

## **Community Consolidated School District 89**

# **Boundary proposal fact sheet**

### **BACKGROUND**

At 8 a.m. Saturday, February 4, 2017, the Community Consolidated School 89 Board of Education will hear a recommendation from the Enrollment Committee to change the District's elementary school boundaries. The meeting will be held at Glen Crest Middle School, 725 Sheehan Avenue, Glen Ellyn.

The Board will not vote on the recommendation on February 4. The earliest the Board will vote on the recommendation is at the regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 13, at the District Administration Center, 22W600 Butterfield Road, Glen Ellyn.

Both meetings are open to the public.

A map of the proposed boundaries can be found here:

[http://www.ccsd89.org/pages/CCSD\\_89/District\\_/proposed1718boundary](http://www.ccsd89.org/pages/CCSD_89/District_/proposed1718boundary)

The new boundaries would most directly affect residents in the Baker Hill, International Village, and Scottsdale subdivisions. Additionally, the District anticipates that the 97 students who are currently being bused and driven to other schools through administrative transfers will return to their neighborhood building.

This document contains information about the recent enrollment changes, the process for making a boundary-change recommendation, and the future impact of potentially changing boundaries.

### **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. This year, 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 transportation issues and capacity imbalance. For instance, Park View Elementary School is at 100 percent capacity in the 2016-17 school year while other schools are at 63 percent.

The District believes 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. 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://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicItemDownload.aspx?ik=39696372>

These enrollment increases and building capacities create an issue of educational equity and access.

### **When were the CCSD 89 boundaries last changed?**

Community Consolidated School District 89 last changed its boundaries in 1991, in response to a 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/xe23yX>) In the 2016-17 school year, 97 students were being bused out of their neighborhood to other schools. In some cases, the students board a bus in their neighborhood, then ride to a school where they switch buses, and finally take a second bus to the school they attend.

In order for the buses to move these students and accommodate other busing at the same school, the administrative transfer student typically arrive about five minutes late and leave about five minutes early, cutting into the amount of instruction these students receive. Over a week, these students could lose 50 minutes classroom time. Over a school year, these students could lose more than 29 hours of class time.

### **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 2017. The current elementary enrollment is 1,544 students, a difference of about 2 percent.

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

In September, 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: [http://www.ccsd89.org/pages/CCSD\\_89/Superintendent\\_Committees](http://www.ccsd89.org/pages/CCSD_89/Superintendent_Committees)

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/19gljY>

The Enrollment Committee did not have any input on how the potential boundaries would be drawn.

#### **How was this process communicated to the public?**

Throughout the process, the District kept the community informed through frequent updates in various formats. The Superintendent's email newsletter provided enrollment updates in October, November, December, and January. The Superintendent also shared information on the Enrollment Committee's work in the "Update" newsletter sent to all homes in November.

All presentation documents and minutes for the Enrollment Committee have been posted on the District's website. Additionally, the District has shared updates and reminders through various social media channels.

#### **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
- Matching the school population with building capacity
- 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. Some families will inevitably 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 eight parents who served on the Enrollment Committee that made the recommendation to the Board of Education. Additionally, all seven members of the Board of Education have students who currently attend CCSD 89 schools, or graduated from CCSD 89 schools.

Parents were not part of drawing boundaries. This recommendation was done with input from experienced District administrators and Forecast 5 Analytics consultants. Allowing parents to draw lines would inevitably pit families against each other. 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](#). 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 8 a.m. Saturday, February 4. Community members will have a chance to view the maps and hear about the process for recommending boundary changes. Community members will also have an opportunity to provide feedback to the Board through public comment at the beginning and end of the meeting. Public comments are limited to three minutes.

The earliest that the Board is expected to vote on the boundary change proposal at the regular Board meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 13, 2017. 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?**

There are two potential problems for delaying a boundary change. First, as mentioned above, the enrollment surge and the magnitude of the administrative transfer transportation program has created an unfair situation for nearly 100 students. That situation will be exacerbated as enrollment continues to increase.

Second, the District will begin registering new students for the 2017-18 school year in February and returning students in April. Enrollment affects a myriad of school decisions from staffing to supply purchases. The District cannot delay these decisions.

The District has spent months studying all possible options and concluded that, although painful for many families, new boundaries are the best long-term solution for the whole of the District.

**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 District does not have the financial resources to purchase property and 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.

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.

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 one program or grade out of a school?**

Shifting certain groups of students – such as moving preschool out of Arbor View to a different elementary building – does not solve the long-term capacity problems; it only transferred the problem to a new locations.

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 2017-18 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.

### **Would there be staffing changes?**

There may be some staff members moved between schools to accommodate the new enrollment at elementary schools. The District was already planning to hire at least two teachers for 2017-18 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 should end or greatly minimize the practice of busing students out of their neighborhoods to schools with more capacity. This reduction in transportation services is expected to save the District about \$79,800. However, the ultimate goal is to better serve the educational needs of all learners.

### **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 provided [here](#) 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](mailto: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?**

Without a doubt, this is the most painful 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 can 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 some 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 new schools before the start of the 2017-18 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/>

**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. 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.