

## Barb Rains

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**Sent:** Monday, April 15, 2019 7:55 PM  
**To:** 'Barb Rains'; 'Leslie DeBoer'; 'Doug Wiley'  
**Subject:** Supt. Advisory - Goal 4 Notes

## Supt. Advisory - Board Goal 4 (4.15.2019)

April 15, 2019

Supt. Rains welcomed everyone and reviewed the four Board Goals:

1. Curriculum & Achievement
2. Social-Emotional Learning
3. Communication
4. Facilities and Finance

An overview and history of District 161 facilities was shared by Dr. Rains:

- District was formed in 1971
- Current enrollment is 2,892 students
- Square footage and number of classroom space at each building was shared
- Current model of delivery of instruction was reviewed

Mr. Wiley, Director of Finance, presented a facility perspective: long-term costs of necessary building upkeep:

- Budget vs. actual expenditures
- Non-personnel O&M costs per student
- Planned maintenance over the next 5 years per building
- O&M fund projection - planned deficits in each of the 5 years

Mid-Point Questions:

- My kids don't like to drink the water; have you looked into this? Another parent reported that we are on well-water and there is a different taste.

Educational perspective (enrollment trends) - curricular consistency and leveling of grade 1-4 class sizes:

- Total enrollment is trending downward (graphics displayed)
- Strong financial position allows for continued low class sizes (guidelines: 23 students in Kindergarten; 25 students in grades 1-2; 27 students in grades 3-8)
- Education fund projection: projected annual surplus until FY 2024; reflects current staffing; shortened tech replacement cycle; fund balance within Board policy
- Instructional elements utilized in local elementary districts:
  - Instructional supports
  - Assessment & grading guidelines
  - Accelerated programming
  - Attendance centers
  - PLCs (professional learning communities)

Mid-Point Questions:

- What is the enrollment at Dr. Julian Rogus School in grades 1-4 only? Is it comparable to Indian Trail School?
- Are the enrollment numbers your best guess / estimate for now?
- What percentage of families typically register late?

#### Community perspective - balancing financial and educational impact

- What are the community priorities? (this is a multi-year process...)
- Guiding principle 1 - The plan must be in the best interest of the education of our children while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- Guiding principle 2 - The plan must be in the best interest of the school district as a whole now and in the future while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- What change would we be seeking?
- When is it time for change?
- Let's begin a discussion of possible options keeping in mind educational and financial impact. Examples:
  - Remain status quo
  - Re-boundary areas of current elementary schools so that the enrollments are more balanced
  - Explore the creation of attendance centers at grades 1-4
  - Move K students back to home schools

#### Input from community:

- Moving the K students back to the home school would seem to have the best educational impact on students; they will be able to ride the same bus route for K-4 with their siblings; stronger continuity; positive transportation impact
- Attendance centers have educational concern related to continuity of care (especially a single level at each building); my child could potentially have to move schools too many times; neighborhood schools provide better continuity
- Nothing can compare to a neighborhood school; in an attendance center model, children with support services have to adjust with each move; having all teachers under one roof makes it difficult to accomplish guest speakers, field trips, clubs, etc. with the entire grade level; transportation concerns for parents having children in multiple schools; concerns with P/T Conference schedule; concerns with open house; takes time for children to adjust to these transitions
- Attendance centers with single level at each building is not preferred; does not give time for students and staff to get to know each other
- What are other schools doing? Pros/Cons? What supports did you have in place during this transition. I'm curious to see what other schools are doing to see if we can learn from them.
- Are you doing the research to see what other schools are doing?
- I've heard the idea of combining Arbury Hills and Frankfort Square Schools - how realistic would this be? Would it support this cause?
- What is the history in D161, have we considered establishing new boundaries? This is not favorable in the eyes of the community. This may not be a long-term solution.
- I like keeping the status quo.
- We can't forget that DJR was designed for our youngest learners.
- Possible attendance centers could breakdown with two year bands; only creating one additional transition from our current model. Kuddos to district staff for making the current transitions positive for our kids.
  - Possible Example:
    - EC-K
    - 1-2

- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7-8
- SEL - one benefit of keeping K separate is transportation - keeping our youngest students on their own route is comfortable for families
- Neighborhood schools are family friendly; we don't want to lose that feeling
- Do we know the home school locations (grades 1-4) of the kindergarten students currently registering? (4 or 5 sections go to DJR and IT; 2 or 3 sections go to AH and FS)
- **When considering all options, the impact on learning is the most important!**
- It is not so much about fund balances as it is about the number of students.
- Why even spend the time researching the new boundary perspective? It doesn't seem necessary since my kids will soon transition to high schools - this will change every year as students transition. Keep it as an option to research and rule-out, if decided.

#### Final Go Around

- Great discussion; thank you for your willingness to share; wonderful turnout by the school community
- Thank you for making it an open discussion
- We will work hard as a team and determine what is best for students and learning
- This was a great forum; it's nice to hear from everyone
- We love the transparency
- Not reactive, but planning ahead
- We are planning for what is best for our kids
- Teachers are concerned about future employment; D161 has attempted to maintain employment over the past several years despite the enrollment trend (not following a hard roll-up for at least ten years)
- These are our kids, too. (from a teacher)
- I appreciate you are looking ahead; planning ahead is essential - don't wait because you will lose the educational value
- Great educational experiences in D161; wonderful class sizes
- It's a treat to be involved in the entire process for all Supt. Advisories - thank you for seeking our input.
- What is the actualized value for considering these changes?
- What is the timeline?
- Transparency is key to the community!
- Neighborhood schools have great value.
- Proactive vs. reactive is appreciated
- We are a team - educators and families

Future meeting dates for continued discussion: October 2019, April 2020, October 2020 and April 2021