

**Quakertown Elementary School, January 12, 2015**

1. Establishing an objective regarding middle school team size is a good idea.
2. Will students on north side of Mill Street continue to be bussed due to PennDOT designation of hazardous road several years ago?

Administration Response: Bus routes will not be determined until after a final plan is approved by the Board. Changing the school of attendance does not change any routes previously designated as hazardous. In addition, the District is beginning to work with our local municipalities to consider sidewalk improvements and crossing guards to improve safety on several potential walking routes.

3. Will students needing to cross Main Street or Broad Street have crossing guards or be bussed?  
Administration Response: Bus routes will not be determined until after a final plan is approved by the Board. Changing the school of attendance does not change any routes previously designated as hazardous. In addition, the District is beginning to work with our local municipalities to consider sidewalk improvements and crossing guards to improve safety on several potential walking routes.

4. What will the size of the elementary schools be after the redistricting?  
Administration Response: The size of each school will not be significantly affected. Bob – need this data

5. How will this plan affect transportation cost?  
Administration Response: In the first two years, when older students (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades) have the option to remain in the current school or move to the new school, transportation costs are expected to be about the same as they are currently. Once the new map is fully implemented, there are expected to be some savings from having more efficient routes.

6. Will Full-day Kindergarten be provided for all students at Quakertown ES?  
Administration Response: No, pending the Program Evaluation and approval for next year, the Full-day Kindergarten program will continue to be offered to students who are identified as needing it. The District does not have the space, and cannot afford to offer FDK to all kindergarten students.

**Neidig Elementary School, January 12, 2015**

1. How soon must we decide if we opt to have 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> graders move to the new redistricted school rather than stay at the current school?

Administration Response: Once the Board approves a final plan on February 26<sup>th</sup>, the Administration will be able to move forward with planning for that. There will be a specific process and notification deadline that will be communicated to all affected families.

2. Will the redistricting affect class size?  
Administration Response: Not significantly, no.

3. Will Kindergarten students attend school in their new redistricted attendance area?  
Administration Response: Yes, with the exception of the Full-day Kindergarten program. Children who are offered and elect to attend FDK will attend a school where FDK is offered, even if it is not their “home” school where they will attend for first grade.
4. How will parents and students be welcomed to their new redistricted school?  
Administration Response: Our principals and parent leadership in each building will develop welcome opportunities for new families. This planning will not take place until after a final plan is approved by the Board.
5. Were other factors considered in this decision making, such as socioeconomic factors?  
Administration Response: Yes, an exhaustive list of factors was considered, including birth rates and expected enrollments, planned developments, impact on school communities, and demographic factors such as socioeconomic levels.
6. Written descriptions of the attendance boundary should be prepared.  
Administration Response: This is an excellent suggestion and we are working on preparing those written descriptions right now.

#### **Trumbauersville Elementary School, January 15, 2015**

1. Lucas Court has 12 houses and 6 families have school aged children. This cul-de-sac neighborhood should be considered as part of the neighborhoods across the road and be sent to Trumbauersville ES rather than be moved to Pfaff ES.  
Administration Response: We have asked our consultant to evaluate the impact of this request and determine if it is feasible to consider it. Keep in mind that the proposed plan is designed to maintain equitable class sizes at both the elementary and middle level, and that changes in where one neighborhood attends school is likely to require that a different neighborhood be redistricted as well. In addition, changing this neighborhood back to Trumbauersville ES would also change their current middle school from Milford to Strayer, so there would still be a change of school but at the middle level.
2. Is there an option to have our 7<sup>th</sup> grader, now at Milford, go to Strayer with his 6<sup>th</sup> grade sibling?  
Administration Response: Yes. If the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grader will attend Strayer based on the new map, your incoming 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader has the option of remaining at his/her current middle school OR moving to the new middle school. This might be an attractive option in families with more than one student in middle school next year. The proposed plan does not, however, allow the opposite. All incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders under the proposed plan must attend the correct middle school based on the new map, even if they have a current middle school sibling who is going to stay in the current school. Families who elect not to move 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders may have a child in each middle school if that is the best option for their family.
3. Will map be available for parents to review in more detail?  
Administration Response: Yes – the map is available on the QCSD website.

4. What is the plan for expansion of Full-day Kindergarten which is now in 3 buildings-Quakertown ES, Neidig ES, and Richland?

Administration Response: The FDK program will undergo a program evaluation this year, and pending approval, will be expanded into two additional elementary buildings next year. The building locations have not yet been determined.

5. Due to the need to arrange child care, when will we find out if Kindergarten is kept other students in the neighborhood going to Pfaff?

Administration Response: Kindergarten students will attend kindergarten in the correct school according to the new map, and will continue into grade 1 in that school. If a student is offered a slot in a full day kindergarten section, then it is possible that he or she will go to kindergarten in a different building.

6. Will students still be bussed if they are now?

Administration Response: If they are attending the same school, yes. If they are attending a new school and live in a neighborhood that is bussed to that school, yes.

7. Have you considered nonpublic students coming into the public schools at certain grade levels?

Administration Response: Yes, all demographic factors were considered in calculating the number of students expected to attend each grade level in each school.

8. How was it decided to send certain elementary schools to Milford MS and others to Strayer MS? We live in Milford Township and the change will cause a longer school bus ride.

Administration Response: One of the objectives given to the Redistricting Committee was to balance class sizes appropriately between the two middle schools. The decision about which elementary schools feed which middle schools was based on both distance factors and on which combination of elementary schools would send the optimal number of students to middle school each year to achieve class size balance.

9. If a child opted to stay in their current school in the first transition year, could they decide to move in the second transition year?

Administration Response: Yes.

10. Splitting elementary students from Tohickon Valley ES and Trubauersville ES between both middle schools had an advantage of reducing the "long-standing animosity" between the middle schools.

Administration Response: Any redistricting plan will have pros and cons. The Redistricting Committee heard feedback from many community members, and the consensus of the feedback was that splitting elementary schools between the two middle schools was divisive and resulted in students living in the same neighborhoods attending different middle schools.

11. Given the student achievement variations between elementary schools, can any financial savings be used to provide more resources to some schools?

Administration Response: The redistricting plan is not expected to either increase costs or result in any financial savings, at least in the first few years during the transition period.

12. How do we let the administration know that we have opted to have our 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader move to the new redistricted school rather than stay at the current school?

Administration Response: Once a final plan is approved by the School Board, all the processes and procedures for families of incoming 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to notify the district of their choice will be developed and shared with families.

13. How long will middle school bus runs be?

Administration Response: Bus routes will not be created until after the final plan is approved by the School Board. On average, bus run times are not expected to increase, however some routes may be longer or shorter than they are right now.

14. The option of having a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade student move to the new redistricted school along with a younger sibling will still be difficult for the older student.

Administration Response: The committee considered several options for implementing the new boundaries, including full implementation next year (the “ripping the band aid off” approach) and various transition plans. After consideration of the pros and cons of all the different options and the impact on class sizes, the two year transition plan – which gives families the choice for next year’s 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders – was determined to be the most viable option. That option allows each family to make the decision about whether it is better for their family to have all children in one school or to keep their incoming 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grader in the same school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Richland Elementary School, January 21, 2015**

1. We live in Richlandtown Borough and have three elementary children-K, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> at two different schools now. That means we would need to decide whether to move the 4<sup>th</sup> grader along with the others to Neidig. While we agree that the plan is good, any movement of children will be difficult and the District has an obligation to do better.

Administration Response: The committee considered an exhaustive set of options in considering how to meet the Board objectives to eliminate open areas and keep neighborhoods together. Any proposed plan will unfortunately require some students to move in order to meet the goals of the redistricting process. The transition period was included to give each family the ability to decide whether to move their older child to the new school or retain them in their current school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. That way each family can make the decision that best fits their child’s and family’s needs.

2. Living in an open area I have been very anxious each summer. I like the certainty of this plan.

Administration Response: The committee appreciates the positive feedback they have heard from the community.

3. One advantage of open areas is that with so many buses traveling across the District it has been possible to transport our child across the District between joint custody arrangements. Can this be continued?

Administration Response: Not necessarily. Whether transportation can be provided to/from two different addresses will depend on the specific addresses and whether there is a bus still going to that area.

4. My children are currently on the bus for 45 minutes. How will this plan affect bus ride times?

Administration Response: Bus routes will not be created until after the final plan is approved by the School Board. On average, bus run times are not expected to increase, however some routes may be longer or shorter than they are right now.

5. It appears that transportation savings are possible. If so, how can we justify spending more money than necessary during the two year transition?

Administration Response: Transportation savings is only one of the exhaustive set of factors the committee considered in making its recommendations. The recommended plan is expected to be cost-neutral in the first two years and then to generate some transportation savings after that. The potential transportation cost savings had to be balanced against the needs of students and families and the desirability of providing some transition time.

6. How will decision making for next year's 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders work?

Administration Response: Once a final plan is approved by the School Board, all the processes and procedures for families of incoming 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to notify the district of their choice will be developed and shared with families.

7. Is there a way to know how many times students have been moved in the past?

Administration Response: Unfortunately, no. Students change schools for many different reasons, and there is not a way to pull that specific information from our data.

### **Pfaff Elementary, January 29, 2015**

1. Please review the assignments along Grant and Allentown Roads

Administration Response: This area has been added to the list for further review, and a decision will be made prior to the February 12, 2015 Board meeting.

2. What efforts will be made to be sure all students are welcomed to their new school?

Administration Response: Faculty and parent organizations in each building are already thinking about and working on this. Each building will have opportunities for students and families to be oriented and welcomed. Our building communities were very successful with this the last time we redistricted, and are already working on how to best welcome the new families that will be joining them.

3. When will parents need to decide on whether their 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade student will go with their younger siblings to the new school?

Administration Response: Once a final plan is approved by the School Board, all the processes and procedures for families of incoming 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to notify the district of

their choice will be developed and shared with families, including the deadline to notify the District.

**Tohickon Valley Elementary, February 4, 2015 (Snow Make-up Date)**

1. Please review the assignment of students on Dahl Road  
*Administration Response:* This area has been added to the list for further review, and a decision will be made prior to the February 12, 2015 Board meeting.
2. Our son is in a special reading group, will that be available at his new school?  
*Administration Response:* Similar programs for reading support are offered in all of our elementary schools. Children will continue to receive the support they need in the new school.
3. A. We hope that staff will welcome the new students and families to the new school.  
B. As a teacher in another school district, I am sure the teachers will make all efforts to welcome the new students.  
C. As a teacher in Richland Elementary School, I am sure the teachers will make all efforts to welcome the new students.  
*Administration Response:* Faculty and parent organizations in each building are already thinking about and working on this. Each building will have opportunities for students and families to be oriented and welcomed. Our building communities were very successful with this the last time we redistricted, and are already working on how to best welcome the new families that will be joining them.
4. When will the decisions be final?  
*Administration Response:* There are some areas along boundaries that are currently under review, and decisions about amending the recommendation to the Board for these areas will be made prior to the February 12, 2015 Board meeting so that everyone understands the impact of the final plan. The decisions will be final once the plan is approved by the Board on February 26, 2015.
5. As a parent in an open area, I worried about my children's assignment every year. Although this is a change for some families at this time, it is a relief to hundreds in the open areas.  
*Administration Response:* The Committee worked very hard to accomplish this objective, while being sensitive to the needs of all families in the community. The positive feedback is appreciated.
6. An effort should be made to welcome students on the new buses because this is their first contact with the new school.  
*Administration Response:* This is an excellent suggestion, and we will incorporate it into our planning for the transition.

7. Please provide more information on the eastern extension of the Pfaff attendance area.

*Administration Response:* This area has been added to the list for further review, and a decision will be made prior to the February 12, 2015 Board meeting.

### **Emails**

**Note:** Emails about an individual child were responded to, but have not been included here

1. We like the elementary plan but do not agree with the middle school plan. Although we live closer to Milford MS we will be sent to Strayer MS because we are being assigned to Trumbauersville ES, which is proposed to be in the Strayer feeder area in its entirety. From our older child's experience, it does not matter if elementary school children are kept together for middle schools because they will know some other children from their current elementary school.

*Administration Response:* Any redistricting plan will have pros and cons. The Redistricting Committee heard feedback from many community members, and the consensus of the feedback was that splitting elementary schools between the two middle schools was divisive and resulted in students living in the same neighborhoods attending different middle schools.

2. For middle school, please consider allowing students with an older sibling staying in their current middle school to follow their sibling to that school so that the family is not split between the two middle schools.

*Administration Response:* This option will be analyzed to see if it is possible without creating class size imbalances at one school or the other.

3. Would I be able transport my child to their current school rather than transfer to a new school?

*Administration Response:* No. The attendance boundaries are designed to be fixed with students attending the correct school for their area. With the exception of next year's 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, who can choose to remain in their current school (but will attend the middle school according to the new feeder pattern based on the map either way) all students must attend their new school in 2015-16.