

Elementary Redistricting and/or School Consolidation Decisions to be Made in 2016-17

Council Rock is in the process of looking at options for redistricting and/or school consolidation to begin in the 2017-18 school year and each successive year. At the October 1, 2015 school board meeting, Superintendent Dr. Robert Fraser gave a presentation on elementary school building efficiencies, capacities and educational programs. He stated that “this conversation is about more than ‘brick and mortar.’ At its core, our focus is on how to responsibly maximize our budget so that, in turn, we can maximize our students’ potential.”

Dr. Fraser stated that the district can increase elementary school space efficiencies and yield a maximum of 24 full sized classrooms throughout the district by:

- Capitalizing on economy of scale, by moving District special education programs to other schools
- Transitioning District Intensive Learning Support programs from full-size classrooms to half-size rooms
- Using mobile dividers in full-size classrooms to combine multiple grade levels of Resource Rooms for learning support
- Moving specialized areas such as Literacy, Math Specialist, and ELL to smaller spaces than currently allocated
- Repurposing fixed computer rooms to mobile labs

The maximum classroom gains are: 5 each at Richboro Elementary and Holland Elementary; 4 at Churchville; 3 each at Maureen M. Welch and Sol Feinstone; 2 at Goodnoe; 1 each at Hillcrest, Rolling Hills and Wrightstown. Newtown would have 1 less section.

Dr. Fraser is recommending that at the very minimum the District should redistrict to balance enrollment, thus correcting a tight enrollment at one school, and the under enrollment at other schools. For instance Newtown Elementary is tight this year and at 92% capacity because it absorbed Wrightstown’s 5th and 6th grade that, in June, included 106 students. At the other extreme, Holland Elementary, where the district replaced all the trailers with inside classrooms and renovated for \$19M, currently only has 298 students and could house 513 students. He stated that Council Rock students are being deprived every day, day after day from getting the benefit of a beautiful new school.

To further maximize efficiency and budgetary facilities’ operating cost, for facilities that are not needed, Dr. Fraser is asking the Board to consider closing one or two elementary schools – Rolling Hills and/or Wrightstown. Maintaining the status quo that keeps the same number of buildings, leaves one school (Newtown) at an efficiency of over 90%, and all the rest under 85%: 4 between 80% and 85% (in descending order – Hillcrest, Welch, Goodnoe and Rolling Hills), 2 at 78% (Churchville and Sol Feinstone), 1 at 70% (Wrightstown), 1 at 66% (Richboro) and 1 at 58% (Holland).

If Council Rock closes Wrightstown which currently has only 9 sections of students from K to 4, as part of the redistricting, the District’s overall usage of space efficiency would go from 78.6% to 82.3%. If Council Rock closes Rolling Hills which currently has 19 sections, the District would increase its usage efficiency from 78.6% to 85.4%.

Closing both schools only increases efficiency to 82.3% because it would require adding at least one 10 room addition to one of the medium sized schools, Hillcrest or Richboro, or possibly two additions, estimated at this time to be \$10M each.

The October 1, 2015 presentation gives detailed information on cost, and pros and cons, for full day Kindergarten for every student. Instituting full day Kindergarten would use 18 out of the 24 available classrooms but would gain back 3 classrooms used in the morning by the Champion's program, now held at Goodnoe, Holland and Welch, that would no longer be needed to help parents whose children are assigned to PM kindergarten.

The October 1 meeting can be viewed on the District's You Tube Channel and the "Elementary School Master Planning" PowerPoint is linked on the Council Rock home page, www.crsd.org, under "Elementary Master Facilities Planning." There, a link can be found to each school's floor plans and each school's current usage.

Citizens For Education has taken each of the school's current usage spreadsheet and increased the font, consolidated the information and put them on Citizen's website where those who are interested can more easily view the specifics of how each school uses its current space and where space economies can be realized.

Citizens For Education supports redistricting in Council Rock in order to best utilize all of the schools and maximize efficiencies.