

Redmond School District
School Board Public Hearing
October 26, 2011

In Attendance: Chair Jim Erickson, Vice-Chair Cathy Miller, Directors Ric Little, AJ Losoya, Bob Perry, Superintendent Shay Mikalson, RSD Staff; Mike McIntosh, Trish Huspek, Gina Blanchette, Media – Leslie Pugmire-Hole (*Spokesman*), Erik Hidle (*Bend Bulletin*) Mayor George Endicott, and approximately 47 parents, staff and community members

Board Chair Jim Erickson called the hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

Board Chair Erickson stated that, “We wouldn’t be having this conversation tonight if it wasn’t for the voters of the Redmond School District who approved the \$110 million bond. It is a blessing that our community supported the district. It is with great anticipation and gratitude to the community that we move towards September and the opening of Ridgeview High School.”

Mayor George Endicott was introduced to the audience. He began by thanking the school board for the many hard decisions they have had to make. He stated he feels their job is harder than being on the City Council. He spoke to the partnership between Redmond School District and the City of Redmond and how glad they were to see funding dedicated to the remodeling of Redmond High School. In closing, he stated that he will continue to support the school district in their endeavors.

Jim Erickson reported the evening would begin with a presentation from staff that provides an overview of the new high school system that will be opening in September. Following that presentation, audience members will be given an opportunity to voice their questions and concerns.

Superintendent Mikalson addressed those in attendance and encouraged them to provide their feedback regarding the information that will be presented tonight. The intent is to provide information on the decisions that have already been made and to get feedback on the decisions that are undecided at this point.

The presentation will consist of:

- Construction Update
- Program Update – Academic and Athletic/Activity
- Boundary Recommendation
- Transfers Process Recommendation
- Questions/Feedback

Mike McIntosh provided an overview of the current projects and the conceptual option for Redmond High School. In approving bond savings to be used to remodel Redmond High School the Board gave three guiding principles when deciding on the design; enhance educational opportunities for students, prolong the life of the building, and make the building more energy efficient.

Superintendent Mikalson provided an overview of Ridgeview High School which will open with grades 9-11. The estimated population will be between 650-700 students and will have varsity level athletics/activities at the Class 4A level. Redmond High School will have grades 9-12 next year with an approximate population of 1000-1100 and will have varsity level athletics/activities at the 5A level. Both schools will have comprehensive

academic programs. It is important to remember that the differences in the two schools will be in the AP and IB classes as well as complimentary career and technical education (CTE) courses. The design was not to duplicate the same programs in order to provide more options to students. Ridgeview High School was built to hold a maximum of 1400 students. Not all CTE programs will be available the first year of operation but will be phased in.

Boundary Recommendations

Boundary recommendations are based on your middle school boundary:

1. Students living within the Terrebonne Community School and Elton Gregory Middle School boundaries will attend Redmond High School.
2. Students living within the Tumalo Community School and Obsidian Middle School boundaries will attend Ridgeview High School.

Transfer Process

- Prior to April of each year, cap's will be set at each grade at every school in our district
- If requests for transfers are below the cap, all students are accepted
- If requests for transfers are above the cap a weighted lottery, according to state regulations and district policy, will occur
- We will continue our process of supporting parents and students in selecting the education opportunities that best serve them
- Because of the fiscal climate the district is in, transportation will not be provided between Redmond High School and Ridgeview High School.
- The district is currently researching transportation options. Initial conversations have begun with Cascade East Transit

Timeline

- October – Boundary/Transfer Discussions
- November – RSD Board makes boundary/transfer policy decision; notify students and families of school assignments
- December – OSAA renders decision on classification and league placement
- January/February – Hire RHS principal; begin student forecasting; begin staffing decisions
- April/May – Conduct transfer process; Student Scheduling; Finalize Staffing Decisions; Begin Community Tours of Ridgeview
- June/July/August – Begin RHS construction; move into Ridgeview

Public Comment

Jeff Bowman

- Q. Mr. Bowman asked for clarification regarding the timeline presented. He would recommend making staff assignments prior to April because it is possible students will make their choice of schools based on those staff assignments.
- A. Superintendent Mikalson stated it was the district's intention to provide staff their assignments by January. However, those placements will be made with the caveat those assignments could change based on enrollment, forecasting and funding.
- Q. Mr. Bowman posed a scenario of a current junior who is currently taking AP classes. Next year, that student will be a senior and won't have the AP option because he will be assigned to Redmond High School. What is that student supposed to do?
- A. Both the AP and IB programs are rigorous courses of study. Students can take the IB classes and still take the AP tests.

Valerie

- Q. Daughter graduated with an IB diploma but her youngest daughter won't because she will be attending Ridgeview. Would it be a possibility for the bus to make one more drop to the other school for transfer kids who can't arrange for transportation? The IB program is an important educational opportunity.

- A. Mr. McIntosh stated those are the exact things we are working toward but would be remiss to say it can definitely be done based on our current bus fleet and schedules. The extra scheduling would affect pick-up and drop-off times. We know transportation issues are important. The ideal solution would be to have a larger fleet but at this time it is not a fiscal option.

Alisha Capson

Ms. Capson stated that she believes the AP and IB programs should be an option at both schools. She reported that the “meshing together of the two programs is currently not happening at Redmond High School.” The IB program is a two year program and students should not be dictated to about what classes they need to take. Ms. Capson provided the board with statistical numbers regarding AP and IB programs. She stated that when given a choice, most students would choose the AP classes. She believes the class enrollment numbers that she provided tonight support the concept that AP classes support the majority of the students. In addition, the AP certificate is widely accepted by universities and the IB diploma is not.

Superintendent Mikalson stated that due to restricted teaching staff, offering the AP and IB courses at both schools is not possible. He further stated that a student can choose to take a single IB class in the same manner as AP classes can be singly taken.

Kristen Barber

Q. Asked what the process will be for seniors next year.

A. All seniors not within the walking area of Redmond High School will receive transportation.

Unidentified audience member

Concerned that asking students and parents to pick a school when they don't really know what classes will be offered at each school isn't a fair choice.

Heather Richards

Ms. Richards presented a written statement to the Board regarding the proposed high school boundaries and transfer policies.

Q. Is there a possibility to pursue a lottery system as opposed to a cap program? She is concerned that within the current recommendation there is a danger of the community being divided between north and south. She further commented that she does not understand why the two facilities need to be districted and why there is the potential that some students will not be able to have access to the educational programming of their choice. She would recommend allowing all families that live in the RSD to choose the high school they want to attend. If there are too many students applying to go to one particular school, a lottery could be held.

A. Superintendent Mikalson stated that if the cap is reached at any particular school or grade there is a lottery that occurs. The Board will need to decide if the district will be a district that will accept students from other districts, but the law also provides guidelines for intra-district transfers. The same cap process will be applied to each school in the district.

Ms. Martin

When she registered her son for grade 9 he was interested in taking the aerospace class but was unable to because it was only offered at the main campus. Her son has Asperger Syndrome and the IB program would not be appropriate for him.

A regional bus service does not serve Crooked River Ranch. Trying to pay for his transportation would be very difficult for her. She works and would be unable to transport him. She would encourage having AP courses offered at both campus'.

Jennifer Ross

Q. The IB program is being offered at OMS. Why has the district decided to put those students at Ridgeview where IB is not offered?

- A. Obsidian Middle School has, in the past, been a Middle Years Program (MYP) school. That program was up for reauthorization and the requirements to obtain that reauthorization were not met. Currently, the program is offered in name only, not in practice. After the current school year, the program will not be offered at Obsidian. Obtaining IB authorization is a long process. Redmond High School currently holds that authorization. Shifting of that program can occur but there are substantial costs incurred. IB authorization is looked at separately from the MYP program.

Kathryn Martin

- Q. Will the Life Skills program be available at both schools? She is concerned that if the program is only offered at one of the schools, it will disenfranchise an entire student population. "If a student must choose between a life skills program and academics, that is not appropriate education. We need to make sure we aren't putting a ceiling on students with disabilities."
- A. Superintendent Mikalson stated that Martha Hinman, Director of Special Education is currently looking at placement of the Life Skills program. The program placement will depend on the number of students needing that support.

Julie Wright

Stated she would echo what people have said about the AP classes and the benefit of having the classes offered at both schools. "When you have this overwhelming desire to have the program in both schools the Board needs to look at that. I have the luxury of transporting my students to Ridgeview but not all parents have that benefit."

Chris Dahlen

- Q. Based on the current economic situation, has the district considered moving all of the students from Redmond High School to Ridgeview High School during the remodel process? He is also concerned about doing repairs while school is in session.
- A. Ridgeview High School is built for 1400 students. By transferring all of the students to Ridgeview it would put the building over capacity with approximately 1680 students. In addition, transitioning back to two high schools is difficult. Mike McIntosh reported that he was the principal at Terrebonne Community School when students were in the building during the remodel. "Construction is managed well with students on the campus." At Redmond High School the academic wing can be divided in half and construction can take place one side at a time.

Maria Vasquez

Many people have reasons for having students in one school or another. Her reason is transportation. She cannot ask permission to get out of her job to transport her students. The district should have the option for those families who cannot transport their children. "How do we expect a better future for our children without education?" She understands that money is tight but feels there need to be options for families.

Janet

She has a grade 8 student at Tumalo who transferred from OMS. Their family currently uses Cascade East Transit. She spoke to the fact there is a there 30 minute leeway time for pickup and drop-off and that the area where students are dropped off or picked up is not well lit or clearly marked.

- Q. What is the school policy regarding the responsibility of keeping students safe?
- A. Mike McIntosh stated that current board policy states that transportation is the responsibility of the families requesting transfers to schools outside of their boundary. Within 1.5 miles of Ridgeview the students will walk to school. It has yet to be determined if a group of students could be picked up at RHS and transported to Ridgeview via Cascade East Transit.

Unidentified audience member

- Q. Will the students need to choose between the ROTC and the AP classes?

- A. In our current schedule we are unable to offer all courses to all students. A student will need to make a choice about which program they want to pursue. Based on projected demand, there is currently not a plan to place the ROTC program at Ridgeview.

Tracy Ronhard

Q. What is the future of College Now?

- A. College now is a dual credit option where students can get both high school and college credit. The district currently partners with COCC and OIT. It is the district's intention to increase those options at both campuses. However, it is important to keep in mind that the district has cut over 17 teachers and specific credentials are required to teach those classes.

Sue Hayden

Q. She asked if AP students who will be a senior next year will have the opportunity to continue on that path.

- A. Because of staffing the district has had to merge those courses. Next year will be a transition year. The proposal is that when both schools become grades 9-12 the AP courses would be at Ridgeview and the IB courses at Redmond High School.

Crystal Buckley

Q. What is happening with the Hartman building?

- A. The long standing plan has been to utilize Hartman during the construction phase of RHS. Most recently there has been a discussion about how other district needs could be addressed by using that campus.

There was concern expressed about 8th graders having to make these major decisions in the spring.

Superintendent Mikalson stated that during the spring transfers are made on a yearly basis. Outside of that timeframe transfers could still occur, pending space availability, following the traditional transfer policy.

Board Chair, Jim Erickson stated that one of the reasons that establishing boundaries by middle school attendance area makes sense is that it doesn't force 8th graders to make a choice. By the junior or senior year they are better prepared to make those choices. Mr. Erickson further stated, "Redmond has been a one high school town and our identity has been wrapped up in that. A culture will be developed at both high schools. It is important that the district will allow transfers, but I also believe that whatever school they attend their education will be enriching. When designing the school it was decided to not duplicate programs in both schools in order to provide more choices to students."

Unidentified audience member

Q. Asked for clarification regarding the two different schools competing in two different sports categories.

- A. OSAA dictates those classifications. With our current enrollment it could easily be two 4A classes but we won't know that until the OSAA makes their determination.

Candy

Stated that she doesn't support the idea of putting all students in Ridgeview during the construction of Redmond High School. She would suggest putting the IB and AP programs at Hartman. An additional idea would be to put three or four AP classes at the Hartman campus at the beginning of the day and then transport students to either RHS or Ridgeview for the balance of their day.

Emily

She expressed her appreciation to the Board. She stated, "I cannot imagine being in your position." However, she doesn't feel the students or families truly have a choice of high schools if transportation is not provided. She will be able to transport her students but not all families will be able to.

Michelle Allen

Would echo everything she has heard tonight regarding AP classes. She has three other students coming up and she wants them prepared for college. She doesn't believe that Redmond is doing a good job in preparing the students. She also has a child with an IEP. She wants all children have their needs met.

Unidentified audience member

Q. Will students need to apply each April to get into a program?

A. Under the new law, it is a permanent transfer unless the family makes application to transfer to another school.

Leah Wilcox

IB and AP are the main concerns tonight. She can appreciate that in terms of electives not all classes will be available to everyone. However, she would echo the request to consider the feasibility of housing the IB classes in Hartman and considering offering AP classes at both schools. She isn't sure there is equal demand for the IB and AP classes and yet we are splitting the classes between the schools.

Becky Cyrus

She agrees that College Now is the best thing that ever happened to her son. He is currently going to COCC on the advanced diploma program. He will graduate this year with an associate's degree and their out of pocket expense will be approximately \$200.

Q. Is the 1.5 walking boundary per Google Maps or as the raven flies?

A. The boundary process is not an exact science. We must comply with the state statues when determining transportation areas. However, as we make decisions on transportation, consideration is made for areas deemed as dangerous. Canal and Helmholtz will get that type of consideration as we look at transporting students. If an area is deemed unsafe for students, exceptions to the transportation law can be applied for through the State. Transporting students safely is a priority for the district.

Superintendent Mikalson stated the Redmond School District we will be an advanced diploma district as long as the law allows. In addition, the district will be working towards extending the College Now options at both schools. The number of students we are sending to college has increased dramatically over the last couple of years.

Unidentified audience member

Q. Forecasting last year was a tough process. Requests more time to review the class choices to allow more time to ask questions. It would be helpful to know what the honors requirements will be so that her daughter knows how to forecast.

A. Lee Loving, Interim Principal at Redmond High School and Principal of Ridgeview High School and Tony Pupo, Assistant Principal at the Hartman Campus are aware of the need to deliver those forecasting materials earlier in the year to allow additional time for families to make those choices.

Maria

Stated she believes it would be helpful to the district if they asked parents where they want their children to attend before a decision is made so that the Boards has a better idea of what everyone wants.

Superintendent Mikalson stated that decisions regarding the IB and AP programs have been made based on the last four years of enrollment data. There are currently 20-30 students taking IB courses. There are many students who take single IB classes just like AP students. "The fiscal realities of being able to offer both programs, at both schools, is problematic. We will never take the stance that what we have is perfect and our thoughts will continue to evolve based on feedback. The plan before us is based on the best information we currently have. As the schools open there will be an ongoing process to determine the best options considering the resources that we have available. What we think now might now be what we think a year from now."

Unidentified audience member

Q. Has there been consideration regarding the traffic around Ridgeview?

A. As part of the conditions of developing the high school property, traffic studies have been completed. The models the city and county have helped us with make us believe we will be prepared. There has been an effort to mitigate some of the concerns we are aware of right now. There is a learning process and there will be things that we will not be able to predict.

Heather Richards reported that there had been improvements identified in the Capital Improvement Plan that had been pushed out 10-15 years. However, those improvements have been brought forward and have become a priority for the City of Redmond.

Unidentified audience member

Q. Will the high school campuses be open or closed?

A. There are two teacher teams consisting of 10 members from each high school who will work with building administrators to make that determination.

Kathryn

Kathryn reiterated that she is the only voice in the audience who represents people with disabilities. "I represent a community of people who can't be here and don't feel they have any power and feel they have been disenfranchised and disempowered because they were born with a disability."

Mike McIntosh stated that it is everyone's desire to meet those needs in both schools. Martha Hinman will be instrumental in this process and would invite Kathryn's participation in those conversations.

Unidentified audience member

Believes the only programs that should be mirrored in both schools are the AP and IB classes, "Even if you must get rid of some of the diversity of programs offered."

Mike McIntosh reported the district is looking for a partnership with families and an acknowledgement that we have limited resources. "We are going to have two high schools unlike anything Redmond has experienced for the last 20 years. With that there will be a limited number of things we can do. We still have to offer as many things as we can and face the reality of having to make choices. We are here to serve you the best we can."

Cathy Miller expressed her appreciation for everyone's honesty. "Everything you have said tonight I take to heart. Before any decision is made I am going to put myself in your shoes to help me make the best decisions possible. We have had many people come and share their priorities over the last several months; one parent advocates for less school days and more teachers, another parent advocates for more school days and less teachers. It is a difficult position to be in and we are constantly evaluating what the best choices are."

Superintendent Mikalson reported that even before staffing cuts, the district has struggled to offer both IB and AP classes. With two schools he does not believe it is going to be possible. He has a strong belief in both programs and knows that it is a benefit to both our students and community.

Cathy Miller stated she is a strong believer in the AP courses. The delivery on how we do things needs to be continually reevaluated. "We need to ask ourselves if there are other ways of delivering classes to students."

Additional feedback can be given via the district website at www.redmond.k12.or.us.

Jim Erickson, School Board Chair

Trish Huspek, Executive Assistant