



Elementary Consolidation Review & Early Learning Expansion

Operational Understandings – Approved March 19, 2019

Background: Due to shifting community demographic and regional influences, Walla Walla Public Schools has experienced a reduction of approximately 250 elementary students over the last nine years. Continued elementary student attrition is anticipated to increase slightly over the next few years, but then expected to stabilize based on demographic and population analysis.

Because of this historic and forecasted student attrition, the district is anticipating approximately 25 unfilled classrooms across its 6 elementary campuses, resulting in significant financial inefficiencies, program sustainability challenges, underutilized campuses, inability to offer increased access to early learning, and middle school feeder pattern imbalances.

The Board has tasked itself with analyzing data - engaging staff, parent and community feedback - and deciding on a responsible course of action for implementation in the 2020-21 school year. The Board has identified that a final decision will be decided upon on or before their November 5, 2019 meeting.

Consistent with the Board's agreed-upon strategic planning belief statements of "*maximizing the impact of its resources*" as well as "*collaborative and transparent operation*," the Board will consider the following criteria in developing their course of action:

- Agree upon a draft timeline to frame their analysis and outreach
- Review, minimally, the following data and information to inform their decision:
 - Consider financial savings and other means to improve operational efficiencies
 - Better understand the prototypical elementary model and its impact on school funding
 - Analyze school capacities in addition to campus opportunities and limitations of each elementary school facility
 - Understand current student residence and neighborhood school attendance patterns
 - Analyze current and projected elementary student enrollment across the Walla Walla attendance area
 - Review early learning space requirements and compliance standards
 - Explore teaching and learning implications and program best practices
 - Consider student diversity and demographic impacts resulting from any proposed changes
- Consistent with the recommendation of the 2017 Bilingual Committee, maintain the phased-in, two-way dual program at Edison Elementary
- Develop one or more solutions for community feedback that:
 - increase efficiency and ensure sustainable student populations; and,
 - provide for additional classroom space for the district and/or community partners to enhance access to early learning opportunities
- In accordance with agreed-upon Board Operational Protocols, the Board President will be the spokesperson pertaining to official board correspondences related to the Board's involvement in this process