

In June of 2017, the Board of Trustees from Mountain View Whisman School District elected to approve a new set of boundaries for the 2019-2020 school year. In order to implement those boundaries, District staff, under the direction of the Superintendent, have been working with an Enrollment Priorities Task Force (EPTF) to update the the procedures, captured in Administrative Regulation 5115, that govern student enrollment and placement. In order to transition students to the new set of boundaries, staff will be working with the Trustees during open session meetings to determine any exemptions they wish to allow.

Development of exemptions

With the new boundaries in place, it is not only prudent but also practical that, barring any extenuating circumstances, all students will attend the school in their current attendance zone; excluding students enrolled in choice schools. However, staff and Trustees alike have acknowledged that there will need to be exemptions, previously called grandfathering, for students in order to minimize disruptions to the school environment; currently there are 637 students who are enrolled in schools outside their attendance zone. Staff, under Board direction, is recommending a list of exemptions that will allow students to remain at their currently enrolled school. For transparency purposes, these exemptions will have a clear sunset clause.

Romero Act and Past Practice

During the May 3 Board meeting, the Board of Trustees noted that they did not want to entertain moving students who were either subjected to the Romero Act (30 students) or because of the District's past approach of moving students away from overenrolled schools to underutilized schools (39 students). Although the District has ended this practice, some families are still impacted by these practices and/or have opted to enroll all of their children into these schools in order to keep families intact.

Sunset clause

One of the guiding tenets for the redevelopment of school attendance zones was to create smaller learning communities, more evenly distribute enrollment, and open the new school on N. Whisman Rd. Because parents may be subject to two different sets of boundaries during the transition period, staff are developing exemptions, which contain a sunset clause, to help create clarity about why older students may attend a school that is outside of their current attendance zone. Furthermore, the development of exemptions and sunset clauses will provide clarity to parents enrolling students in the future about why certain students are exempt and when those exemptions will cease to exist.

Site capacity

Considerations that are necessary for the Board of Trustees and staff are not only the financial impact of renting portables, which are being used while construction is taking place, as well as the size of the schools. Included in the Board packet is a spreadsheet with the number of students who are located in transitional zones; this data is broken down by grade level. This information is important, as several Mountain View Whisman elementary schools are at their maximum capacity; Bubb, Landels, Huff and eventually the school on N. Whisman.

Temporary modulars

The rented modulars on Landels, Huff and Bubb could be used to provide additional space at each of the sites until enrollment reduces to predicted levels. At each of these sites, the renovation of the existing multi-use room will yield a new library and two classes, which will be used to house students who are assigned to a special day class (SDC). These spaces will be ready prior to the start of the 2019-20 school year. It is worth noting that during the initial planning stages of renovation, staff took into account that we would need to remove modular buildings in phases, thus the installation of modular classrooms was designed in such a way so that they could be removed without disrupting the entire campus. Leaving the modulars onsite will not only increase the schools' capacity, but also have other consequences.

Financial impact

The temporary modulars will bear an annual cost of \$9,638 annually (per modular). The total estimated cost of housing all temporary modulars at Landels, Huff and Bubb is approximately \$225,000 each year. Once the new school on N. Whisman Rd. is opened, the District will be unable to use restricted funds (Measure G) to pay for the costs; this cost will need to come from Mountain View Whisman's general fund, which is currently used to pay for instructional needs. Additionally, retention of the temporary modulars will limit the amount of playground space for students. Within the next two year every elementary school, excluding Bubb, will have a shade structure installed, which will further reduce playground space. Delaying installation is not a possibility as the 2019-2020 school year would represent the last year that Mountain View can spend Measure G funds.