

Lake Shore Central School District

Elementary Attendance Committee  
October 11, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Those in attendance included Kathy Bruce, Sue Ciminelli, Mike Dallessandro, Paula Eastman, Scott Gizzi, Mari Grennel, Angela McAvoy, Dawn Mirand, Rosemarie Murphy, Karen Salansky, Jackie Shrader, Jill Utley and Gerry Glose.

The Committee Charge was reviewed.

The September 20, 2006 minutes were reviewed. There were no adjustments.

The Committee reviewed the 8 options that were identified at the last meeting. It was agreed that the options reflected the documentation generated by the 2 groups and that they were not in any priority order. In addition, the following option was also identified:

- Make Hoag and Waugh one campus with K-2 at Hoag and 3-5 at Waugh; add onto both buildings and make one joined campus; eventually close Brant, Highland and Schmidt.

In addition to the land associated with each of the school buildings, the district also owns land at Jerusalem Corners (Route 5 and Sturgeon Point Road). Available land is a variable necessary to expansion or new builds.

Last year the district completed a Building Condition Survey as required by NYSED. An architect and key district personnel undertook an inspection of each of the district's buildings to determine if the mechanicals, infrastructure, handicapped accessibility and health and safety issues of the buildings were in need of repair. That report also estimates the amount of money that would be necessary to make the identified repairs. Frank Nicotra indicates that, due to a series of capital construction projects over the last several years, each of the 5 elementary buildings are in excellent condition and not in need of significant or costly repairs in order to continue as quality structures. While the results of this survey is good news for the district in general, it is of particular interest to this Committee since it does not target any building for closure due to the need for costly repairs.

Native Americans that live in a certain section of the Reservation must attend Gowanda Schools and Native Americans that live in the remainder of the Reservation must attend Silver Creek Schools. However, any Native American that lives on the Reservation has the option to attend Lake Shores Schools instead of Gowanda or Silver Creek. Maintaining and/or increasing the Native American student enrollment has 2 obvious benefits to the Lake Shore Schools—it increases enrollment and it increases financial aid to the district. In addition to the state aid received for these students, the district receives special aid from the federal government so that the total cost of these students is reimbursed. Native Americans that attend Lake Shore Schools but do not live on the Reservation are funded like any other student—a combination of state aid,

property tax revenue and other general revenues. Sue and Angela will put together a spreadsheet that identifies the number of Native American students (living both on and off of the Reservation) by elementary building.

The building aid ratio for the district is 82/95%. This means that any additions or new buildings would be substantially funded by the state, assuming the enrollment was sufficient to “qualify the construction for full aid”.

District maps complete with color-coded boundary lines identifying each of the 5 elementary attendance boundaries were prepared by Sue and Mike and distributed to the Committee. These maps provide a visual representation of the street listings that had previously been given to the Committee. These maps will be important if and when the task of redistricting the elementary attendance boundaries becomes necessary. Direction from the superintendent or board should probably precede any redistricting effort due to the amount of work that redistricting requires and the potential for controversy that such an activity might generate.

A spreadsheet which identified the starting salaries for principals, custodians, laborers, cleaners, clerk typists, senior clerk stenos, nurses, librarians and teachers was distributed to Committee members. The full time equivalent (FTE’s) staffing for each of these positions was also identified for Hoag, Waugh and Brant.

The Committee was divided into 3 groups to begin the process of identifying the pros and cons of each option. Two groups worked on 2 options at once since the options were very similar. It was understood that this was a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of listing the pros and cons. Additions/clarifications to the list will continue throughout the meetings. Below is the progress to date:

Option 1: Keep all elementary buildings open and redistrict to balance elementary enrollment.

Pros

1. Many people are comfortable with having 5 elementary buildings in the district.
2. Class sizes can be balanced.
3. Space remains in buildings to expand enrollment.

Cons

1. No cost savings; operational costs will remain high.
2. Potential drop in student achievement due to larger classes.
3. No consolidation of services.
4. May take additional buses to keep time on the bus reasonable.
5. Possible criticism for inefficiencies in the district by the district’s taxpayers
6. Redistricting could be disruptive in the school community.

Option 2: Keep all elementary building open and do not redistrict (do nothing).

Pros

1. Many people are comfortable with the status quo.
2. Space remains in buildings to expand
3. Keep time on buses reasonable.
4. Research shows that smaller schools better prepare students; more individual attention to students; more child/adult connections; individual schools can better meet the needs of their specific populations.
5. No disruption to the communities.

Cons

1. No cost savings; operational costs will remain high.
2. Greater likelihood of unequal class sizes throughout the district.
3. No consolidation of services.
4. Inequity in “extras” provided; bigger schools, bigger programs
5. Possible criticism for inefficiencies in the district by the district’s taxpayers.

Option 3: Close Hoag and move students to Waugh; excess students could go to other buildings; sell or reuse Hoag.

Pros

1. Save salary and fringe benefits for 1 principal, 2 custodians, .75 laborers, 1 sr. clerk steno, 1 nurse and a .4 librarian. (\$355,743 or \$251,783 w/o principal’s savings).
2. May be additional savings from reduction of teachers due to class size economies of scale.
3. Should not be a huge transportation issue.
4. If Hoag is sold, there would be a one time infusion of money.
5. Logistics would need to be worked out but, this is possible.
6. There may be a revenue producing and/or community use for Hoag.
7. The current Native American enrollment from the Reservation at both Hoag and Waugh should not be impacted.
8. There would be savings in annual utility costs if Hoag were closed (\$24,000 ?? in 2005-06).

Cons

1. May be contractual issues with the elimination of the principal’s position.
2. Not all students will fit at Waugh.
3. Would need to redistrict some students that did not fit in Waugh.
4. May be issues with gym, cafeteria, lavatory, library or comp lab space
5. May not have enough space to house self-contained special education classes.
6. The loss of positions may cause a morale problem with staff.
7. If Hoag is sold, it would be lost to the district for future use.
8. There could be a negative impact on the parents, students and Angola community.
9. Potential drop in student achievement due to larger class sizes.

Option 4: Close Waugh and move the students to Hoag; excess students could go to other buildings; sell or reuse Waugh.

Pros

1. Save salary and fringe benefits for 1 principal, 3 custodians, 1 clerk typist, 1 nurse and .5 librarian (\$375,354 or \$271,374 w/o principal’s savings).
2. May be some additional savings from reduction

Cons

1. May be contractual issues if the principal’s position is eliminated.
2. Not all students will fit at Hoag.
3. Would need to redistrict some students that did not fit in Hoag.

- of teachers due to class size economies of scale.
3. Should not be huge transportation issues.
  4. If Waugh is sold, there would be a one time infusion of money.
  5. Logistics would need to be worked out, but this is possible.
  6. There may be a revenue producing and/or community use for Waugh.
  7. The current Native American enrollment from the Reservation at both Waugh and Hoag should not be impacted.
  8. There would be savings in annual utility costs if Waugh were closed ( \$116,500?? in 2005-06).
  4. May be issues with gym, cafeteria, lavatory, library or computer lab space.
  5. May not have enough space to house self-contained special education classes.
  6. The loss of positions may cause a morale problem with staff.
  7. If Waugh is sold, it would be lost to the community for future use.
  8. There could be a negative impact on the parents, students and Angola community.
  9. Potential drop in student achievement due to larger class sizes.

Option 5: Close Brant; redistrict the students; sell, reuse or mothball Brant.

#### Pros

1. Save salary and fringe benefits for 1.75 custodians, 1 clerk typist, .5 nurse and .2 librarian (\$166,290 w/o principal savings).
2. Likelihood for additional personnel savings (teacher salary and fringe) if the students are consolidated into existing classes throughout the district (approximately \$57,500/teacher).
3. There would be annual savings in utility costs if Brant were closed (\$29,830??).
4. Special Education students could more likely stay at their "home school".
5. There could be more consistent programs across the district.
6. More comprehensive programs/ "extras" could be available to current Brant students in a larger school population.

#### Cons

1. Potential drop in achievement due larger class sizes.
2. If no appropriate reuse of school, the Brant community will suffer loss; also concern that the building will become a liability (Farnham).
3. Redistricting could be disruptive in the school community.
4. Bus rides for some students will be longer; may have to add bus runs.
5. There could be a negative impact on the parents, students and Brant community.
6. The loss of positions may cause a morale problem for staff.
7. Currently about 25% of the Brant students are Native Americans from the Reservation. Changing schools for them may result in the loss of Native American students, resulting in lower enrollment and aid for the district.