

Kramer - Community Meeting 3/6/23

NOTES:

Welcome from Dr. Knight-Abowitz, and she made introductions of members of the leadership team and Dr. Howard.

Mrs. Hansel will take notes, questions, etc. so we can get back to community members if needed.

Process: Dr. Howard outlined the process that led to the work of the **DRAFT cost savings proposal** (grade-banding and transportation savings). Dates in regard to the information that has been shared and then the presentation at the February BOE meeting. Questions have led to hosting these community meetings.

What is a 1 tier bus service? Today we have a 2 tier system, a secondary morning/afternoon route, and an elementary morning/afternoon route. We have 1 fleet of buses. The 1 tier system proposed would be K-8, one set of routes, and a shuttle service based out of TMS. This includes a 2 mile “no transportation zone” equating to the state minimum requirements for bus service. Families k-8 would opt in to the service so that then the routes would be developed. \$200K in savings

What does grade-banding entail? \$400K in savings. Bogan: K-1, Marshall: 2-3, Kramer: Preschool, 4-5. Students would benefit from being with their cohort throughout their entire school experience. Students/staff benefit from PD and collaboration. Latch Key may be added. In some ways it adds some flexibility in transportation at different times of their school experience. There is less duplication of service. The shared resources increase by grade level. Start and end times will be adjusted.

This combination of the proposal will allow the district to keep...

- Art, Music, PE in all three elementary schools
- Reduce Athletic & Marching Band fees to \$450/activity at THS & \$175 at TMS with no family cap
- Provide Extra Curricular Programs (i.e. Prom, Homecoming, and Mock Trial)
- Keep the Athletic Directors and AD Secretary in order to keep Athletics
- Keep the classified lunch/recess monitors

Concerns heard:

- Issues with a mix of ages on the bus
- Changes for families and staff
- Changes in PTG's
- Concerns about TMS as the hub
- Low income families and transportation

Dr. Howard shared information about open meeting laws/Ohio Sunshine Laws that School Board members are subject to by law in this state.

Ohio's Sunshine Law (RC 121.22) requires that all acts and most deliberations of boards of education and other public bodies, as well as their committees and subcommittees, be conducted in public meetings.

QUESTIONS from Community:

1. One speaker asked what kind of information can be shared about Latch Key options and the cost? TSD doesn't have a definitive answer today, but the Y provides this option in this community (currently ONLY at Kramer), and they are very interested in expanding this and are willing to make this happen in TSD. This program currently uses a sliding scale in cost, which makes it difficult to give an exact cost per student using the program. Some folks shared what they personally are paying for Latch Key services. One parent shared that the program only goes up to age 12.
2. One speaker asked what is known about the 2 mile proximity to school and when will we know more? More information will be available at a later date.
3. One speaker asked why didn't TSD bring 3 or 4 proposals to share? This parent shared that he is distributing a petition opposing this proposal. He indicated that currently there are over 300 signatures. He indicated that no one he has spoken with likes this proposal.
4. Dr. Howard shared that there is legislation in place warning the school board against discussing cuts that can be perceived as threatening to community members. This creates a tough environment, and elected officials are being cautious as a result. She also shared that they have made \$500K in cuts during the past 2 years knowing that the district. It was also asked for some clarification about the 2019 audit. Many of the recommendations were made...those that were not...did not create the proposed savings that the audit predicted.
5. One speaker shared that he doesn't support the grade-banding proposal and he'd like to see a democratic vote on this. He shared the difficulties he believes his family will face as a result.
6. One speaker shared concerns about having counselors and mental health professionals, and shared the importance of these positions. She shared that she feels that there is some benefit to having her kids at different schools for safety reasons in the event of a school shooting. She also is concerned about Gifted Services being eliminated and doesn't understand keeping Athletics.
7. One speaker asked what the comparison is for grade-banding? He asked a question in regard to 4 teaching positions, retirements, and the exact cost depending on the rate of

the salary of those positions. He is also concerned about his students at different schools and getting his students to more than one school.

8. One speaker had questions about athletics, band, and the staff associated with that. She wants more information on when those cuts are proposed. She also stated that she'd rather have a school SRO than Athletics. Dr. Howard shared that there are efforts to save money in order to save many programs. Dr. Knight-Abowitz shared that there is a lot of input coming in. The priorities and desires differ from family to family. TSD is trying to take in all of the information.
9. One speaker shared the high value she places on school safety and SRO's. She wants a survey conducted. She believes families will pay for extracurricular activities out of their own pockets. She also shared she doesn't like the variety of ages that would be on a school bus together.
10. One speaker shared her dislike of the grade-banding proposal stating logistics, her own students dislike of the proposed changes, and she doesn't see a high value to have all grade level students together. She wants to put another levy on the ballot sooner rather than later and also not make it permanent.
11. One speaker indicated that if grade-banding is approved she will have her 4 children in 4 different schools in 2 years. She indicated, if approved, she will send her students to another school and she thinks there will be a large flight from the district. She wants to know if parents can vote on this?
12. One speaker wishes to know if there is research around students transitioning to new buildings every couple years and what other districts utilize grade-banding. It was shared that there is little research available and Edgewood (close neighbor district) is using grade-banding.
13. One speaker asked if the proposal is educationally beneficial and a cost savings? Dr. Howard shared that she believes there are both benefits and cost savings, but she is not sure how she will personally choose on this topic.
14. One speaker asked about the timeline to make a decision. There is a deadline to make this decision by the BOE. He also asked if waiting to make a decision will hurt the district further. Dr. Knight-Abowitz indicated that the BOE is evaluating this now. She also indicated that there was surprise as to how much the levy was defeated by. He also asked if this proposal is implemented...can TSD later go back? Nothing is off the table at the moment according to Dr. Howard.
15. One speaker asked if the THS busing is eliminated, can it ever be brought back? Dr. Howard shared that Yes...it could...but details would have to be worked out and funding for it is critical.
16. One speaker asked how many students would be getting off and or changing buses at the TMS hub? Mrs. Tafelski shared that the information is dependent on the number of families signing up for busing and the number of families who drive. The speaker shared that she is concerned that KG students will not learn/remember their bus number. She also indicated that she is concerned that everything that could be saved seems to be "THS extras" (in her own words).

17. One speaker shared that she works in a district that has grade-banding, but they are returning to a K-5 model. She shared that she feels like students will not know teachers and vice-a-versa.
18. One speaker is concerned about her pre-school students and also her students with special needs. TSD can share more information from the Student Services Department.
19. One speaker asked if the BOE knows what their goals are in the form of the budget and cuts? He commented that he knows the BOE didn't create the grade-banding proposal, and he wanted to know why the BOE is in a position to defend the proposal at these meetings? Mrs. Tafelski discussed the 3 year cuts voted on in December 2022. She also shared that Dr. Theroux is absent due to illness/quarantine. Based on the cuts already agreed upon, TSD (if NOTHING changes) will be out of money in 2027.
20. One speaker shared that she has 5 students and she loves Kramer. She wants to share information in regard to foster students in TSD. She shared that she is a foster parent.
21. One speaker shared that she wants to make an emphasis on partnerships with families, and she doesn't feel that the proposal supports those partnerships. She is also concerned that families with few resources will suffer the most.
22. One speaker asked why the cost savings for transportation isn't more than \$200K since the proposal roughly cuts the mileage of the bus routes in half? It was pointed out that the proposal isn't actually cutting the bus routes in half. He also asked why TMS was selected as the hub? It was shared that TSD will get back to the community regarding the factors that went into the proposal in that regard.
23. One speaker indicated that she is just here to advocate for her own children. She shared that she did not understand fully at an earlier date that the financial issues were this large. She also shared that she heard that the majority of the Teacher Union doesn't support this proposal. She is concerned about class sizes, and hopes for clarification on the numbers. She shared that the elementary schools are designed for K-5 students.