School Capacity & Utilization Task Force

Meeting Minutes # 1
September 30, 2025, 5-7 p.m.
Kessler Center – 1501 39th AVE SW Puyallup, WA 98373

Members:
Present: Sari Burnett, Lauralee Chamberlain, Ed Crow, Brian Devereux, MacKenzie Fortune, Maricella Gonzalez, David Ham, Chris Harris, Bob Horton, Julie Hunter, John Huson, Glenn Imke, Michele Jangula, Mark Knight, Daniel Martinez, Rae McNally, Karen Mool, Dr. Vincent Pecchia, Joel Peterson, Kinsey Pitsinger, Meagan Rakoci-McDonald, Quavion Swazer, Victoria Treffry, Rebecca Williams, Bailey Bach, Hien Vo,

Absent: Cari Ake, LaShawnda Baldwin, Sarah Gillispie, Nicole Helgeson, Brady Martin, Julie Moore

Welcome/Introductions:

Brian Devereux, Director of Facilities Planning, welcomed the task force members. Brian reviewed the 2025-26 membership, including invited participants from Waller Road and Spinning Elementary.

Goals for the Meeting:

Brian reviewed the goals for tonight's meeting with the taskforce. Below are the goals that were presented:

- **Understand** why the School Capacity & Utilization Task Force has been asked to study and report to the board on the potential closure of Waller Road and Spinning Elementary schools.
- **Be Able to Communicate** what step(s) would be required for the district to close a school in the future.
- At the end of the meeting, **Provide Feedback** to help guide this work forward.

Why is the Task Force Needed?

Brian summarized a list of factors leading to the origin of the taskforce.

- Lack of funding for major capital projects.
- Overcrowding at existing schools.
- Significant growth projected in certain regions within the next five years and beyond.
- Building condition challenges.

There are currently 200+ portable classrooms in our school district. The district's long-range facilities planning aims to minimize the use of portables. This year our district has seen 2% year-to-year increase in enrollment, a larger increase than projected. We have not seen this level of enrollment growth since 2014-15.

Review SCUT Charter, Standing Recommendations and 2025-26 Work Schedule

Brian reviewed the SCUT charter with the group. Below is the re-commissioned Charter from the Board:

> The School Capacity and Utilization Task Force is re-commissioned by the Board of Directors to provide continuous review and planning to make the most efficient use of existing sites and maximize educational opportunities for all students. It will consider updates to enrollment, demographics trends, and utilization and capacity of schools to main and update recommendations to the Board.

Brian went over the road map for the task force this year. Below is the Roadmap for the taskforce:

- September 30 – 2025-2056 Work Schedule, Introduction of Spinning & Waller Road
- October 14 – Spinning & Waller Road
- October 28 – Spinning & Waller Road
- November 13 – Spinning & Waller Road
- December 2 – Finalize Study
- December 12 – School Board Study Session

The meeting on December 2nd will be the task force's last meeting as December 12th will be the presentation of the report to the board.

Recommendations from Previous Taskforce

Brian reviewed the current 24-25 SCUT recommendations approved by the school board last March. Below are the site-specific recommendations:

- Northwood Elementary – Table recommendation to relocate QUEST to Mt. View with the option to relocate TK at Mt. View to Northwood for 2025-2026. SCUT to revisit recommendation in future updates.
- Glacier View Junior High – Commission a boundary review committee in 2026-2027 to recommend a boundary change between Glacier View Junior High and Ferrucci Junior High for implementation in 2027-2028.
- Emerald Ridge High School - Convert Project Areas to classrooms as early as 2026-2027.

- Rogers High School – Add up to three portables classrooms for the 2025-2026 school year. (At the time of this meeting this project was completed.)

The waiver management watch list was reviewed as well. Below are the current schools on the watch list:

- Dessie Evans Elementary
- Edgerton Elementary
- Woodland Elementary
- Pope Elementary
- Sunrise Elementary
- Glacier View Junior High
- Kalles Junior High
- Emerald Ridge High School
- Puyallup High School
- Rogers High School

Brian also reviewed the general recommendation approved by the school board last spring.

General Recommendation Update:

> If the proposed April 2025 Bond does not pass, the School Capacity and Utilization Task Force will assess the potential impact of closing Spinning Elementary and Waller Road Elementary. A report to the Superintendent, including an alternative housing plan for students residing within the attendance areas of these schools, will be presented by January 2026. The task force meeting schedule may be adjusted to accommodate this expanded scope of work.

Brian reviewed Board Policy 6883 – Closure of Facilities. Brian highlighted that additional steps would need to be taken, beyond the work of SCUT, before the school board could consider closing a school. Specifically, he highlighted the following components included in the policy:

- We will not **conduct or host board hearings** related to the possible closure of a school.
- We will not **issue public notices** in newspapers regarding board hearings.
- We will not **collect or manage public testimony** or comments from community members.
- **We will not make a decision or recommendation to close a school.**

Brian noted that the district's last closing of a school was back in 2010 with Hilltop Elementary and highlighted the full action taken to comply with Board Policy 6883. Brian reiterated that this is not a

responsibility for the taskforce to decide/recommend a closure. The work for the task force includes providing an alternative housing feasibility report to the school board.

Team Building Activity

A team building activity provided members and participants to share basic introductions and goals/gains team members wanted from this task force. Dr Vincent Pecchia started off the exercise. A general sentiment mentioned from a few goals/gains shared were that we as a taskforce do not solely focus on students but make sure to account for other factors like parents, staff, and educators.

Introduction of Feasibility Study of Spinning and Waller Road Elementary

Brian asked Waller Road Principal John Huson and Spinning Elementary Principal Sari Burnett to share information about their school and its community to help provide a better identify of each community for task force members.

Principal Huson spoke first about the surrounding area of Waller Road Elementary. The area is considered The Summit/Waller area. The surrounding area is full of big plots of land that cannot be broken down into smaller plots which is unique to the area. This leads to a lot of farmland. Waller Road is also one of the only schools on the Puyallup Tribe's reservation, as well as bordering three other school districts. This school first began as a one-room schoolhouse, first named Woodrow School. Then in 1936 was when it was first built as an actual school building. The last time a big remodel was done for Waller Road was back in 1985, for its big modernization remodel. He also added that Waller Road is a mostly brick building.

Principal Burnett spoke first on the surrounding area and demographics unique to the area. The surrounding area is a combination of rentals and older homes. However, a lot of these rentals are kept amongst families, so it leads to multiple generations living in the same rental. This school was built in 1891, one year after Puyallup High School was built, this makes Spinning one of the oldest elementary schools in the district. The last time a big remodel was done for Spinning was also back in 1985 for its modernization as well. Principal Sari also added that they are considered an all-walking school, besides for a select few areas in their boundaries that need transportation.

Both principals emphasized that their schools are connected deeply to their communities as they will have many parents and students talk about how a previous family member attended their schools.

Brian had the group review the definition of Feasibility Study definition. Below is the definition:

- Per Oxford University Press, the term feasibility study is defined as "an assessment of the practicality of a proposed plan or method."

Projected Enrollments

Brian next reviewed the projected enrollment and actual enrollment numbers with the task force.

Spinning's Projected Enrollment:

- 4-Year Projected High Enrollment – 320 students
- Capacity with portables – 392 students
- Available Capacity – 71 students
- Actual Enrollment as of 9/26/2025 – 318 students

Per the projections for the school year of 2025-2026 we are meeting the projected numbers.

Waller Road's Projected Enrollment:

- 4-Year Projected High Enrollment – 329 students
- Capacity with portables – 414 students
- Available Capacity – 85
- Actual Enrollment as of 9/26/2025 – 309 students

Per the projections for the school year 2025-2026 Waller Road is 20 students under projection.

Election History

Brian reviewed a table with the election history of both bonds and levies with the task force. Both Spinning and Waller Road have been put on bond packages in past elections but unfortunately none of those bonds were passed.

Below are the various years and attempts of bonds with Spinning and/or Waller Road:

- February 2007 – Spinning – Failed to pass.
- May 2007 – Spinning – Failed to pass.
- March 2009 – Spinning and Waller Road – Failed to pass.
- February 2025 – Spinning and Waller Road – Failed to pass.
- April 2025 – Spinning and Waller Road – Failed to pass.

Brian then reviewed the building scores for both Spinning and Waller Road with the task force.

- Spinning has a low/poor building score of 40*.
- Waller Road has a low/poor building score of 40*.

2024 Capital Levy Projects

The 2024 Capital Levy will fund 906 projects from $175 million over a six-year period beginning in 2025. At the time of the levy election, there was $330 million of levy project need, so the $175M represents the most critical projects from the overall list.

The 2024 Capital Levy will fund an estimated $3.12million for 20 various projects and upgrades at Spinning. An estimated $4.7million will fund 23 various projects and upgrades at Waller Road

Brian emphasized to the group that these projects at Spinning and Waller Road will continue over the next six years regardless of the SCUTs alternative housing feasibility study for these two schools.

Neighborhood Tracts

Brian reviewed a map showcasing the various neighborhoods and areas that comprise the Puyallup School District.

- 237 unique geographies that divide the 54 square miles of the district.
- “Resident” K-12 student population of 50-150
- Boundary Planning can be considered the reassignment of tracts.

Quest Program

Unlike Waller Road, Spinning is host school for QUEST, the district’s highly capable program for 3rd-6th grade students. Currently, Spinning has 62 students in the Quest Program.

PSD schools with the Quest Program in 25-26.

- Shaw Road Elementary
- Spinning
- Sunrise
- Pope
- Woodland
- Brouillett
- Northwood

Board Policy 3130 – District Attendance Areas

Brian reviewed Board Policy 3130 – District Attendance Area – with the task force.

Below is the Factors to be considered when the district develops attendance area boundaries:

- Minimizing disruption of students' established learning programs.
- Maintaining established neighborhood groupings.
- Ensuring the stability of the feeder school concept as much as possible.
- Coordinating transportation routes with attendance areas.
- Geographical features of the area.
- Safety in transportation.
- Walking Conditions.
- Racial/Ethnic/Gender balance.
- Socio-Economic balance.
- Sufficient lead time to ensure effective implementation.

Table Exercise and Guiding Questions

Once the above information was shared the task force was given maps of both schools and the district with all school buildings listed to conduct a table exercise to help facilitate some response for the guiding questions.

The Guiding Questions:

- How would closing Spinning or Waller Road Elementary affect student placement, school capacity, and the overall learning experience – including class sizes, access to programs, etc.?
- Would closing either school improve or reduce equitable access to quality learning environments and resources? How might this decision affect families, neighborhoods, and community relationships?

Closing

Due to the table exercise running right up until the end of the meeting, Brian simply thanked the members for coming and reminded them about the next meeting's date. Written responses from the table exercise were collected and will be shared in a future meeting. Brian also reminded members to submit comments and questions through the QR "parking lot".

Next Meeting:

2025-2026 SCUT Meeting #2
Tuesday, October 14, 2025
Karshner Museum and Center for the Arts
309 4th ST NE,
Puyallup, WA 98372

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.