

Elementary School Redistricting Public Forum
Tuesday, October 14, 2003 – 7:00 p.m.
School Board Meeting Room
Stuart, FL 34994

Members Present

Dr. David Anderson, Chairman
Vicki Davis, Vice-Chair
Susan Hershey
Laurie Gaylord
Lorie Shekailo
Dr. Sara A. Wilcox, Superintendent
Tom Elfers, School Board Attorney

Members Absent

Matt Rudling, Student Representative (SFHS)

Staff Present

Hank Salzler, Lori McWilliams, Darrell Miller, Louise Piper, Dr. Frank Raffone, Cece Hysmith, Brenda Watkins, Larry Green, Delores Calloway, Ray Parrish,

Public

Amy Alpert

Press

PBPost – Rani Gupta

Stuart News – Kelly Tyko

MCEA – No Representation

AFSCME – No Representation

Call to Order by the Chairman and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

Dr. Anderson moved Open to the Public to immediately follow Item 4. *Mrs. Hershey moved approval of the agenda as modified, Mrs. Shekailo seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Dr. Wilcox summarized the process for the meeting and explained staff would be presenting modifications to the Long Range Planning Committee recommendations. She noted another public forum would be scheduled for additional public input. Dr. Anderson voiced concern that citizens are going to wait until the night the Board holds its final vote to voice their input. He feels if the citizenry is sincere in what they feel, now is the time to declare their positions rather than waiting until the night of the final vote.

1. Presentation of Information Regarding Elementary Capacities and Current Attendance Zones

Dr. Raffone reviewed the projected 2004-2005 elementary counts prior to redistricting. He explained the committee was tasked with lowering school capacities and would like to maintain a target of 87% and pointed out that several of the schools exceed this target.

2. Long Range Planning Committee Recommendation

Dr. Frank Raffone reviewed the recommendations made by the Long Range Planning Committee.

Jensen Beach Elementary / Felix A. Williams Elementary

He explained the areas designated in white are under consideration for movement from Felix A. Williams Elementary to Jensen Beach Elementary.

Palm City Elementary, Bessey Creek Elementary, J. D. Parker School of Science, Math and Technology, Crystal Lake Elementary, Hobe Sound Elementary and Pinewood Elementary School

He explained the difficulty with redistricting in Palm City is that many students are walkers and are reluctant to place current walkers on a bus. The committee looked at two areas that are currently bussed, Sunset Trace and Pine Ridge, Mariposa and the Charter Club (ES11) and proposed moving these students to Bessey Creek Elementary allowing some room at Palm City Elementary School. The committee looked at the “Old Publix” and Fisherman’s Cove areas and proposed these students attend J. D. Parker School of Science, Math and Technology.

Mrs. Davis stated she thought Fisherman’s Cove was being routed to Pinewood Elementary School and Dr. Raffone advised he is currently reviewing the Long Range Planning Committee’s recommendation.

Dr. Raffone reviewed the area marked ES14, which transfers students from Pinewood Elementary School to SeaWind Elementary School and ES06 and ES07, which transfers students from SeaWind Elementary School to Hobe Sound Elementary.

He reviewed the chart showing the impact of the suggested changes and called attention to the capacity percentages.

Staff Modifications and Recommendation

Jensen Beach Elementary / Felix A. Williams Elementary

Staff doesn't recommend any changes to the Long Range Planning Committee recommendation.

Palm City Elementary, Bessey Creek Elementary, J. D. Parker School of Science, Math and Technology, Crystal Lake Elementary, Hobe Sound Elementary and Pinewood Elementary School

Dr. Raffone explained staff recommends the scenarios of ES06 and ES07 remain at SeaWind Elementary School and ES14 remain at Pinewood Elementary School due to the upcoming construction issues at Hobe Sound Elementary and should be removed from further action. Staff does not believe it would be a sound move to relocate students to an area that would be under construction.

Staff supports the Palm City area recommendations made by Long Range Planning and concurs that Sunset Trace, Mariposa, Pine Ridge and the Charter Club be redistricted to Bessey Creek Elementary.

He reviewed the "Old Publix" scenario and the impact the additional recommended students would have on J. D. Parker School of Science, Math and Technology and decided to reduce the total number of students (170 students) and changed the boundary slightly. He reviewed the suggested boundary lines.

He pointed out that Long Range Planning made no recommendations for Port Salerno Elementary School. Staff, however, felt that some adjustments needed to be made and reviewed the ES30 scenario, which moves students from Pinewood Elementary School to Port Salerno Elementary School.

Mrs. Davis clarified that Fisherman's Cove would be moved from Crystal Lake Elementary to Pinewood Elementary School. Mrs. Hershey advised Mr. Osborne that new apartments are being built at Central Parkway and Kanner Highway and would be assigned to J. D. Parker and Dr. Raffone agreed. Mrs. Hershey suggested the realtors inform potential renters what school these students would attend. Dr. Raffone discussed the upcoming "S and S" Development below Hammock Creek and recommended this development be zoned for Crystal Lake Elementary. Mrs. Davis commented on the amount of construction taking place in the Tropical Farms area that would be routed to Crystal Lake Elementary and feels this should be looked at seriously. Dr. Raffone stated the district would absolutely be impacted as these developments come out of the ground and the best the district can do is work with the developments that have already been approved. Dr. Anderson feels this would give an indication of where the next elementary school should be built.

He reviewed the capacity percentages with staff's recommendations. Mrs. Hershey complimented Dr. Raffone, staff, and the Long Range Planning Committee on the hard work they put into this plan. Mrs. Davis voiced concern with scenario ES30 and feels the board may be breaking up neighborhoods and their interactions with one another. This scenario places Port Salerno Elementary at 92% capacity and if left at Pinewood Elementary the capacity would be better balanced. Dr. Anderson asked what affect this would have if the students remained at Pinewood Elementary and Dr. Raffone stated it places the capacity at almost 99%. Dr. Anderson discussed future expandability at the Port Salerno site.

3. Open to the Public

- A. Susan Tumbler, a South Wood parent, asked if their neighborhood is being considered for rezoning as part of the Fisherman's Cove community and was advised they would be moved as well.**
- B. Gloria Seidule, Hammock Creek resident, feels the committee has done a good job with the recommendations. She asked how the governmental entities communicate regarding new developments and asked if the impact fees could be increased. Dr. Anderson stated Mr. Osborne is aware of the developments as they are requested and that impact fees are in the process of being reviewed and would come before the Board for a decision in the near future. Mrs. Hershey stated that as the School Board representative on the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council all development impacts come to this committee for review as well. She stated her approach is that if a developer is placing an impact on the County then they should be required to pay for impactors and she has been actively campaigning this issue.**
- C. Gail Dowess, South Wood resident, voiced confusion with moving students out Pinewood Elementary School in order to make room to move other students into Pinewood. She pointed out that as a South Wood resident her child was moved to Murray from Hidden Oaks and was initially zoned for South Fork High School and would now have to attend Martin County High School. Dr. Anderson stated a student going into 5th grade would be allowed to remain at that school. Mrs. Davis asked if the information shown in the presentation shows South Wood as part of the Fisherman's Cove block that would be moved and Dr. Raffone stated it is included and is calculated in the total.**
- D. Violet Palmer, a Hammock Creek resident, asked when the School Board would look for additional land and Dr. Anderson stated they are in the process of looking for land for all school levels. Dr. Wilcox stated ideally the district would go beyond the five years and look to land bank for future needs.**

- E. Bill Nanos, a Hammock Creek resident, suggested developers be required to help with building schools and car congestion. Mrs. Davis suggested donating property. Dr. Anderson stated in the past the Board has asked developers to donate land or sell at reduced prices.
- F. Susie Boning thanked the Board and feels the Palm City redistricting makes good common sense.
- G. Robert Snyder asked the Board where his child would be zoned to attend school and after receiving the necessary information, Dr. Raffone stated SeaWind Elementary School.
- H. Cindy DiNenna, a Palm City resident, discussed impactors and school choice and asked why choice would be allowed at schools with an already high capacity. Dr. Anderson stated that school choice has been frozen for those reasons. He advised that students who are currently on school choice will be grandfathered-in, however the siblings would not be allowed to attend on school choice. Mrs. Hershey asked that this be communicated strongly to the public and stated that if a student is attending a school on a Signature Program, there is no choice into that school for their siblings. Dr. Wilcox pointed out that the Signature Programs are at the high school level, and stated that for a number of years now school choice has been frozen at schools above capacity. The one the exception was you could choice out of a school above capacity into a school under enrolled. Mrs. Hershey explained the board can not build new schools unless they are at a certain capacity level. She asked about special programs and allowing attendance by siblings such as the gifted program. Mr. Salzler advised this was the first year choice was frozen for the siblings of the gifted students, prior to that the board allowed the siblings to attend. Dr. Wilcox stated there are three cluster gifted programs (SeaWind, Palm City and Felix) and one at J. D. Parker, and explained students attend the gifted program according to their locality. Ms. DiNina clarified that if a Stuart student is gifted, they would not come to school in Palm City, but attend at J. D. Parker and the Board agreed. Mr. Salzler explained the siblings that were already choiced into a school were grandfathered in.
- I. Jane Logan, of Hobe Sound, feels there should be one policy regarding all programs. She asked what the impact of siblings is to the district and does not believe it is that significant. She feels the Board is inconveniencing the parents of children in full-time gifted programs.
- J. Sherry Skinner asked if there would be additional considerations and scenarios brought forth in the future and Dr. Anderson stated all public input would be considered. He stated that since staff modified a few of the original recommendations, the Board would hold another public hearing, however he seriously doubts that any new scenarios would come forth, but anything is possible.
- K. Gloria Seidule asked what would happen when the schools become overcrowded again within the next two years, specifically Crystal Lake and Palm City Elementary Schools and would there be a new round of redistricting. Dr. Anderson stated it would depend on how quickly new developments are built such as “S and S”. He stated it is very possible that the district would go through redistricting again due to excessive county growth. Mrs. Hershey stated as new developments are brought on line, the Board has the opportunity to assign them to another school.

4. Discussion of 2004-2005 Rezoning

Dr. Anderson commented that in all his time as a school board member, the current board is without a doubt the best board he has worked with and complimented his colleagues. He feels this board has been able to amicably get the job done as a team.

Mrs. Shekailo again thanked the Long Range Planning Committee and thanked the audience for being positive and appreciates their input.

Mrs. Gaylord thanked staff and believes Hobe Sound Elementary will be happy.

Mrs. Hershey is impressed with the committee and staff and their ability to balance a 17,000 student population for present and future growth.

Mrs. Davis also thanked staff and the committee. She reminded the board they would make a trip tomorrow to Abacoa to look at the prototype school for Hobe Sound Elementary.

5. Open to the Board

There being no further business to bring before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.