

Community Consolidated School District 89

Boundary proposal fact sheet

September 2017
Updated October 2017

BACKGROUND

At 7 p.m. Monday, October 16, the Community Consolidated School 89 Board of Education will hear a presentation about a recommendation for changing the district's elementary school boundaries starting with the 2018-19 school year. The board meeting will be held at Glen Crest Middle School, 725 Sheehan Avenue, Glen Ellyn.

The Board will not vote on the recommendation at the October meeting. The earliest the Board would vote on the recommendation is at a public meeting in December. The Board could also vote not to change the boundaries.

At the October 16 meeting, Board members will hear about a boundary proposal that was the unanimous recommendation of the Superintendent's Boundary Committee, which is comprised of Board members as well as parents and staff from all four elementary schools. The option emerged after district administrators reviewed dozens of potential scenarios for more than a year, and presented four scenarios to the Boundary Committee.

A map and more information about the potential boundary change scenario can be found at www.ccsd89.org/BoundaryProposal.

The agendas, minutes, presentations, and documents from all the Enrollment and Boundary committee meetings can be found at www.ccsd89.org/BoundaryCommittee

This proposed boundary change would move:

- International Village students from Park View to Arbor View;
- Canterbury Woods students from Westfield to Arbor View;
- Arboretum Estates students from Westfield to Arbor View;
- Glen Park Estates students from Westfield to Arbor View;
- Four preschool classrooms would move from Arbor View to Briar Glen;
- One specialized classroom would move from Briar Glen to Westfield.

NEXT STEPS

- **7 p.m. Thursday, September 21:** Superintendent Tammaru will be visiting the Briar Glen Elementary Parent Teacher Council to discuss potential boundary changes.
- **7 p.m. Tuesday, October 3:** Superintendent Tammaru will be visiting the Arbor View Elementary Parent Teacher Council to discuss potential boundary changes.

- **7 p.m. Wednesday, October 4:** Superintendent Tammaru will be visiting the Westfield Elementary Parent Teacher Council to discuss potential boundary changes.
- **7 p.m. Thursday, October 11:** Superintendent Tammaru will be visiting the Glen Crest Middle School Parent Teacher Council to discuss potential boundary changes.
- **7 p.m. Thursday, October 12:** Superintendent Tammaru will be visiting the Park View Elementary Parent Teacher Council to discuss potential boundary changes.
- **7 p.m. Monday, October 16:** The Board of Education will hear a presentation about potential boundary changes at its regular meeting, open to the public. The Board will meet at Glen Crest Middle School, 725 Sheehan, Glen Ellyn.
- **7 p.m. Wednesday, October 25:** Community question-and-answer session with Superintendent Dr. Emily K. Tammaru at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 25, at Glen Crest.
- **7 p.m. Monday, November 20:** The Board of Education will hear more information about potential boundary changes at its regular meeting, open to the public. The Board will meet at Glen Crest Middle School, 725 Sheehan, Glen Ellyn.
- **8 a.m. Saturday, December 9 or 7 p.m. Monday, December 18:** The Board of Education could vote on potential boundary changes at one of its regular meetings, both open to the public. The Board will meet at Glen Crest Middle School, 725 Sheehan, Glen Ellyn.

HOW THE RECOMMENDATION WAS REACHED

Why are boundaries changes being considered now?

Over the last five years, the District has seen a steady increase in enrollment. In the 2012-13 school year, there were 1,968 students enrolled at the four elementary and one middle school in CCSD 89. Five years later, there were 2,192 students in those same schools to start the year – an 11-percent increase.

This increase caused a number of problems, including an enrollment imbalance that led to transportation issues.

The District believes strongly there are more enrollment increases ahead. In October 2016, the District hired demographer Dr. John Kasarda to study enrollment trends for the next five years. Kasarda used birth rates, home sales data, and historical trends to estimate future enrollment. At the time of the report, Kasarda estimated the District is likely to add an additional 331 students in the next five years. Kasarda estimated that it could be as many 609 additional students. The report can be viewed here: <https://goo.gl/BnhtRE>

In February 2017, the Board of Education agreed with an administrative recommendation to further study the issue. During the review, district administrators looked at dozens of scenarios and studied the impact of moving each of the district's more than 30 subdivisions.

When were the CCSD 89 boundaries last changed?

Community Consolidated School District 89 last changed its boundaries in 1991, in response to growing enrollment.

In 2009, the District considered changing boundaries to deal with declining enrollment, but instead decided to begin an “administrative transfer” transportation program that moves some students out of their neighborhood schools (often by bus) to buildings with more capacity. At the time, this was seen as a practical way to save money and minimize disruption for most families. In the first year, 10 students were bused or driven from the Briar Glen area to other CCSD 89 schools, with minimal disruption the students’ educational day.

However, as the district’s enrollment continued to grow, the number of students who were bused through the “administrative transfer” program also spiked. (See chart here: <https://goo.gl/gXyvga> on page 12.) In the 2016-17 school year, 97 students were being bused out of their neighborhood to other schools. In some cases, the students boarded a bus in their neighborhood, then rode to a school where they switch buses, and finally took a second bus to the school they attend. This caused students to lose educational minutes.

In the 2017-18 school year, 106 students are being transferred out of their neighborhood to other schools. For the 2017-18 school year, the District redesigned the bus routes so that no students would miss class time due to busing. This has led to significantly longer bus routes for some students. Some elementary school students are on the bus for close to 50 minutes – about 30 minutes more than in the past.

How does the District know the future enrollment projections are accurate?

Dr. Kasarda, a University of North Carolina professor, is an expert in demography, who has been hired by dozens of Illinois school districts, cities, and other government bodies around the country to give population estimates.

CCSD 89 also hired Kasarda in 2012 to estimate enrollment. Estimating five years out, he projected the District would have as many as 1,577 elementary students by the 2016-17 school year. By the end of the 2016-17 school year, the elementary enrollment was 1,544 students, a difference of about 2 percent.

Who chose boundary changes as the best way to solve the enrollment issue?

In September 2016, CCSD 89 Superintendent Dr. Emily K. Tammaru invited parents, community members, staff, and Board members to join one of the three Superintendent Committees: Enrollment, Strategic Plan, and Finance. The District received dozens of applications for all three committees.

The Enrollment Committee was made up of eight parents (two from each elementary school), one community member, six staff members (two principals and one staff member from each elementary), two administrators, and two Board members.

The goal of the Committee was to study enrollment data and trends; understand District policies related to enrollment; examine how resources and capacity were being affected by current and future enrollment; and make recommendations to the Board of Education on what course of action would best serve all CCSD 89 students.

The Enrollment Committee met on October 26, 2016; November 17, 2016; December 14, 2016; and January 25, 2017. The presentations, documents, and minutes for all those meetings were posted online throughout that time. They can be found here: www.ccsd89.org/BoundaryCommittee

The Enrollment Committee first learned about how the current enrollment was affecting the day-to-day educational services provided to students. The Committee members then considered a wide variety of potential solutions to handling future enrollment issues, everything from no change to temporary classrooms.

The Committee sought solutions that would best serve all students, use taxpayers resources responsibly, and provide a long-term solution. In December 2016, the Committee narrowed the initial list down to three possible solutions: boundary changes, grade-level centers, or moving fifth grade to Glen Crest Middle School. An analysis of these recommendations is available here: <https://goo.gl/rygXcn>

The Enrollment Committee was re-formed as the Boundary Committee after the Board agreed to study the issue further. Additional parents were added to the committee at this time to increase representation. The Boundary Committee has met four times since May 2017 and learned how the district evaluated boundary changes.

The Boundary Committee – which is composed of two board members, as well as staff and CCSD 89 parents from all four elementary schools - did not draw the maps. The committee is advisory. The Board of Education will make the final decision whether to change boundaries for the 2018-19 school year and, if so, how the boundaries should be drawn.

The agendas, minutes, presentations, and documents from the all the Enrollment and Boundary committee meetings can be found at www.ccsd89.com/BoundaryCommittee

How was this process communicated to the public?

Throughout this process, the District has kept the community informed through frequent updates in various formats, including newsletters, social media, news releases, media interviews, and website postings.

All presentation documents and minutes for the Enrollment Committee have been posted on the District's website and can be found at www.ccsd89.org/BoundaryCommittee

How were the proposed boundaries drawn?

The District consulted with Forecast 5 Analytics, which used analytic data to predict neighborhood growth and changes.

When drawing the boundaries, the District considered:

- Natural geographic boundaries that would affect how students would travel safely to and from school
- Balancing the school enrollments, as much as possible
- Keeping neighborhoods together at one school, if possible
- Minimizing changes as much as possible
- Creating a long-term solution that reduces the possibility for future boundary changes

There is no perfect solution to drawing boundaries. If the Board decides to change boundaries, families will be displaced and change is stressful. The District's staff is committed to working with families to ease the transition, just as they work with other students who move into a new school or move from elementary to middle school.

Did parents get any input on whether to make these changes?

There were 12 parents (three from each elementary school) who served on the Boundary Committee that made the recommendation to the Board of Education.

Parents were not part of drawing boundaries. This recommendation was done with input from experienced District administrators and Forecast 5 Analytics consultants. The proposed boundary lines are drawn to factor in transportation, neighborhood and geographic boundaries, minimal change, and a long-term solution.

What is the Board policy on boundary changes? Who approves these boundaries?

When considering boundary changes, the Board of Education is guided by Board Policy 500:30 (View policy here: <https://goo.gl/PnX9g4>.) The policy states:

The Board of Education shall set the elementary school attendance area boundaries and provide administrative regulations for assigning students to schools. Changes in these boundaries and school assignments shall be considered by the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall study the actual and potential enrollment of the District before making recommendations. The following guidelines will be used in setting boundaries:

- 1. Retain contiguous areas.*
- 2. Minimize number of students to be transported.*
- 3. Minimize number of students crossing and walking along major highways. (Maximum safety)*
- 4. Provide for comparability of equal educational opportunity.*
- 5. Retain flexibility to meet unknown enrollment fluctuations of elementary school attendance areas and/or to balance class sizes between schools.*
- 6. Retain reasonably permanent school assignment for maximum number of students.*
- 7. Assign K-5 children in a family to the same elementary school.*

Within these administrative guidelines, the district reserves the right to transfer students to schools other than the one to which a child would normally be assigned.

The Board will hear a presentation about the proposed boundary changes at a meeting at 7 p.m. on October 16 at Glen Crest Middle School. Community members will have further opportunity to comment at the November 20 Board of Education meeting, also at Glen Crest Middle School.

The earliest that the Board would vote on any boundary change proposal is December. If a vote is taken at that meeting, the vote will be final.

Why not study the issue for a few more years before making a change?

The District has spent more than a year studying dozens of possible options and concluded that, although difficult for some families, drawing new boundaries would balance the school populations over the long term. The Board will continue to study the issue before taking any action.

Will you be redrawing boundaries again five years, if the neighborhoods grow at different rates?

The District has used all possible data to propose the best long-term solution. The demographer does not provide enrollment projections past five years because the students would not yet be born. At this time, the District believes these new boundaries will be sustainable for more than five years.

Why doesn't the District build a new school or put an addition on to a current school?

At this time, the four current elementary buildings have capacity to handle the total District population, but not in the way that population is being split up.

At this time, the District does not have the financial resources to construct new schools, or add substantial additions onto schools. Even refurbishing an existing structure would be a multi-million-dollar project, at a time when the District is projecting deficit budgets for the next six years. A new building would also still necessitate new school boundaries.

Similarly, temporary classrooms – having class in a trailer – is an expensive option that substantially diminishes students' experience and does not solve the long-term problem.

Why doesn't the District make all the elementary schools into grade-level centers?

Creating grade-level centers is a method for redesigning schools to group all students in one grade into each building. For instance, one school might hold all preschool students, another all kindergarten and first grade students, another second and third graders, and so on. This solution would uproot nearly all CCSD 89 families and could cause families to have students in as many as four CCSD 89 schools as once, while increasing the cost to bus students all over the District.

The goal of the Enrollment Committee was to minimize disruptions as much as possible.

Why doesn't the District move fifth grade to Glen Crest?

Moving fifth-grade students to Glen Crest Middle School could create several potential problems, including placing elementary-age children with students about to enter high school. Moving fifth grade to Glen Crest would also likely create crowding at Glen Crest while underutilizing the elementary school buildings.

FUTURE IMPACT OF BOUNDARY CHANGES

Would current students be allowed to stay in the school they currently attend?

Only students who will be entering fifth grade in the 2018-19 school would have the option to stay in their current school. Parents would provide transportation. Parents would have a window of time to notify the school that their student will be staying. A full transition plan will be provided.

The District has an open boundary policy (View Board Policy 500.30-R here <https://goo.gl/SvMUq7>) Students who are currently on open boundary would need to re-apply. Not all applications would necessarily be approved.

Update (October 2017): After hearing feedback at PTC and community meetings, the Board will also learn about an option that proposes the same changes to boundaries, but would allow current kindergarten-through-fourth-grade students to stay at the school they currently attend for the rest of their elementary school career. These phased-in boundaries would only apply to students currently enrolled in kindergarten through fourth grade, and not any younger siblings or other students that have not have not yet started school.

Would there be staffing changes?

There may be some staff members moved between schools to accommodate the new enrollment at elementary schools. The District is already planning to hire at least one new teachers for 2018-19 school year to accommodate the expected enrollment increase.

Would this end the administrative transfer (busing) transportation policy?

The District will keep the administrative transfer policy. However, new boundaries would end or greatly minimize the practice of busing students out of their neighborhoods to schools with more capacity.

I live very close to one of the proposed boundary lines. How do I determine which school I would attend?

You can use the map linked at the top of this document to determine whether you would be affected by the new boundaries. If you have further questions about which school your student will attend, you can contact Barb Kosartes at bkosartes@ccsd89.org or (630) 469-8900, ext. 3514.

How will I explain this to my student if he or she has to change schools?

This would be the most difficult part of redrawing boundaries. Many students have developed relationships with students and staff at their current schools. For the families that have to change schools, it would be a stressful time.

For years, the District has worked to ensure that the educational curriculum is consistent at all CCSD 89 elementary schools, so a student can move between buildings without a disruption in their academic instruction.

There will undoubtedly be anxiety if students are starting at a new school. The District is committed to making extra efforts to welcome these students and families to their new school. The District will hold open house events for new students and parents to meet staff and visit their news schools before the start of the 2018-19 school year. The dates of those open houses will be announced well before event dates.

The staff has years of experience receiving new students. Every year, schools welcome students before and during the school year. The staff will continue to put a priority on ensuring that every new student is supported academically and socially.

The District hopes that parents - even parents who are disappointed with the change - will join in us making the transition as smooth as possible for students.

If you are looking for ways to talk about this topic at home, here are some good resources to help you start the conversation:

<http://www.educationcorner.com/adjusting-to-a-new-school.html>

<http://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/adjusting-to-new-school/>

If the Board changes boundaries, would my student's paperwork move to the new school?

Yes, all of your student's records would move with them to their new school. This would include medical records, attendance records, grading records, testing scores, IEPs, 504 plans, and any other records held in a student's permanent file.

I have a student with special classroom needs. If the Board changes boundaries, would assistants and therapists still be available at their new school?

Each school has highly qualified support staff including: interventionists; special education teachers; English language teachers; social workers; Challenge teachers; occupational, physical, and speech/language therapists.