

Bethel School District

Long Range Facilities Task Force



Meeting #3 Summary

Bethel School District Long Range Facilities Task Force Meeting #3
Thursday, October 25, 2018
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Pierce County Skills Center, 16117 Canyon Rd E, Puyallup, WA 98375

Task Force members in attendance

Althea Clark
Ashlee Walker
Audra Brown
Bernadette Patton
Bryan Streleski
Carie An Lathrom
Charis Storrs
Debby Morgan
Dennis Leingang
Jay McIsaac
Jeffrey Johnson
Joe Hoge
Kathleen Jones
Kim Price
Melanie Thomas
Paul Marquardt
Peggy Brayton
Rebecca Sok
Robert Stanley
Sandy Williamson
Teresa Smith
Terry Hurd
Tina Lee
Todd Mitchell

Members absent

Amy Briggs
Bill Taylor
Cathy Hood
Dan Ferreira
David Knight
Demetrius Forte
Denise Clark
Dick Thurston
Geraldine Johnson
Jennifer Van Gieson
Katherine Tackenberg
Kimberly Sablan
Marilyn Wood
Mike Christianson

Mujaahidah Sayfullah
Porsche Appleman
Rick Knutsen
Robert Crewse
Ron Mayberry
Scott Martin
Shannon Zimmerly
Stefan Yehle
Thomas Munoz
Tim Garber
Tracy Hennessy

Meeting observers

Penny Mabie
Cathie Carlson
Leigh Ann Dryer
Bang Parkinson
Jennifer Bethman
Doug Boyles
Karen Campbell
Joel Stutheit
Lori Haugen
John Manning

MEETING PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Bethel School District Long Range Facilities Task Force met for their third meeting on October 25th at the Pierce County Skills Center. The meeting's key objectives were:

- Where is the district using portables and where is there opportunity to add more?
- What do we know so far about:
 - Change one middle school to elementary school
 - Partner with adjacent school district(s)
 - Use parts of middle schools for elementary
 - Turn all middle and elementary schools into K-8
- Is there additional information needed to fully consider these four options?
- What are the pros and cons of these four options? How much capacity would these options provide? Would we recommend these as options to pursue?

Introductions were made, and Penny gave an overview of the 11x17 Options Table. This table will be updated after every meeting and sent out electronically to the Task Force members. The table will track decisions made by the Task Force about which options to consider, and is a tool for task force members to use to note discussions, information and pros and cons about the options.

Penny noted there had been many questions about how portables are used in the district. She asked the district to develop a fact sheet on the topic. Cathie Carlson presented an overview of the information about portables.

Overview of Portables option (see Using Portable/Demountable Classroom fact sheet):

- Portables are intended to be temporary classrooms
- Provide short-term, lower cost solution to overcrowding in schools
- Bethel is using double portables as a partial solution to overcrowding
- Current number of portables in use:
 - Elementary School - 144 classrooms
 - Middle School - 16 classrooms
 - High School - 46 classrooms
- Final cost is between \$600-\$650K; adding onto a building would be up to four times that amount in cost
- Portables can take up space for parking, athletics
- Create demand on common areas; all student have to come in for library, gym, cafeteria use.
- Additional portables scheduled for 2019:
 - 1 double portable each at Graham Elementary and Kapowsin Elementary
 - 2 double portables each at Bethel High School and Spanaway Lake High School
- Space in the district for additional portables after the 2019 additions:
 - 6 more doubles for elementary/308 students
 - 10 more doubles for middle school/600 students
 - No more space for high school

Penny provided an overview of other proposed options for housing students:

- Change one middle school to an elementary school (see fact sheet of same name)
 - Creates more capacity at the elementary level by turning
 - What could change?
 - There would be 5 middle schools in Bethel instead of 6
 - School boundaries
 - Students would need to change schools
 - Transportation changes
 - Repurposing of parts of the middle school may be necessary especially for pre-k and kindergarten classrooms
 - Different furniture needs

Task Force discussion:

- Would this have implications for teachers?
- Concern this would put pressure on remaining middle schools.
- Partner with adjacent school districts
 - Partner school districts could include:
 - Clover Park
 - Yelm
 - Orting
 - Puyallup
 - Franklin Pierce
 - Eatonville
 - What could change?
 - Transportation

- Some students would need to change schools
- Participation in extracurricular activities

Task Force discussion:

- What are other districts doing about capacity issues?
- With districts that have more capacity coming online because their bonds passed, would this have potential in the future?
- Distance on buses would be challenging.
- Use parts of middle schools for elementary schools
 - Select spaces at Bethel's middle schools that share common campuses with elementary schools
 - What could change?
 - Transportation
 - Some students would need to change schools
 - Use of middle school facilities
 - Staff collaboration
 - Recess facilities
 - Food services

Task Force discussion:

- The district didn't include the Thomson Elementary / Spanaway Middle School option because of the Spanish Immersion program at Thomson. Why does that matter? Response: The immersion program is very successful, but it requires students be immersed in all aspects of the school day, which would mean they would need to be at the elementary school all day. Also, the immersion program runs k-5, so moving the 5th grade to a middle school would disrupt the final year of the immersion experience.
- The Task Force discussed whether 5th graders should be in the same buildings as middle school ages and would there be performance or behavior issues as a result.
- Turn all middle schools and elementary schools into K-8
 - Existing middle and elementary schools would change to Kindergarten thru 8th grade (K-8) schools
 - One school in Bethel School District is already a K-8 school
 - Would need to designate some schools to include pre-k
 - What could change?
 - Many students would need to change schools
 - School boundaries
 - Fewer academic transitions between grades
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Transportation
 - Food services

Task Force discussion:

- This has the most bang for the buck and should be considered.
- The fact sheet seems to show that there is a body of knowledge that shows K-8 is a more holistic approach to education.

- There were big concerns on the part of some parents when the district moved 6th grade into middle schools (moving away from junior high); would that level of concern be anticipated with this kind of change?
- Are Bethel's elementary schools adequate for middle schoolers?
- There would be impacts on athletics, as middle schools currently have very strong team identities.

Voting:

Online polling was conducted regarding the previously mentioned four proposed options for housing students with the following results:

- Change 1 middle school to elementary:
 - A. Leave behind, no further discussion: 15%
 - B. Keep on list of potential options, no further information needed: 40%
 - **C. Need more information and/or discussion before deciding: 45%**
- Partner with adjacent districts:
 - **A. Leave behind, no further discussion: 100%**
 - B. Keep on list of potential options, no further information needed: 0%
 - C. Need more information and/or discussion before deciding: 0%
- Using part of middle school for elementary:
 - A. Leave behind, no further discussion: 16%
 - B. Keep on list of potential options, no further information needed: 26%
 - **C. Need more information and/or discussion before deciding: 58%**
- Change all middle schools and elementary schools to K-8:
 - A. Leave behind, no further discussion: 20%
 - B. Keep on list of potential options, no further information needed: 15%
 - **C. Need more information and/or discussion before deciding: 65%**

Next steps:

Penny led the group in a discussion about what additional information was needed in order for the Task Force to further discuss the remaining options later in the process.

- Information needed for changing one middle school to elementary:
 - What schools gains most capacity
 - Transportation issues
 - Effects on feeder system to middle schools and high schools
 - Does it solve the elementary school capacity issues 100%
 - What capacity increase does the district need to 'solve' the problem?
 - How long does the option solve the problem/duration?
 - How soon would that middle school need to be turned back to a middle school?
 - What will the impact be on education?
 - What school would give us the biggest capacity towards transportation issues?
- Information needed for using part of middle schools for elementary:
 - What is the total capacity at the middle schools?
 - What is the gain in capacity with each middle school?
- Information needed for changing all middle and elementary schools to K-8:

- Class start/stop times
- Transportation impacts
- Safety issues between/due to expanded grade bands
- Extra-curricular activities
- Get info from other districts models
- Size of other districts doing K-8/characteristics of district
- Additional resources-library, gym, food services
- Staffing needs
- Student achievement/outcomes
- Feeder system changes from K-8 to high school
- Impacts on special needs students
- Adjustments to facilities needed
- Another option to consider: change a middle school to a high school?
- The next meeting is Thursday, November 15th.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.