

DRAFT

**Red Wing Public Schools**  
2451 Eagle Ridge Drive  
Red Wing, MN 55066



Phone 651.385.4500

www.rwps.org

**School Board Meeting Agenda Item**

Topic: Grade Configurations and Transportation Options  
Contact(s):  
Presenter(s): Karsten Anderson, Superintendent  
Anna Ostendorf, School Board Chair

Nature of Action Requested

Board Action   
Board Information or Report

Background Information

The district is reviewing grade configurations and transportation options for the upcoming school year. Four options were discussed during the previous board workshop; this document includes two variations of one option.

**Grade Configurations  
Overall Administrative Recommendation**

With regard to grade configurations, the administrative team recommends Option 1 (Sunnyside EC-1, Burnside 2-4, Twin Bluff 5-7, and RWHS 8-12) for the 2022-23 school year. However, the administrative team also recommends moving to a 6-8 middle school in the near future.

**Grade Configurations  
5-7 or 6-8 Middle School**

Building leaders, district leaders, and Superintendent recommend implementing a middle school beginning in 2022-23 because of the following advantages:

- Programming focused on students.
- Programming helps students explore potential interests.
- Pathways alternative learning for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in one location.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade band and other activities provided in one location.
- Access to pool for swimming instruction.

A 5-7 middle school model is recommended for the upcoming school year because of space constraints if a 6-8 model is selected. Advantages to waiting for a 6-8 middle school for an additional year:

- Time to plan strategically for use of the high school.
- Current year 7<sup>th</sup> graders would not bounce back to the middle school for one year.
- Time to see impact of charter school and potential for kids coming back from 5RO.
- Time to implement the K-5 / 6-8 / 9-12 model.

## **Grade Configurations Grade-Level Centers or Attendance-Zone Schools**

### Grade-Level Centers

Advantages of grade-level centers:

- Boundaries not needed.
- Fewer classroom teachers are needed because it is easier to balance classes when all students in a grade are in the same building.
- Enhanced horizontal alignment between teachers.
- Greater ability to match students with teachers who are best fit for them.
- Demographics of neighborhoods do not impact demographics of schools.

Disadvantages of grade-level centers:

- Families may have students in up to four schools in a given year.
- An additional transition for students during elementary years.
- Bussing more complicated and costly with more transfer buses
- Longer bus rides for many elementary students.
- Extra special education teacher and paraprofessional needed for center-based services in elementary schools to provide peer group interaction.

### Attendance-Zone Schools

Advantages of attendance-zone schools

- Relationships and social-emotional stability of students enhanced by being in the same building for multiple years.
- Enhanced vertical alignment between teachers.
- Families generally send their children to fewer elementary schools.
- One fewer transition for students.
- Transportation system less complicated. Fewer transfer buses, if any. Likely less costly if 2-tier is implemented.
- Older students serve as role models and leaders of younger students.
- All students in center-based services in elementary schools are provided peer group interaction in selected building. This means an additional special education teacher and paraprofessional are not needed.

Disadvantages of attendance-zone schools:

- Boundaries may shift yearly.
- Challenging to have similar class sizes within a particular grade between schools.
- Additional teachers may be needed to meet class size targets.
- Imbalances between schools in providing support services such as special education services, English Learner services, Title I.
- Demographics of neighborhoods impact demographics of schools.
- Families close to Sunnyside may be bussed to Burnside.

DRAFT

**Transportation**  
**One-Tier or Two-Tier Transportation**

A two-tier system is recommended because a one-tier system costs about \$650,000 more depending on the number of buses needed and costs to renegotiate the transportation contract.

**Transportation**  
**Starting Times and Ending Times**

This year, elementary students are on the first tier of transportation. Research supports having high school students start later in the day, but the impact on student-athletes and work arrangements is significant. Earlier start times for high school students could lead to higher participation in 5RO in the mornings.

Examples of starting and ending times assume middle school and high school students are on the first tier of a two-tier system. The times, of course, can be shifted as long as times between buildings remain constant.

The administrative team will review starting and ending times before a recommendation is made to the board.

**Recommendations**

I move to approve Option 1 for grade configurations for the upcoming school year as presented.

I move to approve a two-tier transportation system for the upcoming school year.

## Option 1

Schools	Grades	Rooms Available	Rooms Needed
SES BES TBS RWHS	EC-1 2-4 5-7 8-12	20+ 24+ 30+	15 (8+7) Plus Early Childhood 22 (7+8+7)

**Option 1 Pros:**

- Advantages of grade-level centers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> graders in same building.
- Space available for early childhood classrooms.

**Option 1 Cons:**

- Disadvantages of grade-level centers
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders not in elementary schools and 8<sup>th</sup> graders not in middle school.

**Option 1 EXAMPLE of Transportation Implications:**

School	Grades	Bus Drop-Off	School Times	Bus Arrival
Sunnyside	K-1	9:05	9:15-3:45	3:35
Burnside	2-4	8:50	9:00-3:30	3:20
Twin Bluff	5-7	7:30	7:40-2:25	2:15
RWHS	8-12	7:20	7:30-2:30	2:25

CESO Notes: K-4 ride together and 5-12 ride together. With the high school starting first, there is more time needed between school times due to longer day at the high school. Colvill rides at same times as first tier. St. Johns would ride as same time as elementary schools. Two additional busses needed resulting in extra \$130,000 costs compared to current arrangements.

## Option 2

Schools	Grades	Rooms Available	Rooms Needed
SES BES TBS RWHS	EC-4 EC-4 5-7 8-12	20+ 24+ 30+	17 (4+3+3+4+3) Plus Early Childhood 20 (4+4+4+4+4) Plus Early Childhood

**Option 2 Pros:**

- Advantages of attendance-zone schools

**Option 2 Cons:**

- Disadvantages of attendance-zone schools
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders not in elementary school and 8<sup>th</sup> graders not in middle school.
- Assignments to SES and BES will be different compared to this year
- Sunnyside would be a neighborhood school with many students bussed to Burnside.

**Option 2 EXAMPLE of Transportation Implications:**

School	Grades	Bus Drop-Off	School Times	Bus Arrival
Sunnyside	K-4	8:50	9:00-3:30	3:20
Burnside	K-4	8:50	9:00-3:30	3:20
Twin Bluff	5-7	7:30	7:40-2:25	2:15
RWHS	8-12	7:20	7:30-2:30	2:25

CESO Notes: K-4 ride together and 5-12 ride together. With the high school starting first, there is more time needed between school times due to longer day at the high school. Colvill rides at same times as first tier. St. Johns would ride as same time as elementary schools. No additional busses are needed compared to current arrangements.

## Option 3a

Schools	Grades	Rooms Available	Rooms Needed
SES	K-2	20+	20 (8+7+5)
BES	2-5	24+	24 (2+8+7+7)
TBS	6-8	30+	
RWHS	9-12		

**Notes:**

- At SES: Five 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms
- At BES: Two 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms.

**Option 3a Pros:**

- Advantages of grade-level centers
- 6-8 middle school and 9-12 high school

**Option 3a Cons:**

- Disadvantages of grade-level centers
- Not enough space to offer early childhood programming, preschool-age childcare, center-based programming for special education services, or additional classroom spaces.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> graders split between SES and BES. This also complicates transportation services.

## Option 3b

Schools	Grades	Rooms Available	Rooms Needed
SES	K-2	20+	19 (8+7+4)
BES	2-5	24+	25 (3+8+7+7)
TBS	5-8		3 fifth-grade classes
RWHS	9-12		

**Notes:**

- At SES: Four 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms
- At BES: Three 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms & four 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms
- At TBS: Three 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms

**Option 3a Pros:**

- Advantages of grade-level centers
- 6-8 middle school and 9-12 high school

**Option 3a Cons:**

- Disadvantages of grade-level centers:
- Not enough space to offer early childhood programming, preschool-age childcare, center-based programming for special education services, or additional classroom spaces.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> graders split between SES and BES and 5<sup>th</sup> graders split between BES and TBS. This also complicates transportation services.

## Option 4

Schools	Grades	Rooms Available	Rooms Needed
SES	EC-4	20+	17 (4+3+3+4+3) Plus Early Childhood
BES	K-5	24+	24 (4+4+4+4+4+4)
TBS	5-8	30+	3 fifth-grade sections
RWHS	9-12		

**Notes:**

- At BES: Four 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms
- At TBS: Three 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms

**Option 4 Pros:**

- Advantages of attendance-zone schools
- 6-8 middle school (plus some 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes) and 9-12 high school

**Option 4 Cons:**

- Disadvantages of attendance-zone schools.
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders split between BES and TBS, some 5<sup>th</sup> graders not in elementary schools.
- Assignments to SES and BES will be different compared to this year
- Sunnyside would be a neighborhood school with many students bussed to Burnside.