

MEETING RECORD

DATE March 4, 2019

PROJECT NAME/NO: MCPS Boundary Line Study/120508

SUBJECT: Open House #2

BY: Anne Cossitt

Wall Comments:

- Consider reopening Mount Jumbo in this process.
- If Franklin's boundary changes, Paxson students could come into Franklin.
- Lewis and Clark vs. Russell: Existing boundary versus what may be possible; add lower income apartment complex to Lewis and Clark do not put burden on Russell.
- Socioeconomics, racial diversity, and other demographics are also important.
- If Jeannette Rankin is forecasted to be over capacity and that neighborhood is projected to develop more, why not utilize the old Cold Springs?
- Based on current/projected demographic trends please consider keeping Rattlesnake Elementary as it is. Thank you!
- New Missoulain (out district parent), previous location children were in Spanish immersion program. Super happy to be able to enroll kids into Paxson for Spanish immersion. Will children still be able to go?
- Consolidate special needs resources centrally in one or two centrally located schools and bus children there.
- Please prioritize school districts that include neighborhoods that can walk/bike to school. This will help emphasize non-motorized forms of transportation. Neighborhood feel, safe routes to schools.
- Misconceptions of schools -> all same curriculum.
- Rattlesnake is at its peak and set to decrease. Please leave it alone. Then reopen Mt. Jumbo when population is sustainable.
- For my family, we have chosen to apply to go to a school outside of our boundary because of the language program offered. We appreciate this opportunity and would like it to continue to be an option for both our children as they progress through the district.
- Paxson, if boundaries change how can more schools have comparable programs to offer? Ex: Spanish immersion
- Why not look at micro changes at some schools?
- What about considering K-8 schools?
- Transportation, please consider bike commuting to schools as a factor.
- Community: please be aware of keeping together student and community relationships.

- Will current students be grandfathered into the same school if the boundaries change before they finish?
- I would love to see Mt. Jumbo reopen. East Missoula should not go to Lowell. Stop consolidating poorer neighborhoods! How much do projections take into reconstruction? How do we reach out to the quieter voices (those concerned with the basic food, rent, clothes)?
- Can we increase Spanish immersions within the schools?
- Will demographic predictions change in two years?
- Why do this now, why not wait until 2020 census data comes out? (cost and accuracy)
- What is this going to do to my home's property value?
- Will siblings be grandfathered in?
- Miller Creek Road kids already being bussed. Use Miller Creek as a boundary.
- Dividing Rattlesnake into upper and lower and sending lower to Lowell will further decrease neighborhood cohesiveness.

General Comment:

- I think that it's very important to consider geographic distance when redrawing boundaries. Kids should go to the school they are closest to. Also consider biking/walking routes as well as driving.
- I feel that students who have started at a school should have the opportunity to stay at their school of origin.
- Can't prohibiting out of district attendance for some of the schools fix the attendance problem (for example for Paxson) without the need to redraw the boundaries?
- What is the plan for middle schools? If boundaries are shifted for elementary schools, are the middle school boundaries a foregone conclusion? If so, this argue for redistricting across the board all at once to account for the consequences at all levels.
- How will the elementary school boundaries affect the middle school and high school boundaries?
- How will elementary school redistricting influence middle and high schools?
- Can we create interesting programs at schools with low enrollment to attract students to those schools? Given Paxson allows 1/6 to 1/7th of their students from out of district. Will redistricting help the capacity issue? They will always be at capacity.
- The response to the Missoula Homeowner's property values implies that we don't currently have neighborhood schools.
- What goes into projections? How ... (illegible) we use as we move from 5-10 years by neighborhood?
- Out of district students -> how to approach these decisions. Redistricting do seem to be needed for some districts like Rankin... (These are two separate decisions and need to be discussed separately.)
- Given the projections of increases for five years then declines (for all but one school). If you grandfather students and siblings in to the schools -> Does this make sense? To do this for such a big change?
- Create special programs (like Spanish or sustainability) that occur at some schools for those under-enrolled to increase out of district transfers.
- During this transition, students who have already transferred out should be allowed to matriculate through their transfer school without the need for yearly renewal.

- Grandfathering current students and siblings is a large concern for our family.
- We bought our house so that our kids could walk to elementary and middle school. By changing the Lewis and Clark boundary to put us in Russell this will affect going to Washington Middle School and we cannot walk to Meadow Hill.
- I don't think you can make decisions that affect people's property values. The data is not that convincing that changes need to be made that effect people's assets.
- Concern that if any Lewis and Clark area shifts to Russell, middle school students who can presently walk to Washington will be reassigned to Meadow Hill.
- We live in the mid-Rattlesnake near a walk to school route. Living near the school in such a kid-friendly.

Open House Questions Form:

The Open House had questions for attendees to answer. They are listed below, and the bullet points list different participant responses to each question.

- 1. Do you think major adjustments are needed to the forecasts? If so, where?**
 - a. An improved (up-to-code, security compliant and generally updated) Mount Jumbo school would be appealing as long as safe routes to school and other infrastructure improvements are in place prior to opening Mt. Jumbo in the growing East Missoula neighborhood.
 - b. Yes. 2013 forecasts show 10% less students than 2018-2019 enrollment.
 - c. Hawthorne should be left as it is. The school has a wonderful diversity, and I think disrupting would not be a logical thing to do.
 - d. Forecasts may need to be increased for East Missoula given the recent announcements of future development multi-unit houses, hobbit houses, and fire. Plus annexation in 2023 up population as it occurred when sewer lines were installed.
 - e. Hard to say given we don't know what is in forecast. If you examine out of district (current student) – some schools at capacity would be under. Redistricting without dealing with out of district students seems like it wouldn't solve the problem for every school. Does the forecast take immigration into account?
- 2. According to the forecast, the district has overall capacity to handle the ten-year change. Assume no additional schools in the district over the next ten years. What schools will students from over-capacity areas attend? Be specific about where students come from and where they go to. Use the maps to illustrate.**
 - a. Lowell school has undergone significant infrastructure improvements yet has lower than capacity number over the projected timeframe. It would be a shame not to address the projected decrease in populations. Lowell may be a good option for potential Rattlesnake students.
 - b. Franklin, Lowell
 - c. Rework Cold Springs and Chief Charlo. Keep Rattlesnake as is, and bus East Missoula to Lowell.
 - d. This seems like a "pointed" question. Plus Mt. Jumbo ready to reopen imminent future once ADA and security are completed. It deserves attention but could benefit East Missoula. Plus host head start or pre-K ... (illegible) Bullock passes!
- 3. Additional Comments:**
 - a. Neighborhood schools are ideal, but that is the challenge – to weigh geography with demography. It's not as simple as drawing a line. The

- projected number of school age kids and future development for young families will be the best resource to guide present changes in districting.
- b. Franklin and Lowell should amass all resources to help special need situations to minimize costs. Renters should be bussed over homeowners.
 - c. If you need additional students at Franklin, you could take the boundary of the Paxson area (Russell, South, Sixth, and Stephens) and add it to Franklin if feasible.

Map Comments:

- First comment within map:
 - **According to the forecast, the district has overall capacity to handle the ten-year change. Assume no additional schools in the district over the next ten years. What schools will students from over-capacity areas attend? Be specific about where students come from and where they go to. Use the maps to illustrate.**
 - Students in the Lower Miller Creek could attend Chief Charlo. Students north of South avenue could be transitioned to Paxson. Opportunity to use Whitaker to SW Higgins to transition students to Russell. Also Russell zone could be bumped to Bancroft. Bump Lowe down to 5th or 6th.
- Second person –
 - **Do you think major adjustments are needed to the forecasts? If so, where?**
 - I vote that you do nothing. No changes.
 - **According to the forecast, the district has overall capacity to handle the ten-year change. Assume no additional schools in the district over the next ten years. What schools will students from over-capacity areas attend? Be specific about where students come from and where they go to. Use the maps to illustrate.**
 - We like living in a “walk to” location for all schools – Sentinel, Washington, and Lewis and Clark. If you relocate us to Russell Elementary that will mean relocate to Meadow Hill and we won’t be “walk to” Washington.
 - **Additional Comments:**
 - The big challenge is we buy a house and pay premiums to live in a certain school district. It seems very unfair that MCPS can change a school boundary that would cause our property value to decrease by at least \$20,000 or more.
 - We live in the middle rattlesnake neighborhood on Linden St. are near a “walk to school” route which has encouraged us to emphasizing to our kids non-motorized transportation to school (walking/biking). We hope that as you determine school boundaries you will consider keeping kids that can walk/bike to school at those schools. Thanks for considering that info in your decisions.
- Third person –
 - The Hallmark neighborhood does not have many families with grade school age kids. It doesn’t seem like it would benefit any school to change our boundary.

- I have a third grader and first grader and a two year old. I wouldn't want the older kids to have to change school or have them at Lewis and Clark and the little one at a different school.
 - The crosswalk at Bancroft and Pattee is much safer than Stephens/MacDonald/Dixon.
 - Lewis and Clark is very easy to walk to from the Hallmark neighborhood. This is very important to us.
 - Lastly, we purchased the home we did knowing our kids would be going to Lewis and Clark with other friends and family.
- Fourth person- Concerns/factors to consider:
 - Safe walking/biking in residential neighborhoods (unsafe intersection at MacDonald/Stephens Dixon easy walk to Lewis and Clark – very important to us.
 - The small Hallmark neighborhood only has a few families with small children – moving this neighborhood would not have a large impact on overall numbers.
 - Keeping children in schools with their support systems – families and friends. This community is valuable to our children.
- Fifth person:
 - We live in the Hallmark Lane neighborhood and have two little kids that we were intending to attend Lewis and Clark. We love this community and have friend and family that we want our kids to go to school with.
 - One of our concerns is the safety of our children walking/biking to school. No crosswalks and inadequate sidewalks at MacDonald/Stephens/Dixon
 - We purchased our home in this neighborhood for the school district and hope to be able to stay in Lewis and Clark district.
 - Thank you for your time and consideration. We realize this is a big project to tackle.