

**Easton and White Marsh Elementary Schools
Redistricting Evaluation Committee**

Talbot County Education Center

Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2017

I- Call to order

The facilitator, Rob Levit of Annapolis, MD, called to order the meeting of the Easton and White Marsh Elementary Schools Redistricting Evaluation Committee at 1:00pm on November 6, 2017 at the Talbot County Education Center.

II- Roll call

Rob Levit conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

Dr. Dan Davis- Teacher White Marsh Elementary School
Traci Weems- White Marsh Elementary School Parent
Kim Seidel- Principal White Marsh Elementary School
Jackie Chwencer- White Marsh Elementary School community member
Estela Ramirez – Easton Elementary School Parent
Heather Ewing- Easton Elementary School Teacher
Anna Howie- Parent White Marsh Elementary School
Sherry Bowen- Principal Easton Elementary School
Lisa Devaric- Principal Easton Elementary School Dobson
Jeff Bell- Easton Elementary School teacher
Susan Delean Botkin- Board of Education member
Mario Diaz Sanchez- Easton Elementary School Parent

Also present were the following employees of Talbot County Public Schools:
Kevin Shafer (Plant Operations and Maintenance Manager), Lynne Duncan (Assistant Superintendent for Administrative and Support Services), Eugenia Lewis (Administrative Support- Transportation), and Angelina Khlok (Administrative Assistant- Human Resources.)

The following persons were not in attendance:

Eugenia Caldwell- Easton Elementary School Moton Community Member
Erica Lewis-Mead- Easton Elementary School Moton Parent
Suzanne Fink- Easton Elementary School Dobson Staff Member
Troy Sherwood- Easton Elementary School Dobson Community Member

III- Topics of Discussion

Mr. Levit asked the committee to respond to the following question, “In your own words, on your sticky, please write down what the issue is at hand we are discussing today and place it in the box at the front of the room.”

The committee wrote the following responses on a sticky note, and placed it on the dry erase board:

- Moving students from Home school to new school- transportation logistics, small school to large school
- Equitable of distribution of people, resources to provide educational services
- Classroom overcrowding
- Redistricting White Marsh Elementary School students

Mr. Levit asked the committee to respond to the following question, “In your opinion, what is the true significance of this issue?”

The committee wrote the following responses on a sticky note, and placed it on the dry erase board:

- Coming together to plan redistricting schools
- Ensure that class sizes are appropriate
- Concerned about declining enrollment- how does this impact staff
- Impact on many families, and impact class sizes
- Affect overall learning environment
- Avoid over crowding
- Fully utilize Easton Elementary School
- Change in schools for students and families
- Voices are heard with decision-making

Mr. Levit asked the committee to respond to the following question, “What would be your ideal outcome?”

The committee wrote the following responses on a sticky note, and placed it on the dry erase board:

- Staffing stay the same- enough staff is assigned to each building
- Classroom size stays the same (similar class size) or smaller classrooms
- Return students back to Easton Elementary School
- Close proximity
- Two high quality schools
- Students/Parent are given advanced notice if change occurs.

Mr. Levit asked the committee to respond to the following question, “What is the driving background information about how this issue arose?”

The committee wrote the following responses on a sticky note, and placed it on the dry erase board:

- Additional Staff may be required (might change # of Special Education students, “English Language Learner” students.
- WMES might change Title I status.
- How will staff look at White Marsh Elementary School? Will it cover all needs of students left at White Marsh Elementary School?
- More Kids= thin resources, more work, spreads administration

- Transportation issues/Proximity issue- time consuming/quality of life
- Public needs to be aware of what is going on
- How will this affect real estate (Easton Club)
- Why were changes made a year ago to move kids?
- Equal class size for all classes across county
- Saving Talbot County Public Schools resources (bus and Money)
- People are lumping issue of TES and redistricting White Marsh Elementary School /Easton Elementary School
- Parents need to know what's happening to better transition

Mr. Levit asked the committee, "What recommendations can we make moving forward?"

The committee members complied the following recommendations:

- Move forward with redistricting:
 - Move forward because of economical reasons
 - Good for Talbot County Public Schools' population
 - Student benefits- time and proximity
 - More space, alleviation of space on White Marsh Elementary School
 - More services available for the students

IV- Additional Remarks made by committee members:

- Create a plan to publicize what is happening. Presentations, public forums, community meetings, timelines, schedule of meetings, background, impact on each school, pros and cons, culturally sensitive
- Get feedback from families, plan to roll-out plan, communication of change, visitation of EES, Open House
- Possible grandfather rule?
- When will these changes happen?
- What are the opinions of those affected?

V- Final Recommendation:

The formal recommendation to the Board of Education is to move forward with the proposed redistricting plan which would move eligible White Marsh Elementary School students to the Easton Elementary School campus, pending the approval and completion of the Easton Elementary School project.

The rationale of the recommendation is as follows:

- Alleviate overcrowding at White Marsh Elementary School
- Balance class size and staff at both campuses to ensure equity
- Maximize current resources and services before and after school
- Decrease transportation costs

Other items for consideration (for the eligible families) are:

- Enrollment
 - Allow students to finish their 5th grade year without transportation provided by TCPS
 - Refer to policy “Assignment of Students to Schools” 10.10 AR for siblings
- Implementation
 - Surveys, community outreach (open houses)
- Communication of Change
 - Be culturally sensitive when communicating the implementation (23 languages spoken at our homes, social economic levels)

VI- Adjournment

The facilitator, Rob Levit of Annapolis, MD, adjourned the meeting at 3:07pm.

Minutes submitted by: Angelina Khlok

Minutes approved by: Lynne Duncan