2-5-2020 Community Meeting Group Input

Group 1 - Facilitated by Dave Kollar (Schuh’s notes)

#1

Safe to learn

Parent engagement

Emotional transition between schools

Quality teachers and school management

S/E growth and academics

Love learning, fascination, externally motivated, look at as a person

My kids safety, holding on to their identity

Schools to aspire to excellence

Safety first – secondary education

Students have the assistance that they need; ensure that the schools have the staff and funding to maintain stability

Meet the needs of all students

#2

Would students have staggered start times or all have the same start time?

Now, students would start at the same time. If the configuration

Will there be parents involved in the questions for the survey?

One question with a yes or no answer. The question will be neutral.

What is the expected class size for 6th grade?

How many seats would be at Alameda if 6th grade would not be added?

Would there be enough seats if all of the 6th grade students enrolled at Alameda?
Research comparing a 6-12 model or a 6-8, 9-12 model?

Are they going to be able to handle all of the students? Currently, my daughter’s teacher says that she cannot handle the size of the class. (Follow up with this parent)

What will the impact be at our elementary schools? With the drop in enrollment if 6th grade, will schools still be able to provide a quality educational environment?

Will there be money available to complete the project?

When will ground breaking take place? If a decision was made to change the grade configuration, would it delay the construction project?

#3 & #4 Excitement or concerns

Nothing

Alameda does not have PTA/PTO or SAC

Excited to grow students through IB – starting at 6th grade will help prepare students for the IB experience.

Excited about kids getting to have a dedicated science class every day if 6th grade would move to Alameda.

Concern about the influence of older student on younger students. How would younger students handle possible

Options for parents who want their students to attend a 6-8 grade configuration – currently my child is on a wait list.

Opportunities that students would have on a daily basis.

Students would be taught by content specialists on a daily basis.

What makes this an IB school?

How many students graduate from the IB DP program each year?

Maturity of the students; will the younger students be co-mingling with older students.

Opportunity that students will be able to expand on academic fields.
Concerned that currently elementary schools are restrained by lack of resources. My concern is that with these expanded opportunities students would have access to all of the opportunities that students want and we want for them.

Concern that we are currently in a title 1 and moving to a title 1 school – will all students receive what they need.

Other articulation areas have gotten a new school – Lakewood, Bear Creek. It is time for Alameda to have a new school. I am tired of us being the armpit of Jeffco.

Taking away the innocence that comes with the transition concerns me.

**#5 Vote**

Vote against

Abstain

Vote against

In favor – opportunity to bring more parents in,

Vote against – the time frame; parents voices have not had an impact on the decision

Vote against

Undecided

Vote against

Undecided

Lean towards in favor – Alameda has a long way to go to repair their reputation

If it is not broken, don’t fix it.

Who is going to review the answers from the vote? Recommendation that one parent from each of the schools to supervise/tally the vote.

How is the 66% going to apply? Is it the number of people who take the survey or is it based on enrollment?
Group 1 Notes Continued: (Lance’s notes)

1. **Most important to you**
   - Safety
   - Parent Engagement
   - Emotional/Social Transition
   - Quality Teachers/Management
   - Academics
   - Learning to be loved/Internal Motivation
   - Wanting my children to go to a great school
   - Secondary Education
   - Opportunities to expand
   - Staff funding for opportunities
   - Special Needs Students

2. **Questions/Clarification**
   1. Start time staggered start time (Dave K. answered)
      
      DAG committee
   2. Are we going to have a committee in the survey committee
      
      What are the questions?
   3. 230--6th graders moving, what would be the class sizes?
   4. How many seats will be added? Is that enough seats?
   5. Research compare 6-12/6-8/9-12 model, what is more effective model?
   6. Be able to handle all the kids “they can’t handle the class now” classroom management
   7. Impact on Elementary School--Decrease the population--What is the minimum of students before you close a school?
   8. How will this be funded if bond is only 18 million w/addition of 4-5 million more
   9. When will construction start and be finished
   10. 4-5 million/if 6th does not go will the 4-5 million be reallocated to Elementary Schools
   11. What makes it an International School

3. **Excites you now**
   - Electives more options
• IB Continuum
• Dedicated Sciences for everybody
• Content Specialist
• Opportunity for more choice
• New electives/opportunities

AGAINST FOR UNDECIDED

6. 2 2

4. Concerns
• No SAC or PTA or PTD
• Impact of older students and on younger students
• Expand options for students for 6-8 model
• Supervision of students
• Strained resources @ Elementary
• Actually get opportunities that we are (Jeffco) is saying they will get
• Title 1 Schools $
• No 6-8 option
• Our voice is not heard

**Group 2 - Facilitated by David Weiss (Rana’s notes)**

Community Questions:

1. How much interaction would 6\textsuperscript{th} graders have with the rest of the high school (i.e. passing periods, before/after school)?
   
   6\textsuperscript{th} graders would be separated in a particular area of the school with their own classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, etc; there is conversation about 6\textsuperscript{th} graders possibly staying with teachers to reduce their passing periods

2. Where is the money for construction going to come from?
   
   Money exists in the budget already to allocate to this project, if the board votes to re-allocate. Precedent set by D’Evelyn’s transition. This money may not exist in the future.

3. Why not invest in more learning and opportunities at Lasley, instead of changing?

4. How many 6\textsuperscript{th} Graders are currently in these schools?

5. Is Jefferson also having this conversation?
   
   Yes, but not on as quick of a timeline bc their construction projects are not coming up as soon as Alameda

Themes/Reflections:
1. Most important (shifted to concern): Emotional readiness; Safety (+ size of school)
2. Opportunity to have traditional middle school experience is gone due to 7-8 transition

Responses about Last Thoughts:

*note: blank indicates this person skipped, asterisk indicates Jeffco employee*

1. *Limited resources to create diverse opportunities for 6th graders, but elementary schools will continue to do the very best with the resources they have. Deane*
2. *Celebration of the process (FEL-Susan)*
3. –
4. Appreciate the small size and community in Elementary School environment
5. Concerned that all the funds from the bond are going to get thrown into this one project, rather than being shared to meet the needs of the elementary schools. Would love to see Elementary to a traditional 6/7/8 model
6. --
7. *Principals in Elementary schools are phenomenal and aren’t broken—they do their best with what they have, this is just an opportunity right now (FEL-Linda)*
8. --
9. --
10. *Appreciate this conversation bc it first came off as a “sell”; Feels like 6th graders aren’t ready for this transition (Teacher)*
11. Every student is learning and improving at Lasley
12. –
13. –
14. Concerned about maturity level of the kids (and related safety concerns), and appreciate the basic support that exists in Elementary
15. Appreciates support and community at Lasley

**Group 3 - Facilitated by Jason Firestone (Esther’s notes)**

**Community Questions:**

- How is the design of the building keeping kids separate? - Shared spaces, electives
- Against
  - Students unable to concentrate on learning due to safety
  - Developmental difference of 6th - 12th graders. Special needs students will be significantly impacted negatively (sarcasm, jokes, social cues, puberty, hormones)
  - Special needs programs of support would be lacking
  - 6th choice out to avoid Alameda
  - Large school lacks 1:1 connection to significant adult at AIHS
  - Too much freedom/too many choices
- Too much pressure to adjust to several teachers

**Cindy**
- Appreciate “equity” focus (asking our opinions), 6th graders deserve access to full opportunities
- Survey (community members vote) - vote “felt shady”
- Lying and false facts - “fishy-sneaky”
- Alameda needs a makeover
- Support 6th - 8th, not 6th - 12th

**Nancy**
- growth/change in area - economic
- Safety concerns - go off campus with upper class
- Educational opportunities - google classroom, IC - inconsistency in communication

**Brian**
- Crossing Wadsworth - lots of kids walking across Wadsworth, don’t qualify for bus
- Funding concerns - need more money to add 6th grade, empty classrooms in elementaries, SBOE vote additional capital funding to impact other projects

**Darcy**
- Kids are not separated
- Facts are misleading
- 7th graders struggled - families had no choice

**Martha**
- Want additional learning experiences but worry about safety
- Dismissal with older students, 6th graders “looking older”
- 6th graders dating older students
- Not able to concentrate on academics

**Carmen**
- Negative influence of HS kids with MS. Mental health pressure

**Karen**
- Parenting support has changed
- 6th grade in a MS is different than 6th grade at a 6th - 12th
- Brain development & body development is so different

**Construction**
- Lots of unknowns - costs could escalate

*Questions from Steve Otto*
Questions from Community Meeting

- Explain why AIHS doesn’t have an Accountability Committee or a PTA
- What size are 7th and 8th grade classes currently? Expected size of 6th grade classes
- How much money per student will AIHS receive for 6th graders compared to elementary schools?
- I understand that the dual language program at Emory means that students get English and Spanish all day, every day, for every subject, while the Middle School Spanish class focuses on conversational Spanish and is only offered every other day. Is this correct?
- Do you expect to add another vice principal with the expected addition of 230 6th graders?
- What percentage of 6th graders in the Alameda Articulation area currently enroll as 7th graders at AIHS?
- What classes are 6th graders likely to share with 7-8th graders?
- If 6th graders today were enrolled at AIHS, what impact would this have on the Alameda Middle School performance measures? Currently the Alameda MS is operating under a Priority Improvement Plan Rating, one step above a Turnaround rating, which it had in 2018-19.
- What lessons were learned regarding the drop in achievement scores that occurred when other 6th graders transitioned to a Middle School that will keep this from happening if this transition progresses?
- The FAQ’s states that the redesigned building will have 7 classrooms for 6th graders. If daily advisement classes for 6th graders have 18 students each, would this require 13 classrooms for the expected 230 6th grade students?
- Approximately how many taxpayers without students currently enrolled in an elementary school will receive ballots to vote on this issue? Currently those eligible are limited to those that serve on an Elementary Accountability Committee, or who attended one of the two public information presentations.
- How much were 7th and 8th graders charged for fees 2019-20? Expected to be comparable for 6th graders? Differences?
- The FAQ’s document states that the 6th grade transition should have minimal impact on the elementary schools. The loss of 6th graders ranges from 30 to 70 students per elementary school. If an elementary school loses 50 6th graders, the school’s budget is reduced by approximately $278,000. The elementary school won’t have to pay for 2 6th grade teachers costing approximately $133,600, reducing the hit to the rest of the school budget to $143,400. Is this really considered a minimal impact? This will need to be absorbed by reducing funds available for art, music, pe, band, orchestra, paras, instructional coaches, digital librarians and/or other supporting positions.
- Will AIHS middle school still be considered a Title I school with the expected addition of 6th graders?
Emailed Questions 2-8-2020

- Please provide detail of the overall cafeteria capacity in the proposed design, current cafeteria schedule by grade, and projected schedule by grade. The current proposed building design does not appear to add significant capacity to the cafeteria to serve an additional 230 6th graders.
- In addition to moving approximately 15% of the library books from the elementary schools to Alameda, what other assets are expected to be removed from elementary schools if the 6th grade transition is implemented?
- It appears that proposed 6th grade class size will be 33 students, given a projection of 230 6th graders and 7 classrooms designated for them in the proposed school remodel plan. Is this correct?
- Do Jeffco K-8 schools offer a middle school model of multiple teachers and expanded electives for 6, 7 & 8 grade students?
- Patterson currently has no bused students, but would likely be subject/eligible for busing. If the transition is approved, how will the number of students bused in the Alameda Articulation likely to change? How much are parents charged for busing?
- In addition to Alameda offering 6-12, could Rose Stein be converted to a K-8 model given its low current enrollment level, providing parents a choice similar to what is available in the Bear Creek area, where they have both a K-8 school and middle school?
- With the use of a paper ballot/survey form, will parents be given a paper copy of the material presented at the two community meetings, and a paper copy of follow-up questions/answers submitted by the community?
- Fact: The Boulder school district offers a K-8 model (4 schools), a 6-8 middle school model (8 schools), and one Junior/Senior High School. The Cherry Creek school district offers a 6-8 middle school model, but no K-8 schools or Junior/Senior High Schools.

Email sent to Audrey from Brenda Gonzalez (Lasley parent?) who couldn’t attend mtg

- According to the Election in 2018, the $567 million bond for school construction did not pass. Voters voted against this. So where is this bond money coming from? Since this did not pass, this should not be paid or taken out of our tax dollars, and I do not want to be taxed for a bond issue that was voted against. How is the community going to verify that Jeffco is not taxing the community on a bond issue we did not vote for? Is this the same bond money? How do we know?
- Parents are uncertain why the transition – Is it because Alameda received bond money, and it was decided to build a building and add the 6th graders (without notifying the Community Tax payers), or considering other alternatives?
- Why wasn’t an alternative of having middle school 6-8th grade, back to O’Connell. Parents see the bigger issue in the fact that the district or the Jeffco Education Association want to combine the middle schools in the same complexes as the High
Schools. No one wants their 6th graders around high schoolers. Couldn’t an alternative have been to open up O’Connell back up as a 6-8th grade Middle School, now that Stein is now open? Wasn’t the reason for Emory because of Stein in the first place.

- Why wasn’t it an alternative to use the bond money at Alameda for improvements, like modernizing the auditorium, modernizing the cafeteria, and band room, even expanding them. Build better outside bleachers for spectators when watching outdoor sports. Better security, since it appears from what I hear, the high schooler’s run amuck. The improvements can go on and on.
- If the Bond money is to benefit all schools, then why didn’t the district ask the communities, Principals, Teachers for ideas on alternatives before they made their decision. I believe everyone (Principals, Teachers, Students, and Parents were blindsided.)
- There are so many Cons to why the 6th graders should not be moved to middle school.
- Why is it that after so much research, studies have concluded that 6th graders behave and test better in elementary schools than 6th graders in middle school, yet they want to continue with this decision.
- Peer pressure becomes a powerful force in middle school.
- They will be exposed to older teens which will have a negative influence on them.
- 6th graders will be exposed to more adult experiences at an earlier age.
- 6th graders will be more susceptible to become sexually active or experiment with drugs, alcohol, vaping, social media (sexting-texting). Feelings of depression and suicide at a young age.
- In a middle school setting, the facility and staff have less opportunity to monitor students. Studies have concluded that 6th graders in elementary do better when they spend most of the day with the same teacher and classmates in the same classroom. This is a more nurturing setting as opposed to a middle school setting which is more uninviting.
- Studies have concluded that 6th graders in middle school have more behavioral problems, than those 6th graders in elementary schools.
- What does the district tend to provide as far as transportation?
- There is no confirmation that the 6th graders will be physically separated from the older students even if in a separate section of the school. How will the middle school be separate from the High Schoolers who are there all day. High schoolers have block days, where some days they get out earlier, than other days, and then you have the ones that hang around because of their after school activities, sports, practices, etc. High Schoolers will always be on school grounds.
- Did they think of the 6th grade teachers who may lose their jobs, since they have a Primary License to teach, and now they will have to seek a Secondary License to teach if they want to teach 6th grade.
- How successful has Alameda been as a Middle School compared to other local middle schools, not attached to a high school? If not successful, why add 6th graders.
- I can actually go on and on, however, I know there are many parents, who may have addressed the same issues.
● The folks in charge of this transition have to know that:
● This is not an exciting opportunity for anyone involved.
● This is not a grass roots initiative.
● It was unfair to blind side everyone.
● We would like all of our questions and concerns answered.