

Focus Group Summary

March 23, 2026

Agenda

- 1. Introduction and Purpose**
- 2. Setting the Stage**
- 3. Focus Group Summary**
- 4. Next Steps**
 - Community wide input - April
 - Board follow-up

Introduction and Purpose

Purpose and Process

Provide direction to the administration for redistricting of high school student population by the 2027/28 school year.

1. Direction will be provided in the form of criteria
2. The criteria will be generated based on factors in Board Policy 5120
3. Initial draft considerations were tested with community via focus groups and survey
4. The input will be used to refine the criteria by the Board.
5. The Superintendent will implement a redistricting plan that is informed by the criteria

The goal is to get 2000 students at each high school for the 2027-2028 school year

Setting the Stage

The realities...

- Central Ohio continues to be—and is anticipated to continue to be—a dynamic, growing place
- Dublin is—and is anticipated to continue to be—a "community of choice"
- Dublin City Schools is a key driver of the community's desirability
- The city's development pattern—over time—creates the conditions that drive needs for re-districting to balance enrollment
- When it comes to addressing population growth school policy follows/reacts to multiple local governments.
- Tough—and likely unpopular—decisions are very difficult to avoid

Board Policy 5120

- The Superintendent assigns students to schools within this District consistent with the best interests of students and/or the best use of the resources of this District, as set forth in this Policy.
- The Superintendent shall determine annually the school attendance areas of the District and shall assign students to the proper schools and grades.
- The Superintendent shall periodically review existing attendance areas and make such changes as may be justified by:
 - a. student enrollment and building capacity
 - b. considerations of safe student transportation and travel
 - c. convenience of access to schools
 - d. financial and administrative efficiency
 - e. the effectiveness of the instructional program
 - f. other relevant factors, including those required by law.

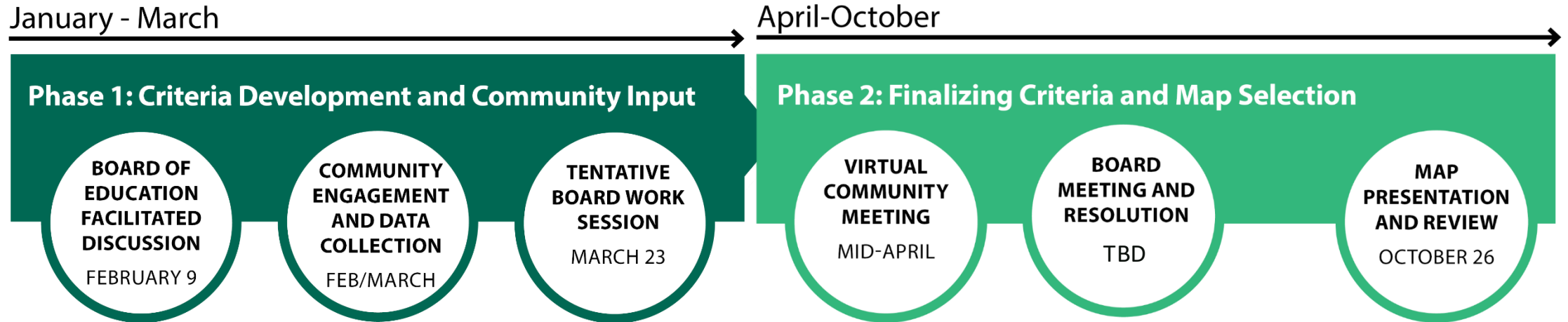
Legal Considerations

The following may not be used in the districting process:

- Race
- Color
- National origin
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Special education (the district must provide a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities)
- Immigration status
- Sex

Process Overview

Process



Focus Group Summary

Focus Groups Meetings (over 150 people participated)

1. Business Advisory Council
2. Senior Advisory Council
3. Key Communicators
4. High School Guidance Counselors
5. Community Partners
6. High School Principals and Athletic Directors
7. Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SSAC)
8. DCS Leadership Staff
9. Student Services and Teaching and Learning Coordinators
10. Emerald Campus Academy Staff
11. High School and Middle School Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council (STAC)
12. PTO Presidents
13. Feeder Parents to Coffman High School
14. Feeder Parents to Scioto High School
15. Feeder Parents to Jerome High School
16. Community Members (no parents)
17. DCS Department Heads
18. EL Families (with translation)
19. Community Cross-section Representatives 1
20. Community Cross-section Representatives 2
21. Community Cross-section Representatives 3
22. Community Cross-section Representatives 4
23. Community Cross-section Representatives 5
24. Community Cross-section Representatives 6

Agenda for focus group meetings

1. Background
2. Considerations
3. Feedback
 - a. Choices
 - b. Prioritize
4. Conclusion and Next Steps

Facilitation of focus groups

1. Five considerations, presented as choices (A or B)
2. Previewed the considerations
3. Unpacked and answered questions for each consideration
4. Received feedback on each consideration
 1. Choices
 2. Additional comments for each choice
5. Prioritization
 1. Most important, what best positions district for continued success
 2. Least important

1. Considerations

A. Impact fewer students now

- Will affect a minimal number of students now
- Will need to redistrict sooner (in 5 years?)

OR

B. Account for future growth now*

- Use higher range projections and the farthest year projected
- Jerome would operate at a lower enrollment initially to accommodate the future growth
- Will affect more students now
- Minimizes the need for future redistricting

**costs are minimal, but this indicates the lower cost option*

2. Considerations

A. Allow grandfathering in over time

- Kids who are already in a high school at the end of 26/27 school year would have a choice whether to move to newly assigned school or stay at current one.
- Puts extra strain on the administration and staff

OR

B. Move students at one time*

- All kids would move for the start of the 27/28 school year including incoming freshman, sophomore and juniors (seniors would stay).
- More efficient for administration and staff

**costs are minimal, but this indicates the lower cost option*

3. Considerations

A. Spread impacts out (more comprehensive, look at all boundaries)

- Affect all schools in the move
- Could potentially affect more kids overall

OR

B. Impact fewer students overall (be more surgical)

- Move kids where the growth is happening (to where there is capacity)
- Impacts fewer students overall

4. Considerations

A. Keep current feeder patterns together (keep current middle school boundaries)

- Keep current feeder patterns the same
- Restricts options

OR

B. Make changes to create better flow for high school

- Spot redistricting at the middle school level to achieve better flow for new high school boundaries
- More flexibility

5. Considerations

Proximity: Because the school buildings are where they are, not everyone can attend the school closest to their home. How should proximity to a school be defined? (Choose one)

- a. A radius drawn around a school building
- b. Driving time to a school (travel time)
- c. Distance/mileage to a school
- d. Other (please use worksheet to share)

Choices Feedback

Considerations	
1. Account for future growth now: 81%	Impact fewer students now: 19%
2. Allow grandfathering in over time: 62%	Move students at one time: 38%
3. Spread impacts evenly (more comprehensive): 52%	Impact less students overall (more surgical): 48%
4. Make changes to create better flow for high schools: 83%	Keep current feeder patterns together: 17%

5. How should proximity to a school building be defined?

Drive Time (travel time): 44%

Distance/Mileage: 23%

Other: 20%

Radius: 13%

Qualitative Feedback: Why?

Consideration 1

Account for Future Growth (81%):

- Desire to avoid repeating this process in five years
- Described redistricting as an emotionally exhausting and costly process
- Provides time for families to settle into the new redistricting without an impending change
- Past short-term fixes were perceived as ineffective

Impact Fewer Students Now (19%):

- Lack of confidence in the accuracy of long-term projections
- Fatigue from prior redistricting cycles
- Desire to reduce harm to students previously affected (by the most recent middle school redistricting)
- Potential/question of need for a fourth high school in the near future

Qualitative Feedback: Why?

Consideration 2

Grandfathering (62%):

- Concern for student mental health and social-emotional well-being
- Redistricting disrupts students' academic and extracurricular plans (i.e., working towards a leadership position)
- Gives families a sense of control and reduces backlash
- Grandfathering has been promised before, and there is expectation that it would be honored again
- There is an understanding that transportation may not be provided in this scenario

Move at One Time (38%):

- Reduces strain on administrative resources
- Creates a clean transition for everyone, "ripping off the band-aid"
- Ensures the benefits of redistricting (less overcrowding) are more immediately experienced
- Grandfathering can create complications for families with siblings in different high schools

Qualitative Feedback: Why?

Consideration 3

Spread Impacts Evenly – more comprehensive (52%)

- Believe a comprehensive approach would produce better, longer-lasting boundaries
- Ensure students are going to the closest, most logical school possible
- Would help all three schools share the burden of redistricting
- “One Dublin”

Impact Less Students Overall – more surgical (48%):

- Belief that since the growth is in Jerome, Jerome should be impacted
- Frustrations toward moving students in areas unimpacted by growth (Central Dublin/Coffman)
- The surgical move is considered simpler and more cost-effective
- Many Northeast neighborhoods are equally close to Jerome and Scioto, suggestion for breaking up larger neighborhoods (such as Muirfield)

Qualitative Feedback: Why?

Consideration 4

Make Changes (83%):

- Pre-existing frustrations with the current middle school feeder patterns
- Desire for cohorts to be kept together for K-12 as much as possible
- For high school redistricting to be effective, middle (and potentially elementary school) should also be evaluated

Keep Feeder Patterns (17%):

- Middle school was redistricted very recently, and some expressed a desire not to have to redo it so soon and potentially create additional conflict
- Students who were affected by prior middle school redistricting should not be “punished” again

Qualitative Feedback

Consideration 5

Driving Time to a School (travel time) (44%):

- Consideration of walk/bike time should be prioritized
- Dublin's geography makes mileage misleading due to infrastructure (crossing the river, I-270, roundabouts) and traffic
- Drive time is how families think about their commutes, not mileage
- Shorter drive times help ensure student driver safety

Distance/Mileage to a School (23%):

- Mileage is considered the most objective or "fair" metric
- Mileage is less variable than drive time

Qualitative Feedback

Consideration 5 (continued)

Other (20%):

- A combination of all three metrics may be more practical than any single one
- Desire for safety to be the primary consideration over all other measures (high traffic areas, roundabouts, etc.)
- Ensure that students who walk/bike to school can still do so
- Natural boundaries and infrastructure should be accounted for (bridge, neighborhoods, etc.)

Radius Drawn Around a School Building (13%):

- Radius proximity seems to be most intuitive
- Helps reinforce neighborhood connections

Prioritize

- **What consideration best positions district for future success (most important)?**
 - **Plan for future growth: 52%**
- **What consideration is least important to continued district success?**
 - **Keep feeder patterns the same: 29%**

Thank you