

District Configuration

Pitman Board of Education Meeting

10/29/2019



School configuration

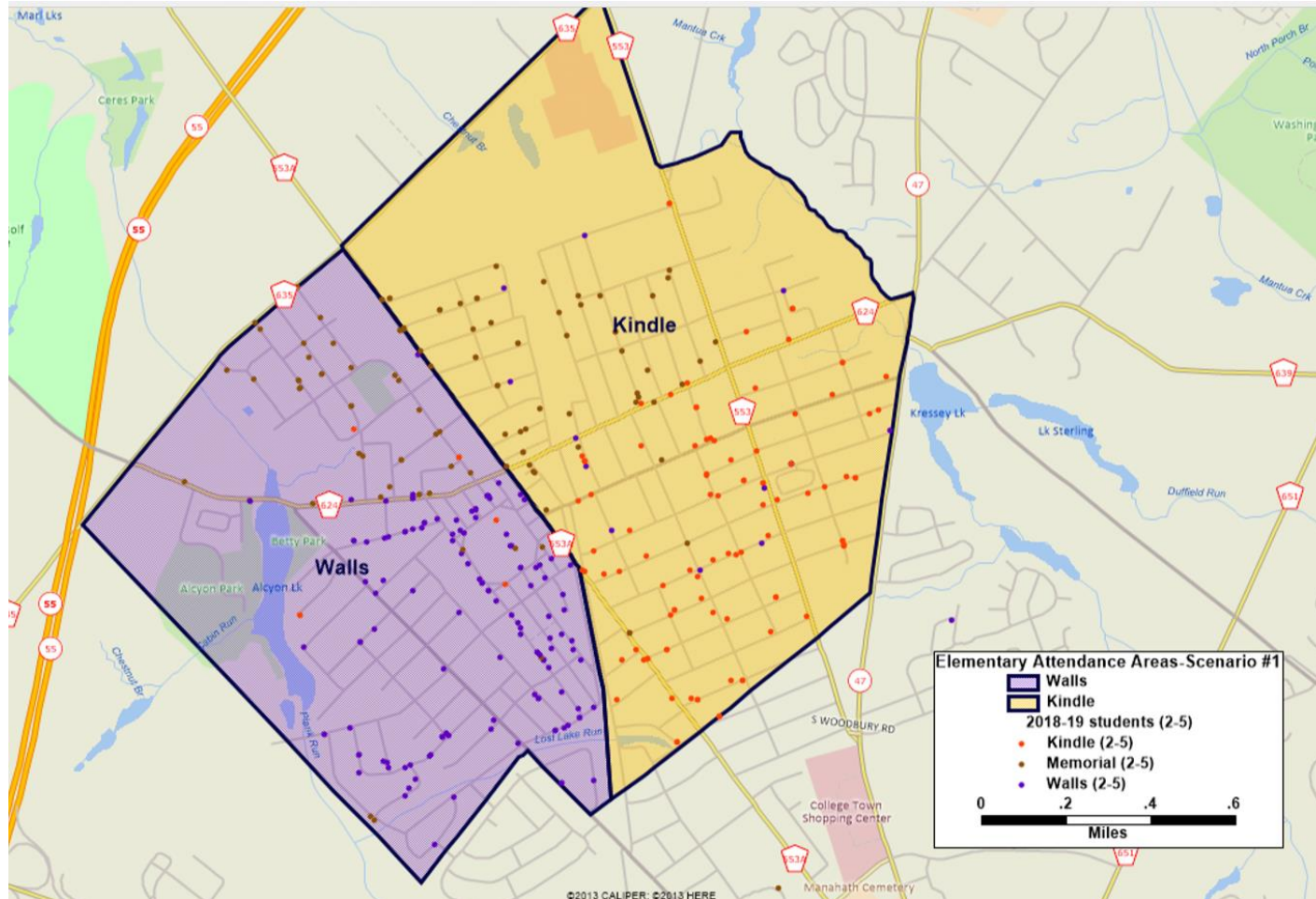
- ▶ Fall 2017 - district adopts five year Strategic Plan
 - ▶ Core values = safety; small size; community commitment/engagement with schools; positive reputation of district
 - ▶ Context of limited funding, declining enrollment, aging school buildings, etc.
 - ▶ Strategic Goals developed within the above context, but with an eye towards enhancing programs and offerings to better meet future needs of students
- ▶ Summer 2018 - State budget agreement includes Senate Bill 2 (school aid reform) - seven year-phase out of adjustment aid to school districts like Pitman
 - ▶ Result: projected loss of \$1.4 million+ in aid to the district by 2024-25
- ▶ Fall 2018 - **preliminary** proposal: grade-level schools (preK-5th) by 2019-20
 - ▶ Later **withdrawn**; committee convened to examine various configuration models
- ▶ Spring/Summer 2019 - Pitman Schools Advisory Committee
 - ▶ Mission: balance fiscal/enrollment realities with best instructional practices and student achievement
- ▶ September 2019 - PSAC issues final report
 - ▶ recommends hybrid configuration model by 2020-21
 - ▶ Early Childhood Center at Memorial (grades pre-K through 1st)
 - ▶ Two neighborhood elementary schools at Kindle and Walls (grades 2nd through 5th)

My recommendation

- ▶ Hybrid configuration in grades preK through 5 (beginning 2020-21 school year)
 - ▶ District Early Childhood Center @ Memorial
 - ▶ Neighborhood schools @ Kindle and Walls)
 - ▶ Proposed boundary: Broadway from Lambs Road to Laurel Avenue, then following RR tracks (West Jersey Avenue) towards Glassboro border
 - ▶ Phase-in of grade 1
 - ▶ 2020-21 - grade 1 at all three buildings
 - ▶ 2021-22 - all grade 1 to ECC @ Memorial



Revised Boundaries - Two Neighborhood Schools



ECC Model - Projected Enrollment

2020-21 (phase out grade 1)

	Memorial (ECC)	Kindle (1-5)	Walls (1-5)
PreK 3/4 (2 each)	40 (est.)		
Kindergarten (5)	85		
Grade 1 (5-6)	29*	33	27
Grade 2 (4)		54	38
Grade 3 (3-4)		26	48
Grade 4 (4)		46	54
Grade 5 (4)		41	35
Total (28/30 sections)	154* (10-11)	200 (9-10)	202(10)

2021-22 (grade 1 to ECC)

	Memorial (ECC)	Kindle (2-5)	Walls (2-5)
PreK 3/4 (2 each)	40 (est.)		
Grade K (4-5)	88		
Grade 1 (4-5)	89		
Grade 2 (4)		46	55
Grade 3 (4)		54	39
Grade 4 (3-4)		25	47
Grade 5 (4)		47	54
Total (27/30 sections)	217 (14)	172 (7-8)	195 (8*)

ECC Model - Projected Enrollments

2022-23

	Memorial (ECC)	Kindle (2-5)	Walls (2-5)
PreK 3/4 (2 each)	40 (est.)		
Grade K (5)	103		
Grade 1 (4-5)	92		
Grade 2 (4)		35	54
Grade 3 (4)		46	56
Grade 4 (4)		52	38
Grade 5 (3-4)		26	47
Total (28/30 sections)	235 (13-14)	159 (7-8)	195 (8*)

2023-24

	Memorial (ECC)	Kindle (2-5)	Walls (2-5)
PreK 3/4 (2 each)	40 (est.)		
Grade K (4-5)	94		
Grade 1 (5)	108		
Grade 2 (4)		39	53
Grade 3 (4)		35	55
Grade 4 (4)		45	55
Grade 5 (4)		56	38
Total (27/28 sections)	242 (13-14)	172 (8)	201 (8*)

Potential Concerns to Be Addressed

- ▶ Arrival/dismissal procedures and schedule at ECC (Memorial)
- ▶ Families with younger children at multiple sites
- ▶ Some facilities adjustments - playgrounds, etc.
- ▶ Subset of Memorial 1st grade - potential opt-in to new school for 2020-21
- ▶ Other concerns



Transition Committee

- ▶ Membership of stakeholders
 - ▶ Parents - all grade bands, all three schools; include special education and multi-child family perspectives, HSA leadership
 - ▶ District staff - elementary teachers, counselor (including special education perspective)
 - ▶ Elementary principals
 - ▶ Others as needed - facilities director, SRO's/police department/borough, central admin. team, nurses
- ▶ Committee structure
 - ▶ Internal tasks (mainly district staff)
 - ▶ External tasks (mainly families)
 - ▶ Joint tasks (all members)
 - ▶ Subcommittee functions - facilities and resources, family/student engagement, communications
 - ▶ Other functions maybe be administrative (e.g. finances, personnel), but committee can ask questions and offer feedback

Details of Implementation

- ▶ Police - transportation logistics (drop off, pick up)
- ▶ Consultation with other districts with ECC model
- ▶ Review of building schedules
- ▶ Identify and plan for facilities needs and moving of equipment and resources
- ▶ Examine and plan allocation of personnel and resources (budget development)
- ▶ Communication plan for families, staff, community (timelines, etc.)
- ▶ Other factors



Transition Process and Timelines

- ▶ regular meetings (monthly), regular communications - developed in consultation with committee
- ▶ Important: providing opportunities for orientation of students and families to new school communities and procedures
- ▶ Some decisions are budget-driven, but cognizant of sharing information about changes ASAP
- ▶ November through June and beyond





Why change configuration?

- ▶ Unbalanced enrollments across three locations (inequity)
- ▶ Inefficiency in staffing, programming, and facilities use
 - ▶ duplication of programs (special education, etc.)
- ▶ Status Quo = Less efficient financially
- ▶ School configuration changes are part of district's response to significant funding challenges
 - ▶ Projected state aid reductions to Pitman schools (2020 through 2025)
 - ▶ 2020-21 = \$330K
 - ▶ 2021-22 = \$410K
 - ▶ 2022-23 = \$385K
 - ▶ 2023-24 = \$240K
 - ▶ 2024-25 = \$75K

Why this model?

- ▶ Strengths of ECC
 - ▶ Control balance of class enrollments in the earliest grade levels
 - ▶ More opportunities for targeted grouping to better support at-risk students, G&T population, etc.
 - ▶ Consistency of programming (equity) with a clearer, age-based focus
 - ▶ Instructional program
 - ▶ Social/emotional needs of younger students
 - ▶ Child care program (Panther Club) - narrower age range, opportunity to expand extended day coverage for pre-K students
 - ▶ Early intervention opportunities - may reduce future costs (special ed, other interventions)
 - ▶ Potential for investment in programs
 - ▶ Specialized programs for students with special needs (e.g. autism spectrum) - keeps students in house, saves \$
 - ▶ Pre-K expansion

Why this model?

- ▶ Strengths of neighborhood schools
 - ▶ Retains aspects of community identity, buy-in and support (district/community values)
 - ▶ Eliminates one additional school transition vs. grade-level configuration
 - ▶ Research: Fewer transitions supports higher student achievement
 - ▶ Better control/balance of class size and resources (2 schools vs. 3)
 - ▶ Better alignment of programming (2 schools vs. 3) - includes state mandated testing
- ▶ Other Advantages
 - ▶ Fewer single grade-level sections; restores opportunities for departmentalized instruction
 - ▶ Stability - mitigates annual “reshuffling” of teachers across grade-levels and buildings
 - ▶ Special education - expanded opportunity for co-teaching model programming (less restrictive, greater mainstreaming of students)
- ▶ Projected savings (2020-21 and beyond) = minimum \$120,000/year vs. status quo (staffing/programs)

Why Not Other Options?

- ▶ Other models evaluated by PSAC
 - ▶ 5 models: status quo; redistricting; grade-level; 2 hybrid models
 - ▶ Criteria used: finance, facilities, research of elementary grade spans, demographic projections (enrollment)
 - ▶ PSAC case for ECC is compelling - efficient, preserves aspects of neighborhood schools, creates consistency in early childhood program
 - ▶ Case for other options less compelling - generated comparable savings, but created additional challenges, or left challenges unresolved.
 - ▶ While grade-level model creates efficiencies, it does so at the cost of community values, has additional transition (impact on student achievement) and creates greater logistical challenges.



Why Not Other Options?

- ▶ Other models not evaluated by PSAC
 - ▶ MS and HS configuration - inadequate space for programming for 6-7 grade levels at one site at this time
 - ▶ These options will be reviewed going forward to determine future feasibility; potential for grade 7-12 campus TBD
 - ▶ Elementary reconfiguration - generates greater efficiency/savings more quickly
 - ▶ PSAC Finance sub-committee offered additional recommendations re: potential cost savings and revenues

