

## REDISTRICTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 6, 2008

*These minutes were prepared by Margaret Hawkins to the best of her understanding. If you find any inaccuracies, please contact the Superintendent of Schools Office at 871-0555.*

Present: Mike Eastman, Rick Carter, Margaret Hawkins, Jim Fredericks, Marie Cross, Kathy DePhillipo, Angela Emery, Matt Green, Tap Fitzgerald, Allie Gant, Kate Clark, Lue Bagley, Elizabeth Holland, Sue Trout, Suzanne Godin

*Should anything be added to Guiding Principles?*

- Question about the PTA money/socio-economic balance
- Strong support heard for not dividing neighborhood and come up with a plan that lasts for the next five years.
- Strong support heard for people staying close to their home because they bought their house in that particular neighborhood in order to go to that school.
- ELL survey – initial results were shared
- Should we add, “do not divide neighborhood” as a guiding principle?

*Conversation about the area across Main Street – Is it part of Thornton Heights?*

*Discussion about What is a neighborhood?*

- Do we divide neighborhood?

*How do you divide Redbank and Brick Hill?*

- We send two buses into that area – one to Redbank, one to Brick Hill

*More discussion about splitting neighborhood*

- “Using the Transportation Department definition of a neighborhood, we will not divide a neighborhood.” (All thumbs up, except one sideways thumb)

*More discussion about moving 5<sup>th</sup> grade to middle school*

- If you take all the 5<sup>th</sup> graders out of the elementary schools, you could actually close an elementary school because the numbers would be so low.
- We should not make the decision based on a facilities issue. It should be a program change with much thought put into the decision.
- The idea should be explored for a later date.

*Discussion about capacity and class size*

### CHANGES IN PRIORITY/IMPORTANCE

*Are there any changes to the list of guiding principles?*

- Add – not dividing neighborhood (high priority!)

### TIMELINE

- This plan has to go to the Board first. It will be at the workshop on February 28, 2008, which will be the second night of the budget hearings. If the first budget hearing has to be rescheduled to the 28<sup>th</sup> then the redistricting issue will come up on March 3.
- Budget timeline is very tight.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

- Rick asked the group to give feedback now so that the Board can be prepared for the questions and comments from the public.
- The School Department needs to get more information out to the public so that more people know all the facts needed to understand the issues of the schools