

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting – Nov. 8, 2022

CAC Members: Benaifer Dastoor, Wes Morse, Yanping Zhao, Sundeep Jain, Ganesh Balgi, David Heinke, Daniel McCune, Cathy Gomez, Melinda Hamilton, Carol Gao, Lori Cunningham, Andrew LaManque, Zongbo Chen, Mori Mandis, David Fung, Sam Vicchilli, Jingna Zhang, Seema Sharma, C.S Prakash, Kevin Du

FEA Representatives: Bonnie Belshe

Students: Kumar Chandra, Henry Widjaja, Saisuijan Kotakonda, Vikram Thirumaran, Rachael Ding

FUHSD Administrators: Superintendent Graham Clark, Associate Superintendent Trudy Gross, Associate Superintendent Tom Avvakumovits, Associate Superintendent/CBO Christine Mallery, Coordinator of Data and Assessment Denae Nurnberg, Lynbrook High School Principal Maria Jackson, Monta Vista High School Principal Ben Clausnitzer, Fremont High School Principal Bryan Emmert, Coordinator of Communications Rachel Zlotziver

Facilitator: Minh Le

Facilitator Minh Le opened the meeting at 6 p.m. and made welcoming remarks, shared the agenda and reviewed the committee's purpose in coming to an agreement around a short-term goal.

CAC Meeting #4 Results

Minh reminded the group about the voting process that took place last week and the re-vote over email that was done to address some of the technical issues with the first poll, when some individuals accidentally voted more than once.

Minh shared an overview of the results of the second poll (*Slide 3*).

- Several members of the group favored Scenario 1. However, as Superintendent Clark shared it would be helpful to have at least a small pilot program so that the district can get a sense if there are students and families willing to transfer.
- Scenarios 2, 3 and 4 are similar in that they all represent a geographical area within the district boundaries.

- Scenario 5 was the most popular in the poll. That may be partly because this was similar to the methodology that was used to create the LSSAP six years ago. But over the years, there have been unintended consequences caused by following a middle school path as a basis for balancing enrollment. More information will be shared later in the meeting about what has happened that was unintended 6 years ago.

Minh reviewed some of the sentiments that were voiced in the previous meeting by committee members (*Slide 4*).

Denae Nurnberg further reviewed the results of the voting from the previous meeting. She shared that the voting results did not necessarily allow the group to easily eliminate any of the scenarios (*Slides 5 and 6*).

Evaluation Criteria

Superintendent Clark reviewed the Deliberate Decision-Making Process and shared that we were on the steps of *Developing Evaluation Criteria* and *Contrasting and Comparing Courses of Action* (*Slide 7*).

Superintendent Clark reviewed some of the evaluation criteria that staff have been using while looking at the various options for balancing enrollment (*Slide 8*).

Unintended Consequences from LSSAP

Jason Crutchfield covered some of the unintended consequences of the LSSAP, including the transfer of 36 Monta Vista High School students to Lynbrook High School over the last four years. FUHSD doesn't have control over who attends the middle schools in our feeder districts, thus some students at Monta Vista have been eligible to transfer under the LSSAP criteria.

Looking at a scenario where we might let 8th grade students from Lawson Middle School to apply for a transfer to Monta Vista HS (*Slide 10*), it would not seem to make sense to encourage students living in the LHS area to transfer to MVHS, as LHS has its own enrollment decline that is being addressed. Neither would it seem like a good idea to encourage students living in the CHS area to transfer to MVHS as CHS is a key part of the enrollment balancing plan for LHS at this time. Thus, the district would be left with a very small population of 8th grade students eligible to apply for a transfer to MVHS.

Scenarios 2, 3 and 4 are all really the same scenario just in various sizes. Jason Crutchfield reviewed four different possible geographic areas that could be considered: Los Altos City limits, lower portion of the Homestead High School boundary area, all of the Homestead High

School boundary area and all of the Homestead High School and Fremont High School boundary areas (Slides 12 to 15).

Discussion

- *Question from CAC member: Do you know the number of students who are eligible for the LSSAP each year?*
 - *Jason Crutchfield: It changes each year, but last year around 300 students were eligible, and we had about 100 applications*

- *Question from CAC member: We've only been asked to talk tonight about the short-term, but it's pretty clear that Cupertino High School will soon be in the same situation that Lynbrook is in. Lots of housing is being built in Northern Sunnyvale and will see increasing enrollment and yet all our schools are concentrated in the Southern part of the district.*
 - *Jason Crutchfield: There has been 10-12 years of new construction, but we are just not getting many students from these projects. The student generation rate is very low, because what is being built is a lot of one-bedroom units, not necessarily family housing.*

 - *Superintendent Graham Clark: I would say we are thinking about the long term. But our goal now is to do something for the short term by the end of this calendar year. However, we are doing a study session in January on the costs, amount of land and what it would actually take to build a school in North Sunnyvale in order to address some of these community questions. But in terms of the short term, we are really just looking at a pilot program right now.*

- *Question from CAC member: Could we look at other middle schools other than Lawson as a pathway – perhaps Sunnyvale Middle School? Northern Sunnyvale students may have difficulty with transportation to Monta Vista High School, however they already travel quite a distance so we should not automatically disqualify them from consideration for transfer.*
 - *Minh: There could be criticism about why you are allowing students from one middle school the option to transfer but not students from other middle schools. The middle school strategy has a big disadvantage in that each middle school is attended by students from many different high school attendance areas, making it a very imprecise approach to use for enrollment balancing. When the CAC*

made its recommendation six years ago, the option to transfer to Lynbrook HS was offered to 8th graders from three different middle schools that were in close proximity to LHS. We could not see that MVHS would experience the same enrollment decline today that LHS did 6 years ago and did not have any concern about students from the MVHS area applying for transfer to LHS under the LSSAP program.

- *Comment from CAC member: Why not focus on Fremont HS as well as Homestead HS, why only focus on Homestead HS.*

- *Minh: A consideration shared earlier tonight is that this area might be too large, too many students are involved, and a transfer program might attract too many applications, exposing too many students and families to uncertainty, and eventually the disappointment of not getting selected by the lottery. Remember that we have five excellent high schools, and back in 2016 as well as now, we must not create or contribute to the perception that one high school is somehow better than the others.*

- *Comment from CAC member: The feeder school pathway is the most popular scenario in our voting, but now you are saying we should not choose this option.*

§ Jason Crutchfield: A geographic area is within our control, but middle school pathways are not in our control. That is a disadvantage because of the unintended consequences we previously discussed.

- *Comment from CAC member: When we consider all the options, we have to consider the impact on the high school that students are transferring away from. What would the impact be on Fremont High School if students choose to transfer, and would it impact the school negatively?*

- *Question from CAC student member: Could you create a program where socio-economically disadvantaged students received priority in a transfer program?*

- *Jason Crutchfield: According to California Ed Code, we cannot use income, race or other characteristics to determine who can transfer or attend certain schools.*

- *Question from CAC member: My family recently experienced the process of transferring from a private school to the public school system. I thought the basic concept of the public school system is that you attend school where you live. My feeling is you shouldn't disturb that fundamental concept of going to school where you live.*

- *Minh: You are advocating for the neighborhood school concept, and that is a fundamental concept with most school districts, including this one. On top of this idea, however, most school districts have a variety of inter-and intra-district transfer programs just like FUHSD. If a student does not apply or get selected for one of these transfer programs, he/she can always attend the neighborhood school, i.e. the one indicated by the attendance area the student lives in.*
- *Question from CAC member: How many applicants do we expect to get out of any given area?*
 - *Minh: We don't know exactly since this will be the first time we ask students and families to consider a transfer to MVHS. The rough number of students in each of these areas that Jason provided can be a useful guide to us in deciding how many students and families we ask in order to get not too few and not too many applications.*
- *Question from CAC member: Is there a scenario where we can survey families?*
 - *Minh: There are logistics involved in organizing a survey. Even in a really well-designed survey, there is also the question of what people say they will do in theory and what they would actually do in practice. There is not enough time to do a survey in the next couple of weeks, but perhaps down the road when we have more time to look at longer term solutions.*
- *Comment from CAC member: My recommendation would be a pathway through Cupertino Middle School as it is closer to MVHS.*
 - *Minh: When you take a look at the number of students attending CMS who live in so many different high school attendance areas, can you anticipate the unintended consequences we will have, i.e. having students apply to move to MVHS from other high school areas where we don't want to see a loss of students?*
- *Question from CAC member: My question is are we here to make a decision regarding MVHS right now or are we supposed to be looking at the big picture. Last time, we had CUSD here to answer some of these questions that we have.*
 - *Minh: Yes, the question is about whether the group would support a pilot program for the 2023-24 school year that the district would be able to learn from.*

- Superintendent Clark: *If we are going to do something for the next school year, we have to notify people that they will have that choice very soon.*
- *Question from CAC member: I'm sort of torn, I'm hearing "short-term solution" but also hearing "pilot". I feel like the question "can MVHS have 30 students for a year or two?" (a short term "ask") is different than something we want to keep doing indefinitely.*
 - Minh: *Your concern is that the short-term solution could become the long term.*
- *Comment from CAC member: I think there is a fundamental difference with the situation last time as there was an easier pathway between just one high school district and one elementary district. This is a very different and more complicated scenario because now there are two feeder districts involved. I can also say that the CUSD choice programs do create some stress for families. In some of these programs, more people get turned away than there are spots available.*
- *Comment from CAC member: We haven't talked about whether we should be revisiting the LSSAP, so I think we should include a sunset clause.*
 - Staff: *We have consistently approved this on a one-year or two-year basis and had the CAC come back together to look at how the LSSAP program is working.*
- *Comment from CAC member: One recommendation I would make would be can the district fund an equity officer to look at how to run these types of programs.*
- *Question from CAC member: Does CUSD know if their schools of choice entice people that otherwise would choose private schools?*
 - CAC member: *It's very family specific, it depends on a variety of factors.*
- *Question from CAC member: Do we have any longitudinal data about students that come back to public schools in high school?*
 - Staff: *Yes, we have a lot of students that move into our district that previously went to private schools.*
- *Question from CAC member: How flexible is the number of students you need to transfer?*

- *Jason Crutchfield: It is somewhat flexible. If we target 30, but only get 10, we would transfer those 10 students.*
- *Comment from CAC member: To echo my previous comments, this is a perfectly fine short-term solution, but not a good long-term solution. If our strategy is to have families make a decision based on their perceptions of each school without having experienced it, that is not a good long-term strategy.*
- *Comment from CAC student member: it's better to have more rather than less students have the opportunity to transfer. I would steer us towards more rather than less. I think logistically it is just easier.*
- *Comment from CAC Student Member: I would caution us from relying on the ratio from LSSAP because the circumstances are different this time.*
- *Question from CAC member: I don't see that we have a consensus. Should we stop and take more time to do something right, rather than something quicky?*
- *Comment from CAC member: I would recommend pulling the students from the Homestead HS area, as we are talking about a small and reasonable number of students for a short-term solution. This is a middle ground solution that addresses the short and middle term.*
- *Principal Giglio: I would agree with the last CAC member's comments. We have more kids right now and we are going to have more kids for several years. To me this is what makes sense for the next few years. Yes, I want to protect my school, but I also want to support my district and help MVHS, and it doesn't hurt HHS to give up a small number of students. This is the recommendation that I would be advocating for right now.*
- *Comment from CAC member: I have some frustration feeling like we don't have the information we need to make a decision. What if we divide the Homestead HS boundary into tiers and offer the option to Tier 1 first, then if you don't get enough applicants you move on to Tier 2, etc.*
 - *Staff: Logistically the time involved to do that would be hard. It would take more time to go through that kind of staggered process.*
 - *Comment from CAC member: The people that live in North Sunnyvale will feel resentment about why they don't get a benefit that the people in the southern part of the district receive.*

o Comment from CAC member: But we don't have the information about how families will respond.

· Comment from CAC member: We won't have that until we try something.

· Principal Tomberlain: I agree with Principal Giglio. I think giving the option to 450 eligible students to get the 30 you want is reasonable. It is going to help MVHS preserve some jobs and courses. HHS is the school that is oversized right now, and they kept having to add sections at the start of the school year which was a problem. This short-term solution will help MVHS mitigate their losses and help students at HHS so the school doesn't have to scramble at the last minute to make new classes for them and shift them around. If you go too big with this pilot, you create a false sense of scarcity. I don't think we want to create that kind of mood around the district. Six years ago, Principal Jackson of LHS and I were very careful not to set up a "you won the lottery" type of sentiment.

· Comment from CAC Member: I resonate with what Principal Giglio said. And within the time limits, I think this solution would be optimal.

· Comment from CAC student member: I think most people seem ok with a temporary HHS solution, but I would caution that choice programs are more often taken advantage of by those who are affluent, so we need to make sure we provide resources so that people can actually make that choice.

· Comment from CAC member: You're not addressing access and equity by expanding the zone of choice. I feel like we've misused the term equity in this group. People in North Sunnyvale that don't have access to transportation to MVHS are not going to be able to do this. We've been hearing about those in North Sunnyvale who are choosing to send their children to private schools.

· Comment from CAC member: I'm hearing that HHS would prefer to open the option to all families vs. just in the Los Altos portion of the boundary area.

o Principal Giglio: Yes, that is correct.

Minh asked the CAC members whether they had enough information to be able to come to a consensus around a short-term solution. He restated what the principals had shared and that they all indicated they were supportive of Principal Giglio's recommendation and reasoning. He

asked the five non-voting student members for their recommendation and they each indicated they were in agreement with it as a temporary solution.

- *Question from CAC member: In the application, would it be possible to collect some data about families' ability to handle potential transportation issues involved in transferring school sites?*

- *Jason Crutchfield: Yes, we could look at that.*

- *Comment from CAC member: I want to reiterate that this is fine as a short-term solution, but not as a long-term solution. I just want to say it a third time.*

Minh asked for FEA's position on the recommended solution, and Bonnie Belshe shared that FEA agreed with the recommendation on the table.

Minh called for a vote of the voting CAC members present, and 16 of 20 voted in favor of the recommendation to allow students from the Homestead High School area the option of transferring to Monta Vista High School. Of the four other members, two voted for a smaller area (the lower portion of the Homestead High School boundary area), one voted for the larger area (both the HHS and FHS attendance areas), and one voted to take no action at this time.

Presentation Sub-Committee

Minh asked for nominees to the Presentation Sub-Committee, who will present the CAC's recommendation to the Board of Trustees (*Slide 16*). Several individuals were nominated or volunteered themselves to make the presentation. All those who were nominated or volunteered were affirmed by the group to be part of this sub-committee. Those members are all five student CAC members, David Heinke, Carol Gao and David Fung.

Closing

Graham thanked the group for their hard work and commitment to the CAC process. He indicated that the work would continue in the next year. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.