

## **QUESTION:**

**Are there school or grade level configurations that are more beneficial for student learning than our current groupings?**

## **COMMENTS:**

- 1. If we do have to limit number and types of configurations, HOW do we decide which ones to keep? Multiage, combo, traditional, looping?**
- 2. Don't want to see any of the younger groups mixed in with the High School. Would rather see 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> grade go back to elementary levels, than go up.**
- 3. I am concerned about optimal size of school for younger students. We are already losing focus on students as individuals. Young children should feel KNOWN by the people around them, and know the people around them.**
- 4. Concern at Middle School having so many different teachers that no one can really make deep connections, better to have maybe cross age groupings with 2 or 3 teachers only.**
- 5. Need to open the age groups to facilitate creativity, ability grouping multi-generational learning, FLEXIBILITY.**
- 6. Concern that our HS students are reporting that Middle School years were the worst in their lives. Could we change the grouping to make it more positive? (This is coming from parents and students (the age lots of kids leave and go to WIA). Bullying starts and girls "dumb down".**
- 7. Don't understand why our MS has been allowed to exist given the buildings physical condition.**
- 8. Mentor programs like Central Park East (mentors had time built into their day)**
- 9. Way too much age based grouping and not enough ability grouping.**
- 10. Number of students matter if you get more than about 600 students. It is not ideal and less positive for staff and students.**

(over)

11. "Less about configuration and more about practice".
12. Have to take into consideration things like playground safety, but then it isn't as easy to do cross age tutoring.
13. When we separate kids by ages we don't allow them to develop those skills for mutual cooperation, mentoring, living together, building community. (It isn't what life is like.)
14. More ages within a school to facilitate cross age peer tutoring/mentorship and fewer transitions.
15. More flexibility so we could make groupings that made sense and are not so arbitrary.
16. ~~K-6 grouping- Worried about 5<sup>th</sup> grader going to Middle School.~~
17. Freshmen year difficulties within groups; peer influence rules- drugs, sex and bullies.
18. Not a good idea to mix alternative school students in with the main, regular school.
19. Parent recommendations, K-8 helps keep students bonded with a teacher and less likely to mature early.
20. Shift at Middle School with attitudes towards drugs and alcohol.
21. K-8?? When you have big people and little people it brings out the best in the older kids and they can cross-age tutor.
22. Recommend K-2 with the High School.
23. Recommend K-6 Elementary and 7-12 Secondary. (here\* here\*)
24. Check out 7-R Vancouver School for Arts and Academics.

## **QUESTION:**

**Enrollment is currently declining. Will it turn back up, flatten out or continue to decline? Why do you think that?**

## **COMMENTS:**

1. Carry programs through from Middle to High Schools, such as Adventure Education.
2. What makes a smart class? Teachers, 100% passionate!
3. Identify our strengths and support them to increase enrollment in those areas, such as music. Become a magnet school.
4. Change the configuration of classrooms by technology and ability.
5. Decrease the bombardment of negative aspects of our district, and promote our strengths. Share positive information and communication in other media than the Record.
6. Investigate the amount of children home schooled in our area.
7. Most Elementary schools are K-5.
8. Multiage classrooms provide for expanded learning opportunities.
9. Be able to provide what the community wants to encourage students to attend this district.
10. Be flexible to serve our community needs.
11. Just because our district is smaller doesn't mean our services need to decrease.
12. Mothball a building depends on busing changes; Community Transit is available and encourages interaction between age groups. (Reassign bus drivers to other duties of the district.)
13. Conserve students by providing a broad menu in terms of types of classes offered.
14. Mothball Bayview and WIA buildings and combine them.

## **QUESTION:**

***If we are to recommend that a school building is taken “out of service,” what criteria should be used to decide?***

## **COMMENTS:**

1. How else could building space be used? For instance, providing space for non-profit and service groups – like a “community school concept.” Whidbey Watershed Stewards (that works with the SWSD) could sure use space for file storage, etc.
2. Hear from the Safety Committee and/or Maintenance Department about issues with each school that they are working on. There are some hidden (perhaps?) concerns.
3. PLEASE don't sell any buildings – mothball them or rent/lease them! (partnerships)
4. K-3 and 4-6 [*attendee drew brackets to show these 2 grade clusters together*]; 7/8/9 [*attendee circled these 3 grades together*]; 10-12 [*attendee listed this grade cluster*].
5. I think we should explore creating a Community Center with one of our schools – rent space to local non-profits, government health organizations, etc.
6. What if we turn the Middle School into an Arts and Crafts School where kids learn a skill as well as basic skills? Mentors in the community as well as teachers could staff an innovative program that could include community involvement and service.
7. I would like to see 8<sup>th</sup> graders stay away (separate) from older kids.

## **QUESTION:**

***We are inviting you into the problem. What questions should we ask that you think we haven't asked, or haven't been thorough with?***

## **COMMENTS:**

1. Why do you think enrollment is going to go up, down or flatten out?
2. What are the main issues with facilities problems re: health, safety, waste, and operating costs that the Safety Committee and Maintenance Department could address?
3. How do we serve ALL students that live in the District? Can we offer more choices in our programs and curriculum?
4. How do we not accept our declining enrollment? What can we do to at least flatten it out? Programs – Bands, sports, AP classes.
5. What is cause/are causes of decline in enrollment? Leaving system? Why? What do parents perceive as “excellence”? Are private schools growing? Why? Is home schooling growing? Why?
6. Is what Administration sees as “excellence” the same as what parents see as “excellence.”? Are these ideas diverging or converging?
7. What is optimal size of schools for students (Primary age? Older?)