

Missoula County Public School District  
Elementary Boundary Study  
Advisory Committee Meeting #5  
May 2, 2019

Meeting Notes

Meeting purpose: Finalize advisory Committee recommendation to the Board of Trustees

1. Bus Tour

Members of the Committee who participated in the bus tour of proposed change areas on Monday, April 29, shared what they learned on the bus tour. These included:

- Better understanding of the topographical features that formed some change area boundaries
- Better understanding of hills and trails, sidewalks (or lack of) for bike/walk
- A first-hand view of new subdivisions, and ground-clearing for more in the southern portion of Jeannette Rankin and potential for more in Charlo area
- Differences in Russell Street North and South putting into perspective comments about safety of crossings

2. Review and Discussion of Comments Received since Open House #4

Anne Cossitt reported that 66 pages of comments had been received at the open house and a couple of dozen comments sent via email. The most recent round of the social pinpoint map had 617 visits from 530 unique users and a total of 35 comments. Since the beginning of the project, 1,625 individuals visited the site a total of 2,081 times and left 247 comments.

Cossitt initiated the discussion by asking Committee members to share their reflections on comments that could affect their approach to changes in the map boundary.

These included:

- Safety of street crossings
- Area 8 and Briggs Street cul-de-sac – consider a western boundary of Change Area 8 at the end of the cul-de-sac
- Middle School – this was not a criteria for selection, but comments indicate concerns about students who will be attending a different middle school as a result of a boundary change – somehow this should be considered
- All the comments received about Change Area 22

Anne Cossitt then reviewed the map presented at Open House #4 with site-specific comments that had been received.

- Change Area #23 – Shaver Dr and concern about safety of bus stop on Miller Creek Road.
- Change Area 26: Rimel Road does not currently connect to Hillview Way. Only two students from this area now. This area has potential for development and is zoned for mixed densities, with about half as multi-

family. Cossitt indicated that this area could be identified as a “future change area” to be included if/when Rimel Road connects to Hillview.

- Change Area 8: Traffic lights at Reserve and Dore and pedestrian crossing at Paxson. Cossitt showed on a map how the Paxson crossing connects to an undeveloped park with informal trail that extends and neighborhood streets to near Russell school.
- Change Area 22: Cossitt showed a map of the city’s growth policy in this area for high density residential spanning across much of the current Franklin area and north of Stephens Avenue, similar to Change Area 22. Also shown: a page from the EIS with a map and schematics showing the Milwaukee Trail/Russell crossing (now built) and another for Bitterroot Trail/Knowles/Lowell (to be built). Master planning is underway for Russell from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Mount to include retail/commercial nodes, 2-3 story residential buildings up to the sidewalk (not set back). Cossitt suggested that bike/walk connections along the Riverfront Trail from the area north of 3<sup>rd</sup> in Change Area 22 made a potential case for retaining that north area in the current Paxson boundary.
- Change Area 24: Comments on this area indicated the bus from the eastern portion of Rattlesnake goes right by this area to take kids to Rattlesnake, so why would they go to Lowell. Also if MT Jumbo is started again, it would be closest for kids in this area to attend there.

### 3. Final Recommendations

Cossitt suggested the Committee consider change to the map and also separate recommendations for topics such as grandfathering, Mt. Jumbo, middle-high school.

Mark Thane then led discussion and shared his thoughts.

He started by charting out classroom sizes for individual grades. Each school is designed for 496 students. Because classroom size varies by grade it is possible to have fewer than 496 students at a school, and still be over capacity in one or more grades. Consequently, the target of 350-450 students per school was established.

Grade	# students per classroom	#classrooms	Total students
K	20	4	80
1	20	4	80
2	20	4	80
3	28	3	84
4	28	3	84
5	30	3	90
TOTAL		21	496

Mark then shared some of his ideas regarding the boundary changes on a new map entitled “UPDATED ADVISORY COMMITTEE BOUNDARY OPTION RECOMMENDATION.”

The committee discussed the south end of the district, where the issue of overcrowding is immediate and significant. There are nearly 600 children living in Jeanette Rankin and room for only 500. Mark Thane also discussed the growth in the south end of the district and suggested that if growth were to continue at anticipated rates, eventually another school would be needed near that growth.

The discussion then moved to the current overcrowding at Lewis and Clark. The enrollment in Lewis and Clark is forecast to stay near the current levels of 518 in-boundary students, and to lower to 499 in 10 years.

The committee discussed their concerns with Change Area #22, particularly issues with Russell Street crossing, change in middle school, and effects on students who had the Spanish Immersion at Paxson. There was general agreement that this area more than any other was significantly affected by a change from Washington middle school to CS Porter.

The committee discussed Change Area #24, and agreed that it would be a huge shift for those students from a middle school perspective, from Washington to CS Porter. Rattlesnake is projected to see a decline in enrollment over the next 10 years, but if it were to grow Mt. Jumbo could be re-opened.

The committee considered making change Area #14 smaller so that a shift from Paxson would not be needed. They also discussed how small the Franklin area is and Mark provided some background on that and suggested the Franklin area should be expanded.

#### Public Comment

A member of the audience asked for the opportunity to speak before the Committee made their recommendation.

Andrew Drobeck explained how Area 27 split the neighborhood and described the topography in more detail. He also pointed out that the entire area includes only 15 students over the 10 year period, not enough to make a major impact on Lewis and Clark overcrowding. Trisha Drobeck also spoke to issues of neighborhood cohesiveness and the barrier of the hill down to Hillview Way.

Cindy Lunn, from the Riverfront Area in Change Area 22, explained how the Riverfront Trail system really connected their neighborhood to Paxson with safe trails and neighborhood streets.

#### Committee Recommendation

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board of Trustees the following changes to the “Updated Advisory Committee Boundary Option Recommendation”:

- Change Areas 23, 28 and 29 should advance to the Board of Trustees.
- Change Area 26 should be included on the map, but labeled as “Future Change Area.”

- Change Area 27 is to be deleted.
- Change Area 14 to stay on the map with a provision that some version of Change Area 22 must shift to Paxson. The Committee could not find agreement on the final area of Change Area 22.
- Change Area 24 is to be deleted.

The Committee also agreed to forward their recommendations, agreed to at their previous meeting, regarding grandfathering and Mt. Jumbo.