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To: Dr. Mary Pfeiffer, District Administrator
Board of Education

From: Steve Dreyer, Assistant District Administrator of
Learning and Leadership

Date: November 27, 2013

RE: Elementary Recommendation

Recommendation

The following is an overview of the administrative recommendation for the structure of the elementary program. The plan is to implement the changes with the start of the 2014-15 school year.

- The elementary program would remain in a kindergarten-grade 5 structure. Clayton, Coolidge, Hoover, Lakeview, Roosevelt, Spring Road, Taft, Tullar, and Wilson would be kindergarten-grade 5 schools.
- Alliance would remain a one-section (six classrooms) school at Roosevelt.
- Taft would become a two-section (approximately twelve classrooms) school.
- The Early Learning Center would be located at Washington.
- Boundary changes would be implemented to establish an attendance area for Taft and to balance enrollment across the District.

Background

Structural issues persist in the elementary program that are preventing:

1. students from being accommodated at their identified home schools
2. schools from using instructional space efficiently and appropriately
3. class size targets from being realized

In the 2012-13 school year, four kindergarten classrooms with a total of 76 students could not be accommodated at their respective home schools because there were no classrooms available. There are currently 463 kindergarten students enrolled for the 2013-14 school year. Most schools reached the cap of 20 students, and 85 students are attending Taft Elementary School in five classrooms.

In many schools, locker rooms and other spaces not designed as classrooms are being used for instruction. Art and music instruction at most elementary schools occurs in the students' classrooms with the art and music teachers traveling from room to room with a cart of supplies.

The cap of 20 in kindergarten has been maintained but, as previously mentioned, a significant number of students are not able to attend their home school. Moreover, while a target class size of 20 may be preferable in first and second grades as well as in kindergarten, space constraints do not allow for it. In terms of fourth and fifth grades, some classes have 27 and 28 students.

The following Success Criteria were developed as a means of defining the elements of a quality elementary program. The criteria, together with the results of the SWOT Analyses (Appendix A), served as guides and filters throughout the planning process. The Success Criteria are revisited in the Summary section to illustrate the extent to which the administrative recommendation presented in this report is projected to support each criterion.

Success Criteria (The elementary program will be successful if...)
Class size ranges are maintained
Instructional areas are structured to accommodate learning
Dedicated space is available for art and music
Students are accommodated at their home school to extent possible
Classroom design is developmentally appropriate
Special education programs accommodate identified student needs
Transportation costs remain stable or less
Early Childhood/Preschool Program remains centralized
Gifted and Talented Magnet Program is accommodated
One principal is assigned to each school/site
Playground designs are age appropriate and equitable
Consistent times for art, music, and wellness education
Plan allows for future growth
Instructional time for content areas is defined
Teacher collaboration time is maximized
World language recommendation is accommodated
Plan is financially viable
Maintain neighborhood school concept where practicable
Class sizes are equitable across schools
4K Program is implemented
Technology matches instructional need and is equitable across schools
Educational opportunities/alternatives are available (e.g. music/fine arts, world language, year-round school, etc.)
Buildings meet safety and instructional needs
Staffing/school day/schedule supports best instructional practice
Maintain single grade classrooms
Alliance expands as enrollment warrants

Class Size and Enrollment

The current kindergarten-grade 5 District class size average is 21.5, which is very favorable. However, as indicated previously, the average is realized by low class sizes in kindergarten, and to some extent first and second grade, with higher class sizes in the intermediate grades. The following class size ranges and targets are recommended and are the basis of projected District class size averages, classroom sections, and full-time equivalents (FTEs).

The class size *range* in a kindergarten-grade 5 program would be 18-26 with the following *targets*:

- Kindergarten-grade 2 = 18-22 students
- Grade 3-5 = 20-24 students

Previous to lowering the cap in kindergarten to 20, the maximum in a kindergarten classroom was 22. However, space constraints contributed to a gradual increase in kindergarten class sizes to 24 and 25. This report recommends a return to a cap of 22 in kindergarten.

The research on class size generally indicates that classes need to be as low as 13-15 to consistently realize gains in student learning. Additionally, irrespective of class size, the number one contributor to student learning is an effective teacher. That stated, the goal would be to operate classes with less than 22 students for primary grades and less than 24 at the intermediate elementary grades.

Though elementary enrollment has remained relatively steady over the past several years, projecting enrollment out five or ten years is not an exact process. Therefore, enrollment for the 2013-14 school year was used as the basis for estimating the number of classroom sections needed in each model recognizing that future enrollment may vary.

The chart that follows details the 2013-14 enrollment by grade.

Grade	Enrollment
Kindergarten	463
First Grade	467
Second Grade	435
Third Grade	448
Fourth Grade	468
Fifth Grade	445
TOTAL	2726

Applying the recommended class size targets to the 2013-14 school year enrollment provided an estimate of classroom sections for each grade.

Grade	Class Size Target	Enrollment	District Class Size Average	Classroom Sections
Kindergarten	18-22	463	18.5-22	21-25
First Grade	18-22	467	18.7-21.2	22-25
Second Grade	18-22	435	18.1-21.8	20-24
Third Grade	20-24	448	20.4-23.6	19-22
Fourth Grade	20-24	468	20.3-23.4	20-23
Fifth Grade	20-24	445	20.2-23.4	19-22
TOTAL		2726		121-141

Building Capacities

Dedicated space for instruction is another important success criterion. Currently, art and music instruction occurs in the students' classrooms at most schools requiring the art and music teachers to travel from room to room. Some special education programs and other support programs occupy less than desirable sized spaces not appropriately designed for instruction.

The chart on the next page illustrates estimated full-sized classroom space available at each school while providing dedicated space for art, music, and special education compared with the current number of classroom sections at each school. In addition, projected classroom sections are listed for each school for the 2014-15 school year. Note: the Early Learning Center (ELC) would be located in the Washington building.

School	Level	Classroom Spaces	Current Class Sections	2014-15 Projected Class Sections
Clayton	K-5	11-12	12	12
Coolidge	K-5	16	17	15
Hoover	K-5	12	12	12
Lakeview	K-5	15-16	17	16
Roosevelt	K-5	10	12	12
Spring Road	K-5	18	18	18
Taft	K-5	12	5	12
Tullar	K-5	15-16	17	15
Wilson	K-5	15	17	15
TOTAL		124-127	127	127

To meet success criteria relative to realizing class size targets, using instructional spaces that accommodate learning, and having dedicated space for art and music, there appears to be incongruence between the recommended model and space available. Administration recognizes that not all success criteria will be met to the extent possible in this model. Some schools, for example, will continue to have art and music instruction on a cart. Another variable regarding classroom space yet to be determined is the impact moving to a cross-categorical approach in the special education program will have on classroom utilization.

Early Learning Center at Washington

Background

The elementary restructuring process looked at many different facility options in an effort to provide the best possible learning environment for the students attending the Neenah Joint School District (NJSD). One of those options is to reopen Washington Elementary School for use by the Early Learning Center (ELC).

The current Washington Elementary School was built in 1976. In 2004, the building was converted to the ELC. The building was closed in June 2008 and has been in that state ever since.

Current Costs

Currently, the District is paying approximately \$20,000 per year to maintain the building in its current state. Those costs are itemized below:

Source	Annual Cost	Description
Natural Gas	\$ 5,349	Building temperature during heating months is 55 degrees
Electric	\$ 4,095	Running some computers, lights, boiler controls and alarms
Water	\$ 4,385	Boiler feed water
Operations Staff	\$ -	None assigned to Washington currently
Snow Plowing	\$ -	City of Neenah currently plows this parking lot in winter
Maintenance	\$ 6,030	Mostly NJSD staff time

TOTAL	\$ 19,859
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Anticipated Costs

Reopening Washington Elementary School has a number of associated costs. There are initial, one-time costs and there are recurring, yearly costs. The recommendation is to use fund balance to pay for the one-time costs. Those costs are summarized in the tables below:

Table 2: One-Time Costs		
Project	Cost	Description
Duplex Boiler System	\$ 80,000	Washington is the only school with a single boiler. If the boiler were to go down during a school day during heating season, the building would have to be closed until repairs could be made. A duplex system would alleviate this issue.
HVAC repairs	\$ 30,000	Unanticipated repairs that will likely be needed due to system running at lower capacity for last 5 years and then running at full capacity
Technology needs	\$ 76,675	Wireless access points, data projectors, document cameras, SmartBoards, phone system, and security cameras
Replace Roofs 1-7	\$ 600,000	All of these roofs were replaced in 1993 and had a 20-year warranty and design life. Few leaks are noted at this point, however the frequency of leaks and amount of deterioration is expected to increase if action is not taken.
Reconstruct Parking Lot	\$ 100,000	The parking lot has been bandaged for the past few years by the City of Neenah as a result of their use and ability to repair. The parking lot has many cracks and is at the end of its useful life.

TOTAL	\$ 886,675
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Table 3: Anticipated Recurring Costs		
Source	Annual Cost	Description
Natural Gas	\$ 11,537	*Annual gas expense at Taft Elementary School
Electric	\$ 16,785	*Annual electric expense at Taft Elementary School
Water	\$ 6,266	*Annual water expense at Taft Elementary School
Operations Staff	\$ 15,750	Outsourced custodial: 5 hours/day x 180 days/year x \$17.50 /hour
Snow Plowing	\$ 5,625	Prorated based on other district plowing expenses
Maintenance	\$ 12,960	Mostly NJSD staff time

TOTAL	\$ 68,922
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*Actual utility costs at Taft were used to estimate annual costs for operating Washington.

Space Requirements

In previous conversations about the use of Washington, the Board of Education requested Administration to look at a leasing option. This option entails NJSD entering into a lease

agreement with a local commercial property owner for use of their facility for the NJSD ELC. The anticipated space requirements associated with the ELC are approximately 16,200 square feet.

All of these spaces currently exist at Washington Elementary School, however preliminary research indicates there are no local spaces available that have the required infrastructure associated with an ELC. This means that modifications would likely be needed in any space that NJSD decides to lease. These modifications could become part of the lease agreement in a "build to suit" arrangement or would more likely be made at the expense of the District. Preliminary cost estimates of these modifications are \$300,000.

In addition to the construction costs associated with a lease agreement, there is the obvious cost of the lease agreement. Looking at a variety of available local spaces, the estimated rental rate would range between \$8 per square foot per year and \$13 per square foot per year. This would equate to a range between \$129,600 and \$210,600 per year.

Considerations

Utilize Washington Elementary School for the Early Learning Center

One-Time Cost: \$886,675

Increase in Annual Cost: \$49,063

1. Preserves existing NJSD building
2. If one-time costs are not implemented with project, they will be rolled into 5-year plan
3. Building infrastructure is set up for use as an Early Learning Center
4. Building is the newest building in the District
5. Building location is central to the District
6. Building is air-conditioned

Utilize leased space for the Early Learning Center

One-Time Cost: \$300,000

Increase in Annual Cost: \$129,600 - \$210,600

1. Space may or may not be ready for 2014-2015 school year
2. Renting space while paying \$20,000 to maintain Washington
3. If NJSD pays for improvements to new space, this is a more costly solution by year 8
4. If lessor pays for improvements to new space, this is a more costly solution by year 6

Boundaries

The District has made a commitment to assessing its boundaries approximately every three to five years, which is aligned with this planning process. The current elementary attendance areas are detailed on the map in Appendix B. The proposed attendance areas starting with the 2014-15 school year are illustrated on the map in Appendix C. Appendix D highlights the changes in boundaries from current to proposed. The revised boundaries provide for:

- A dedicated attendance area for Taft that will result in the school having approximately 12 classroom sections.
- A revised attendance area for Hoover due to a significant portion of its current attendance area being reallocated to Taft.
- Modest changes to Coolidge, Tullar, and Wilson's attendance areas.
- No changes to Clayton, Lakeview, Spring Road, or Roosevelt's attendance areas.

Special Education

The intent would be to implement a non-categorical approach in the elementary special education program. Currently, students essentially receive services via the special education program that is associated with their disability area. Students requiring the most intensive services, Cognitively Disabled Severe (CDS) and Cognitively Disabled Moderate (CDM), would continue to receive services in those respective programs. Similarly, a program for students who exhibit severe behaviors would be established to accommodate their needs.

Students determined to have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Cognitively Disabled Borderline (CDB), and Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) would receive services collectively via a non-categorical program or resource room that would be located in each school. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) would dictate the educational program for each student, as is the current practice. The difference with a non-categorical approach compared with current practice is that more students would be able to attend their home school to receive services for SLD, EBD, or CDB. Additionally, because students with a variety of disability areas would be a part of the same program at each school, lower caseloads are recommended, which translates into an increase of 2 FTE special education teachers. Commensurately, fewer educational assistants are required because of the lower case loads. Thus, there is an estimated reduction in special education educational assistant FTE of 7.

Potential Benefits

The administrative recommendation has a number of potential benefits. Additional information about the extent to which it addresses the previously established Success Criteria is located on page 9.

- Provides for low class sizes kindergarten-grade 5
- Allows the Early Learning Center to remain together as a program
- Opening Washington provides space for the Early Learning Center as well as some onsite 4-year old kindergarten classrooms, should we consider a 4K program in the future, overflow kindergarten classrooms if enrollment were to increase significantly, or other alternative programs
- Requires limited boundary revision
- Provides an opportunity to implement a focus at Taft such as wellness if supported by the school community
- Presents the least preliminary cost estimates of the models previously presented

Potential Challenges

- Not all instructional areas would be optimal learning environments
- Art and music instruction would continue to be in students' classrooms at some schools
- Alliance would not expand

Estimated Staffing

The chart below represents projected staffing allocations and estimated costs for the recommendation. It should be noted that the recommended increases in Wellness Education and Supportive Math, which total 4 FTE and \$240,000, are not related to the proposed structural changes to the elementary program.

Area	2013-14 FTE Allocation	Projected 2014-15 FTE	Projected FTE Difference	Estimated Cost Difference
Classroom Teachers	126	126	0	\$0
GT Magnet Teacher	1	1	0	\$0
Total Teacher FTE	127	127	0	\$0
Administrators	8	9.5	+1 (Taft) +.5 (Washington)	+\$150,000
Administrative Assistants	9	10	+1 (Washington)	+\$35,000
Art Teachers	4.5	4.5	0	\$0
Music Teachers	6.2	6.2	0	\$0
*Wellness Ed. Teachers	6	8	+2	+\$120,000
Literacy Coaches	8	9	+1	+\$60,000
**Supportive Math Teachers	5	7	+2	+\$120,000
Library Media Specialists	4	4.5	+.5 (Taft)	+\$30,000
Library Media Assistants	4	4.5	+.5 (Taft)	+\$10,000
School Counselors	5	5.5	+.5	+\$30,000
School Psychologists	3	3	0	\$0
Special Ed. Teachers	17	19	+2	+\$120,000
Special Ed. Educational Assistants	27	20	-7	-\$210,000
Building Educational Assistants	16	16.5	+.5 (Washington)	+\$15,000
TOTAL				+\$480,000

*Starting with the 2013-14 school year, class time for art and music was standardized to 30 minutes for kindergarten and 45 minutes for grades 1-5. The plan has been for wellness education to have standard times to coincide with art and music starting with the 2014-15 school year. The staffing recommendation for wellness is not a function of the structural changes to the elementary program.

**There has been a goal of increasing math support at the elementary level to provide support to students who require intervention. The addition of another school reinforces the need for math support teachers. At least one of the two additional positions will be funded through Title IA.

Overall Estimated Cost Summary

The following charts provide an overview of estimated one-time costs to open Washington and estimated recurring costs for opening Washington and staffing.

One-time costs

Area	Estimated Cost
One-time cost to open Washington	\$886,675
Total	\$886,675

Recurring Costs

Area	Estimated Cost
Recurring cost difference between maintaining Washington as closed and opening Washington	\$49,063
Staffing	\$480,000
Total	\$529,063

Summary

The administrative team developed Success Criteria as a guide for the elementary planning process. A “Y” following a success criterion indicates that it is projected to be realized in the administrative recommendation. An “N” means that it is not anticipated to be met. “TBD” means that there is insufficient data at this time to assess.

Success Criteria (The elementary program will be successful if...)	
Class size ranges are maintained	Y
Instructional areas are structured to accommodate learning	TBD
Dedicated space is available for art and music	N
Students are accommodated at their home school to extent possible	Y
Classroom design is developmentally appropriate	TBD
Special education programs accommodate identified student needs	Y
Transportation costs remain stable or less	TBD
Early Childhood/Preschool Program remains centralized	Y
Gifted and Talented Magnet Program is accommodated	Y
One principal is assigned to each school/site	Y
Playground designs are age appropriate and equitable	Y
Consistent times for art, music, and wellness education	Y
Plan allows for future growth	Y
Instructional time for content areas is defined	Y
Teacher collaboration time is maximized	TBD
World Language recommendation is accommodated	TBD
Plan is financially viable	Y
Maintain neighborhood school concept where practicable	Y
Class sizes are equitable across schools	Y
4K program is implemented	TBD
Technology matches instructional need and is equitable across schools	TBD
Educational opportunities/alternatives are available (e.g. music/fine arts, World Language, year-round school, etc.)	TBD
Buildings meet safety and instructional needs	TBD
Staffing/school day/schedule supports best instructional practice	TBD
Maintain single grade classrooms	Y
Alliance expands as enrollment warrants	N

Appendix A

Themes from staff SWOT analyses conducted at each elementary school

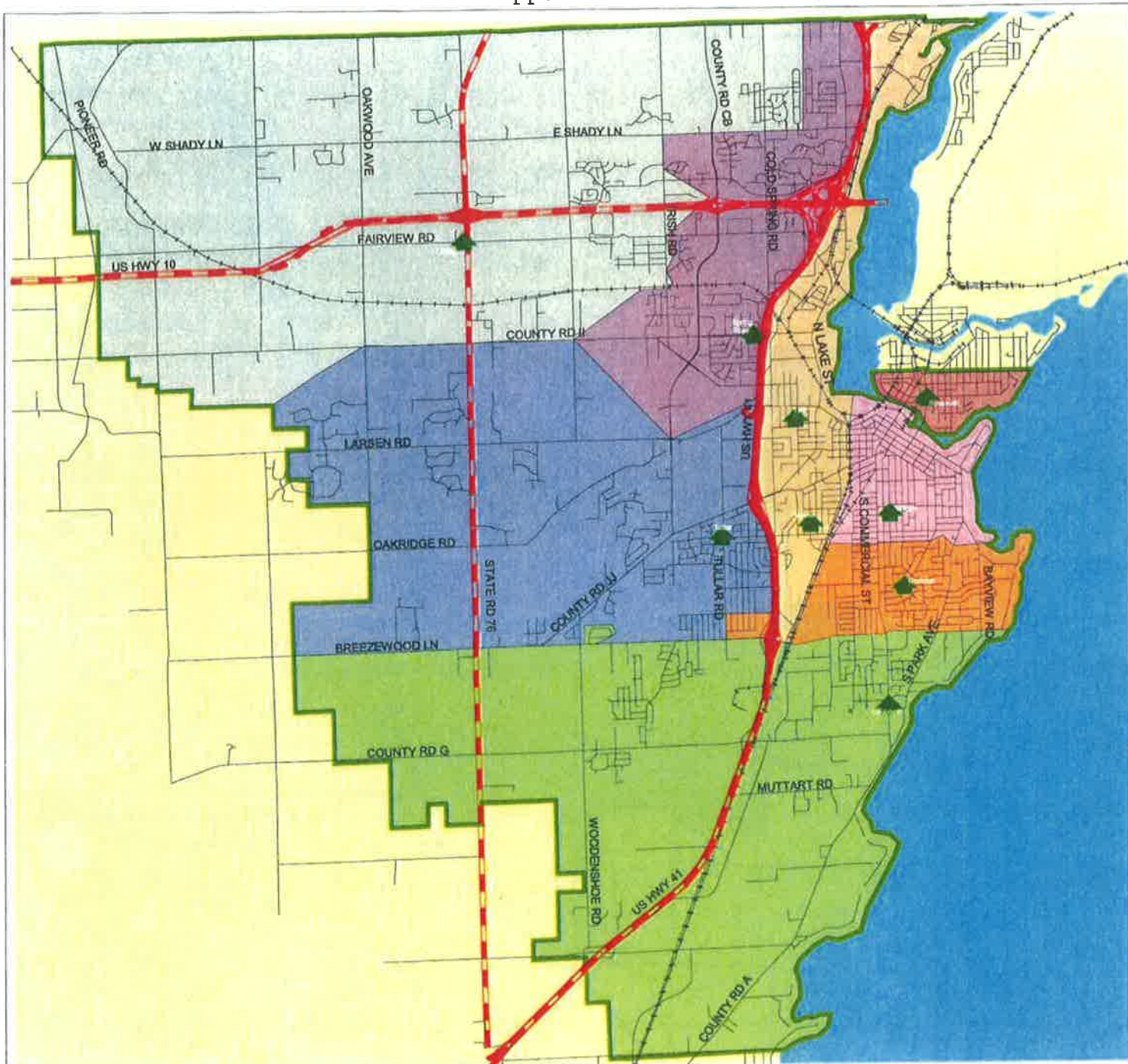
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Staff Technology Curriculum Literacy Coaches and Math Specialists District Literacy and Math Coordinators Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports K-5 schools Neighborhood schools Class size in K and 1 Board of Education support of class sizes Parent/family support PTOs Professional Learning Days and other professional development opportunities Before and After School Care Program Developmentally appropriate classrooms for Early Childhood Centralized Early Childhood Program</p>	<p>Staff morale Technology training, support, and equity across schools Lack of equitable resources across schools Writing curriculum Staffing level of Gifted and Talented Program Lack of time for staff collaboration and preparation Lunch program Condition of some buildings Various sizes of classroom space Space for supportive services, specials, and classrooms All students cannot be accommodated at home schools Class size in grades 3-5 Part-time Library Media Specialists Lack of full-time Math Specialists at each school Not having electronic report cards Transportation Socioeconomic diversity varies by school Parent support 2:15 p.m. and 11:30 a.m. dismissals can be confusing for families Communication</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>4 K Program World Language Program K-4, 5-6 structure Washington building Additions to buildings Available land for building a new school Adjust boundaries Full-time principal at each school Special education services at all schools Emotional Behavioral Disabilities program for students with severe needs Updated and electronic report cards Consistent instructional times for art, music, and wellness education Schedule/structure supports collaboration time Additional professional development opportunities Full-time Math Specialists at all schools Enhanced literacy materials Community partnerships Use of fund balance</p>	<p>Funding Economic conditions Open enrollment Boundary changes Effectiveness Project Increased expectations on staff Stress on teachers Socioeconomic diversity Lack of time for training, collaboration, preparation, and instruction Time to administer assessments Future opportunities for input Communication</p>

Themes from parent SWOT analyses conducted at each elementary school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Staff Technology Curriculum Differentiated instruction Intervention services Suzuki program Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) K-5 schools Neighborhood schools Class sizes especially K-2 School/space available if needed-Washington High interest in Alliance Parent involvement PTOs Volunteer opportunities in schools Before and After School Care Program Community Learning Centers</p>	<p>Equitable level of technology across schools No World Language Program offered No 4K Program Staffing level of Gifted and Talented Program Number of elementary schools in Neenah Overcrowding Space for supportive services and specials Storage space Various sizes of classroom space Class size in some grades Boundaries Students displaced from home schools Number of transitions for students/families Loss of neighborhood school for Taft Early dismissals Climate/morale of teachers Communication to parents</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Technology More differentiated instruction 4K Program World Language Program Half-day Kindergarten Adjust boundaries Washington building Available land for building a new school Expansion of Alliance Additions to buildings Year-round school Enhanced communication</p>	<p>Equitable technology for all grades Lack of 4K Program Balancing class sizes Space for art and music Lack of space to grow in current schools Families may not be able to attend home school Adding transitions for students/families Socioeconomic diversity Economic conditions State funding Transportation (transfers) Open enrollment Limited time in school day to meet instructional expectations</p>

SWOT analysis of Elementary Program conducted at the Board of Education Retreat on July 26, 2012

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Class size Smaller neighborhood schools Community support Staff Curriculum Financial situation Communication between parents/teachers Successful charter school Facilities No split classes Technology Parent involvement Student performance Low transportation costs After school programs Music programs Community partnerships Board of Education support Principals Level of experience of staff</p>	<p>No World Language Program Boundary issues Use of capacity Facility costs Personnel costs Travel time between schools Consistency across schools Curriculum Socio-economic variety Security Space for ACE Employee development and evaluation Design and use of space Efficiencies Staff morale Defined vision for elementary program Shared staff Scheduling challenges, e.g., specials</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Ability to differentiate Implementation of common core Employee development & evaluation Technology in the classroom Utilize Washington and Taft World Language Program Year-round school 4K Program Merit pay and pay-for-performance Opportunity to expand Alliance Facility energy efficiency Engaging community Additional charter schools Wellness Growing ethnic diversity of community</p>	<p>Security Open enrollment Class size School vouchers Transportation safety Financial situations Enrollment Unfunded mandates Growth of our special education needs Economy State funding Retaining staff Staff morale</p>

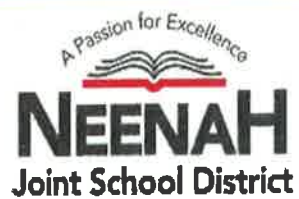


Neenah Joint School District

Elementary Attendance Areas

Effective 2008-09

Prepared by: Neenah Joint School District
July 1, 2007



Elementary Attendance Areas

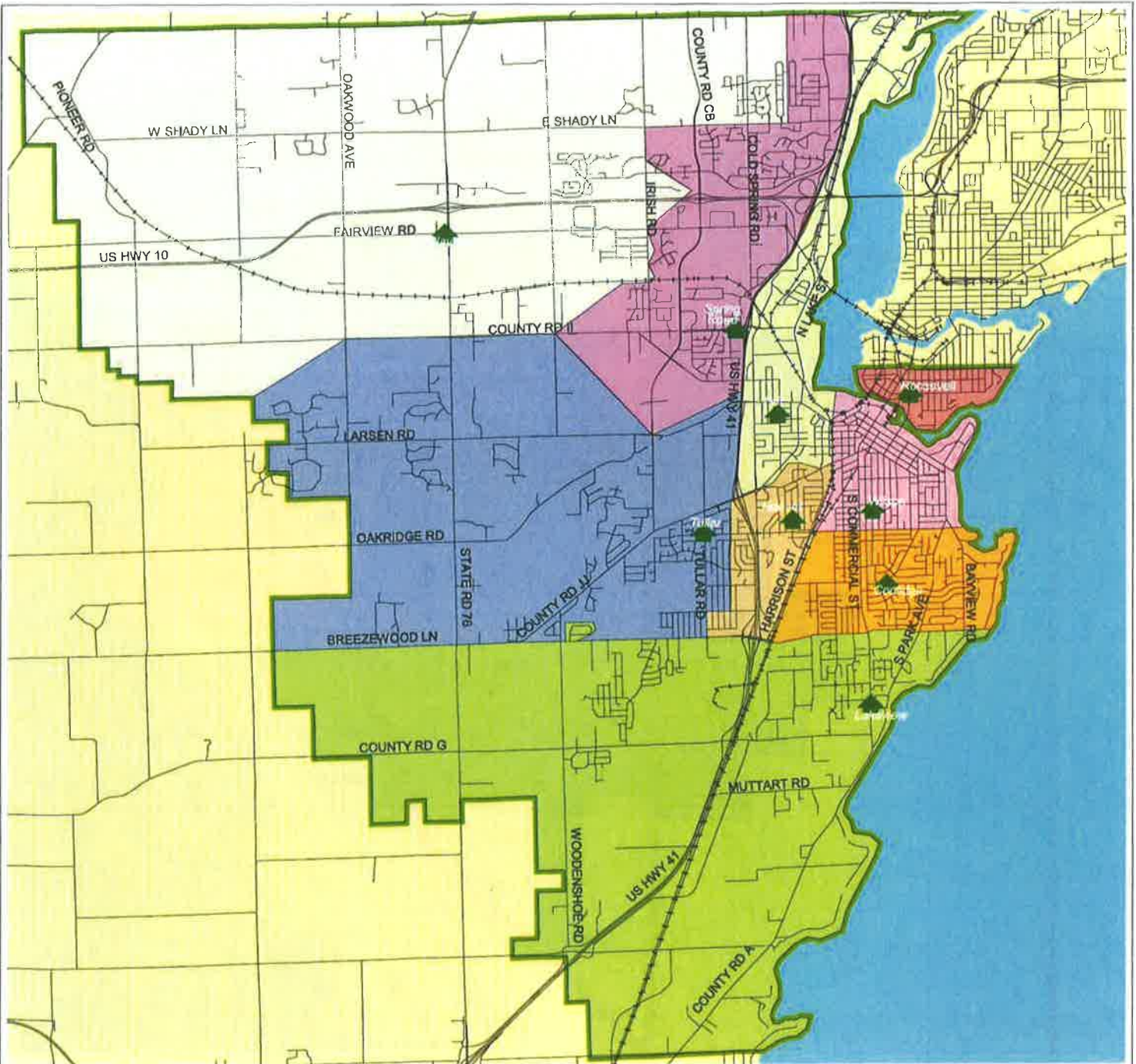
- Clayton
- Colldge
- Hoover/Taft
- Lakeview
- Roosevelt
- Spring Road
- Tullar
- Wilson

- Major Road
- Streets
- Railroads
- School District Boundary
- Water
- Background



0 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

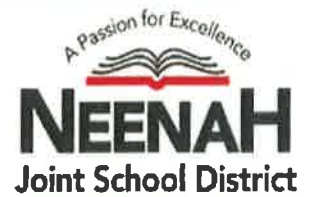




Neenah Joint School District

Elementary Attendance Areas Proposed 2014-15

Prepared by: Neenah Joint School District
November 10, 2013



Elementary Attendance Areas

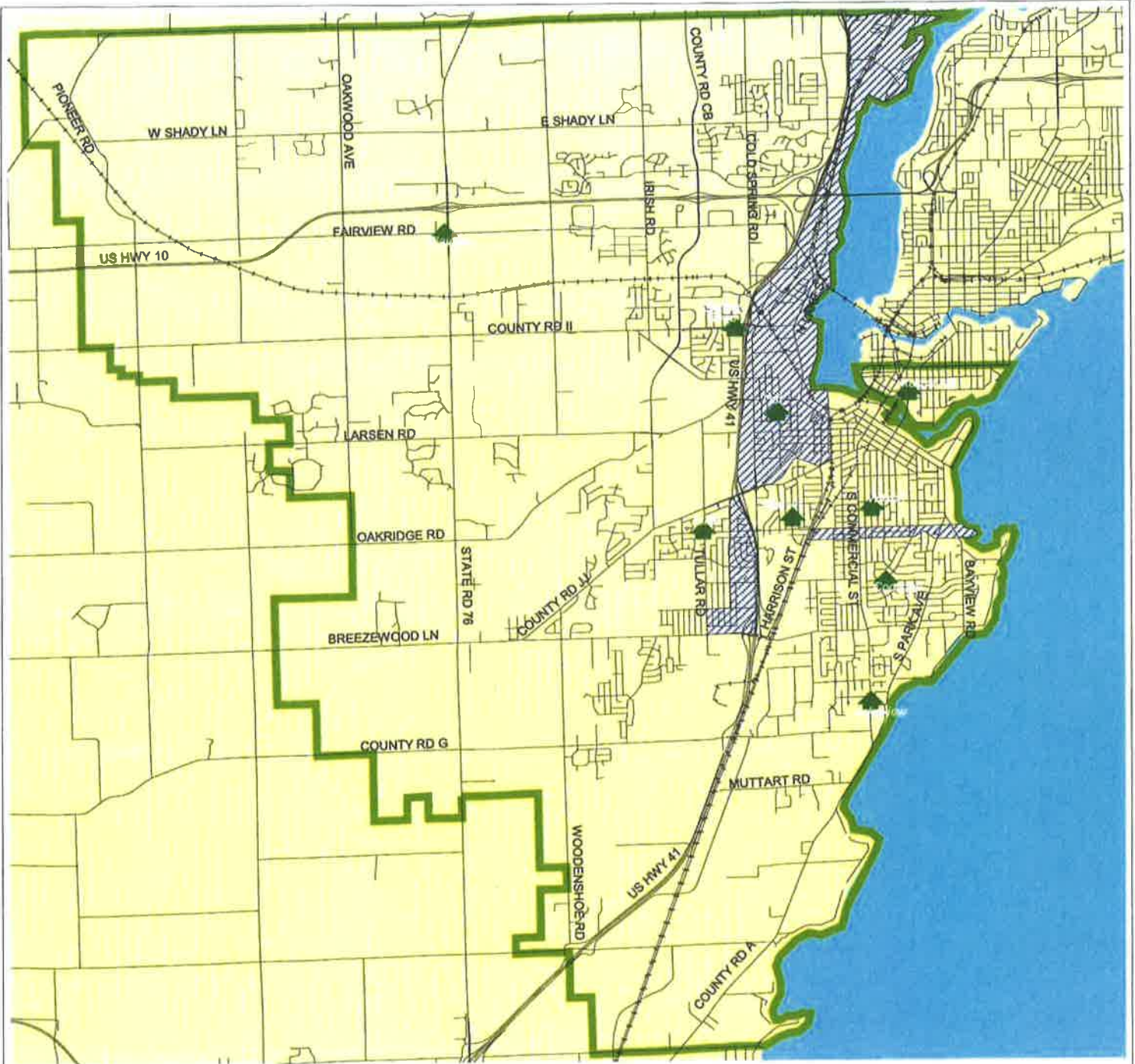
- Clayton
- Coolidge
- Hoover
- Lakeview
- Roosevelt
- Spring Road
- Taft
- Tular
- Wilson

- Major Road
- Streets
- Railroads
- School District Boundary
- Water
- Background



0 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

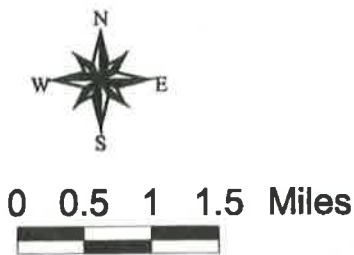











Neenah Joint School District

Changes to Elementary Attendance Areas for 2014-15

Prepared by: Neenah Joint School District
November 10, 2013



-  Major Road
-  Streets
-  Railroads
-  School District Boundary
-  Water
-  Background
-  Changed Attendance Areas