move forward to the Oversight Task Force for further consideration. Group members unanimously eliminated two elementary options (Oak View Addition and Weaver Lake Addition) and were split with support for the Rice Lake Addition option and the New Elementary option. The group also unanimously supported recommending the Secondary Option.

The group that supported the Rice Lake Addition option was asked to compile answers to the following questions: why they chose this option, what will make it successful, what are the positive and negative implications, and what are considerations that should be suggested to the Oversight Task Force. The same request was made of the group that supported the New Elementary Option. The results of this work is indicated in Appendix H. The group then came back together and collectively worked through each question. There was constructive dialogue around both options, and ultimately neither group was swayed to the other option. At the

conclusion of the meeting, ECMAC unanimously supported moving both elementary options (Rice Lake Addition and New Elementary) to the Oversight Task Force for further consideration.

ECMAC's findings and recommendations to address over-capacity conditions in the district were presented to Superintendent Cory McIntyre and the school board at a work session on January 14, 2020. Additionally, the information was provided to the Oversight Task Force as part of the Building a Better Future process to determine comprehensive facility needs and recommendations to address those elements.

January 21, 2020 ECMAC Meeting

Once the observations and recommendations were made to address over-capacity conditions in the school district, ECMAC spent its final meeting of the year hearing from our student services and community education leadership teams about the facility challenges they face, as well as making observations related to under-capacity conditions at schools in the district. While there was concern expressed about schools that were more than 10% under-capacity, there was not consensus with the group on whether any recommendations should be made to address those situations.

COVID-19 Related Cancellations and Impact

After the January 21 meeting, ECMAC had two remaining meetings left for the 2019/2020 year scheduled for March 23 and April 13. Typically, these two meetings would be spent assembling and reviewing the year-end Summary of Progress report. Because of the pandemic, the school district shifted to a distance learning format for the remainder of the 2019/2020 school year, which precipitated the cancellation of the remaining ECMAC meetings. This year-end review is designed to replace the SOP for the 2019/2020 work for one year only. The traditional SOP will resume to summarize the work of the 2020/2021 ECMAC.