

## I. Welcome and Overview

Superintendent Becky Berg welcomed the committee back after their summer break, saying how pleased she was to see such a high turnout. She reviewed facility projects completed over the summer and announced the implementation of the next phase of the district's technology plan: on October 1, all students in grades 6-12 will receive a Chrome Book, and their teachers are receiving training to make effective use of that capability in the classroom. Becky introduced Craig Degginger, recently hired to serve as Director of Communications and Community.

Facilitator Dick Withycombe also welcomed returning committee members and provided a meeting overview. The committee approved the June 9 minutes as submitted.

## II. Information Requests

### Enrollment

Jim Baker, Executive Director of Finance, reviewed a several-page handout summarizing enrollment patterns and projections.

- Since 1980, the district's enrollment has grown from 6,037 students to 11,139 students (2014). These are headcounts taken on October 1 of each year. The district reached its highest enrollment in 2001 and declined in 2003 after the teachers' strike; since then, enrollment has been relatively stable, decreasing slightly each year.
- There are two ways to count enrollment. Headcount makes the most sense for facilities decisions, because it reflects the number of students who must be housed at some point in the day. The other method is fulltime equivalency (FTE); this is used for some purposes because it corrects for students who aren't in school all day (e.g., half-day kindergarten students and high school students enrolled in Running Start).
- This year, enrollment is slightly lower than expected: just under 11,000 students. The district expected to have 60 fewer students and has about 150 fewer students. The staff is collecting data to help them understand the factors that affect enrollment.
- The district hires a demographer to project enrollment based on cohort survival (rolling students up through the grades based on historical patterns) and on a variety of external factors (e.g., birth rates and housing development). The demographer projects a continuation of relatively flat enrollment.
- Kindergarten enrollment is important because the district has had a good retention rate; students who enter as kindergartners usually stay in the system. Projected kindergarten enrollments are stable over the next 20 years.
- District enrollment has decreased by 630 students since 2000, even as population increased by more than 14,000 people, from 57,398 to 71,472. The district is studying

this trend as well. It may represent changing demographics (e.g., an influx of retired residents, fewer children per family).

- *Do these numbers include students who transfer to other districts, attend private schools, or are home-schooled?\** They would be included as residents, but not as students, with the exception of students in the School to Home Partnership Program.

## Transfer Requests

Assistant Superintendent Ray Houser reviewed transfer requests.

- The district provides transportation to enable students to attend their choice of the eight high schools, which do not have attendance areas. This year, every incoming freshman got his or her first choice; some smaller schools declined in enrollment because the district wanted students to be where they chose to be. Every February, students may request an in-district transfer. This year, 168 of 193 high school requests were approved; the denials were typically because the student's grade was full.
- This year, two middle schools (Cedarcrest and Marysville) and three elementary schools (Liberty, Marshall, and Shoultes) were closed to transfers because they were full. (State funding of full-day kindergarten has affected elementary school capacities.) At the middle school level, 193 of 282 transfer requests were approved; 179 of 252 elementary requests were granted.
- This year, 926 requests to attend schools outside the Marysville School District were granted; and 168 students who reside in neighboring school districts were approved to attend Marysville schools. District staff will continue to study these Choice Transfer Requests to determine the reasons Marysville students choose to attend schools elsewhere. Students who live near the district boundary may be closer to another district's school, and sometimes parents place their children in schools near their work; but they are still looking for patterns.

## Portable Classrooms

Facilities Supervisor Greg Dennis distributed an updated version of his "State of Facilities" report, which indicates the number of portables on each school site (total and those used for instruction, e.g. 9/6 means six of nine portables are used for instruction). The district has used mitigation fees paid by residential developers to purchase portables to house students. School portable counts may have changed since June because students have been moved from districtwide programs into their neighborhood schools.

Greg's report also includes, for each school, the year it was built, its square footage, its 2014-2015 enrollment (average monthly headcount), a security ranking based on last year's security assessment, and structural, mechanical, and electrical deficiencies.

Some security issues have already been addressed, so the rankings (low numbers being better) and color coding (green, yellow, and red) may no longer align; for example, Allen Creek's

---

\* The comments of committee members appear in italic print, those of the facilitator, presenters, and district technical team in regular print. Unless enclosed in quotation marks, comments have been edited for brevity and clarity.

communications problem has been corrected, so it is coded green, although it was ranked 7. The primary security issue at Pinewood is the number of exterior doors, a problem shared by other “California campus” schools built in the 1970s without interior walkways. The trend is away from this kind of design, for reasons having to do with energy efficiency as well as security.

### III. Tour of Liberty Elementary School

Principal Gloria Henderson provided a brief overview before she and Greg led tours. Built in 1951 for 325 students, Liberty currently houses 519 students, with the addition of nine portables. The school hasn’t been modernized, but it has been reconfigured to create, and then reverse, an open-concept design. Liberty is a multi-generation neighborhood school, with children attending where their grandparents did. “Families transfer in because they love being here,” she said.

- *Does that field across the street belong to Liberty? Do kids cross the street?* The grass field belongs to Marysville Middle School; elementary students don’t cross the street.
- *Can you get the whole school into this gym at one time?* Yes, we can: but it’s like “sardines who really love each other.” It works because the students are so well behaved.
- *Has the boiler been replaced?* No, but it’s been fixed (a lot).
- *What are your concerns about this facility?* It would nice to have more space, so we don’t have students in portables. A new building would be nice, but the students don’t notice the facility problems; they connect with the teachers.
- *What percentage of the students qualify for the Free and Reduced Meal Program?* Approximately 90%. I believe many other students would too, but their parents don’t want to apply.

#### Discussion Following the Tour

- *On the negative side, it seemed to me that some parts of the school were hot, and some were cold; and in some areas it smelled like heat, maybe because of the boiler. On the positive side, the school feels so welcoming — as the parent of an elementary student, I would want my child to come here. And everything’s so neat!*
- We can't regulate the heat, but we do what we can to make it comfortable.
- *What was the issue with the electrical system?* There was a full lighting upgrade two years ago, but the school is operating with the original 1951 electrical service. It has old fuse panels, rather than breaker panels. Cascade has the same problem.
- *I have a concern about safety, in case there were an intruder, because there’s only one way out; and there seems to be a lack of ventilation, a smell.*
- There is only one way into and out of the classrooms. The way the windows open, they can't be used for egress.
- *One end of the school feels better, okay, but the other end is kind of bob and weave.*

- Those cubbies are where paraprofessionals work with students; there's no other space for them; and it's a safety concern, having people working in the hallways.

Gloria described Liberty's free, in-class breakfast program. Though almost all students qualified for the food program, fewer than half were eating the breakfast; and the staff was concerned about students starting the school day without food. They obtained a grant to provide a free breakfast to all students in their classrooms during the first 10 minutes of the school day, as they get settled for the day. The results are that students appear to be happier, better able to concentrate — and more likely to arrive on time. (The district's central kitchen supports this program.)

#### IV. Developing Recommendations

Dick reviewed the remaining meetings. The committee will meet on September 22 and October 6 to develop preliminary recommendations: two alternative scenarios, which may share elements. Then thoughtexchange will test community responses to those, reporting their findings to the committee on November 17, when they meet to finalize their recommendation.

To prepare for the September 22 meeting, Dick asked committee members to:

- review the minutes and handouts from prior meetings;
- identify one-to-three projects they regard as critical and come prepared to talk about their priorities in small group discussions with fellow committee members; and
- considering what they'd heard and seen and how they choose priorities, come prepared to talk about the values that should guide the committee's recommendation.

The district staff will revise the "State of Facilities" report to color-code priorities in the structural, electrical, and mechanical categories. Based on that work, they will propose approaches to addressing needs by type (e.g., replacing old electrical systems) and provide cost estimates.

Dick told committee members that the district's needs are likely too great for a single bond measure. "While you may feel anxious about whether you can finish the work in the available time," he said, "the reality is that this first bond can pick off only a portion of the projects needed — and the critical question is, which ones are those?"

He said he is committed to seeking consensus within the group. "I don't want a minority report," Dick said. "We will spend the time to seek agreements among ourselves, so the superintendent, the board, and the community can feel confident in having a single direction from this group."