



MT. VERNON

COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

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Dr. Robbins Statement on Redistricting

First, let me start off by saying, the last thing I ever set out to do as your Superintendent is cause anxiety, especially through miscommunication. It is my responsibility to ensure transparency in our practices while providing the very best environment with the greatest amount of opportunity possible for our children. That is what drives me each and every day.

With that said, it is true that I am researching the possibility of redistricting our current elementary school boundaries. However, the primary reason for this is not for the reasons that have been widely communicated. Later on in this presentation, I will provide you with a Fact/Myth slide. However, for right now, let me say this; if we did not do anything, we would be fine. Our elementary schools were designed architecturally to hold student enrollments ranging from 850-1100 students, depending on the student/teacher ratio for each class. I have been tracking our enrollment since the day I arrived in our community with the assistance of our data steward, Kathy Reed. We have a slide containing our enrollment across the district that we update every two weeks. I do this so that I can see exactly how our “true” enrollment projections are affecting our buildings.

It is important to understand that school districts play a big role in the growth, development, and stability of a community. Our school district has three fantastic, state of the art elementary school buildings with caring and compassionate staff in each one of them. We are working hard to celebrate our students and provide them with innovative opportunities. We are also one of the few districts that are managing to control our financial debt and not push it off on our community through referendums. We are building our reputation on a solid ground. These are the type of things that will encourage people to bring their families to our community with the objective of sending their children to Mt. Vernon.

So if we aren't in a capacity crunch, then the natural question you ask is why now Dr. Robbins? There is not one simple answer, rather multiple reasons why now this is a good time;

1. Doing it early will allow families the opportunity for a choice.
2. As the homes in our subdivisions are completed, we will have reset boundaries considering our growth patterns. As new families move into our community, they will fall under the new boundaries.
3. We hope to achieve balance among the elementary buildings to assist with efficient programming and staffing needs.
4. This should mitigate the immediate need to renovate any one particular building thus saving the district and community money by being efficient with our current resources

On the associated map, you will see the main subdivisions of Bay Creek (East), Highland Springs, Cardinal Woods, Emerald Springs, Bay Creek West, and Geist Woods that I am evaluating. Currently we are pulling the data for the exact number of households and students in grades K-4 as a starting point. It provides a foundation to begin formulating ideas and options. I truly believe we can accomplish the first wave of this by simply changing the boundaries and only affecting new residents. I am hopeful that we will have some current families that are willing to volunteer. I have personally driven the district and it is a great option.

What I will not do is split up a family. If you have an elementary student (currently enrolled) and I change the boundary lines, future family members will be able to remain at that particular elementary if you choose. As I said, we are walking to this and not running, therefore, a considerable amount of choice will exist until we have to become stricter on our policies. However, you can see that we are a thriving community, attractable to young families with a wonderful school district. We will continue to grow.

In closing, things will become clearer as I gather more data. Over spring break, I will continue to disaggregate the data and assemble a community survey. My goal will be to distribute the survey the first week of April. It will contain options for you to consider and an opportunity for parents to provide feedback. We are in the middle of some exciting times at the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and I consider myself blessed to serve you and your children. Please know this, me and my team will make decisions based on what's in the best interest of the district as a whole remaining dedicated to excellence. If you are fortunate to leave town for spring break, travel safely. We will be working hard and anxious for our 3900+ students and 250+ staff members return on March 27th. "It's a great day to be a **Marauder!**"

MV=E3 (We will Engage, Educate and Empower today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities)

Kind Regards,

Shane

Dr. Shane Robbins, ATC, LAT
Superintendent of Schools