



## **Wellen Park High School Boundary Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting #1**

**Date: Monday, April 14, 2025**

**Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm**

**Location: Venice High School Media Center**

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1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Dr. Michael Kemp, Chief Operations Officer (COO)
  - a. Welcomed and thanked everyone for volunteering for this opportunity to serve.
  - b. Reviewed Agenda Items
  - c. Introduced District Administration Team
  - d. Introduced Boundary Advisory Committee Members
  
2. **Historical Summary** – Mrs. Micki Ryan
  - a. In 2018, due to increasing enrollment at Venice High School, a series of seven (7) stakeholder meetings were held to explore capacity solutions, including expansion of Venice High School or construction of a new high school in Wellen Park.
  - b. Community input - including parents, educators, residents, local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce and City of Venice staff – led to the decision to build a new high school in Wellen Park.
  - c. After collaborating with the community, the School Board worked with Wellen Park developers to swap an existing kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) school site for a larger site to include the K-8 school and a high school campus.
  
3. **Wellen Park High School Update** – Jody Dumas, Executive Director, Facilities
  - a. 12/10/24 School Board Approved
    - i. School Name: Wellen Park High School
    - ii. Mascot: Eagles
    - iii. Colors: red, white and blue
  - b. The campus will accommodate approximately 2,100 student station high school and includes space for a future kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) school facility.
  - c. Shared-use infrastructure was designed for cost efficiency (HVAC, drives, facilities, gymnasium, auditorium, athletic fields).
  - d. The total investment exceeds \$200 million, making it the most expensive school in Sarasota County, featuring state of the art full service athletic and performing arts facilities.
  - e. The high school is scheduled to open in August 2026 for the 2026-27 School Year.
  
4. **Timeline & Communication Protocols** – Dr. Michael Kemp, COO
  - a. School Board Policy 5.20II School Attendance Zones – Timeline
    - i. Purpose is to review feasible potential attendance zones and provide feedback (Policy 5.2II0D.) on potential boundary scenarios presented by the Office of Planning (Policy 5.2II0C.).

- ii. Provide publicly notice meetings at each potentially impacted school (Policy 5.20IIF.)
- iii. Provide input, ask questions about each scenario and propose additional scenarios for consideration (Policy 5.20IIF.)
- iv. Currently enrolled families whose student(s) may be impacted by changes will receive notification of meeting dates and locations (Policy 5.20IIF.)
- v. The feasible scenarios and recommendations shall be presented at a School Board Workshop (Policy 5.20IIG.)
- vi. A Public Hearing shall be held to allow the School Board to receive public input/feedback (Policy 5.20IIG.)
- vii. At the next Regular School Board Meeting the School Board will vote on the feasible boundary scenarios (5.20IIG.)
- viii. After adoption of boundary changes, notice will be provided to currently enrolled families with student(s) impacted by the change (5.20IIH.)
- b. A dedicated Wellen Park High School webpage will house public notices, meeting documents, frequently asked questions and other pertinent information.
- c. The Wellen Park High School website provides an opportunity to submit questions/suggestions to be reviewed by the District Administration Team.
- d. Wellen Park High School Website:

<https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/page/wellen-park-high-school>

MEETING / COMMUNICATION TIMELINE	DATE	Notes
Present Timeline to Cabinet	03/31/25	Completed - Approved
Initial Meeting - VHS, NPHS, VMS, HCMS leadership	04/01/25	8am Teams - Completed
Informational Meeting -NPHS/HCMS Admin & SAC Chairs	04/07/25	7:30am NPHS - Completed
Informational Meeting -VHS/VMS Admin & SAC Chairs	04/08/25	12pm VHS - Completed
BAC Meeting 1 (Combined) VHS - Media Center - 6PM	04/14/25	Completed
Community Meeting 1 VHS VPAC - 6PM	04/29/25	Reserved
Community Meeting 2 NPHS VPAC - 6PM	05/12/25	Reserved
BAC Meeting 2 (Combined) NPHS - Media Center -6PM	05/21/25	Reserved
Board Workshop - WPHS Redistricting	08/05/25	Add to agenda
Public Hearing Notice	08/05/25	Regular Mtg (Need 30 days)
Public Hearing - WPHS Redistricting	09/09/25	Special Called
Board Action for Boundary Change	09/16/25	Regular Mtg

**5. Boundary Advisory Committee (BAC) Purpose & Tasks – Dr. Michael Kemp, COO**

- a. School District Policy 5.20 outlines the Redistricting Process, the creation of a Boundary Advisory Committee made up of parents, School Advisory Committee (SAC) Chairs, staff from impacted schools and district administrative staff.
  - b. The Boundary Advisory Committee Members have the following main focus:
    - i. **Reduce capacity** at overcrowded schools (Venice High School & North Port High School) based on Geographic Information System (GIS) and Student Information System (SIS) data showing the number of students living within the boundary.
    - ii. Develop a feasible **Level of Service (LOS)** for all school boundaries to assure equitable programs, financial feasibility for staffing and facility operations.
    - iii. Provide **guidance** to the District Planning Team on feasible scenarios to present to the School Board for consideration.
    - iv. **Share** information with other stakeholders – Dare to Share and help the community understand the process, laws/regulations and primary variables in determining a school boundary.
  - c. School Board Policy 5.2 following guidelines are to be used whenever possible:
    - i. Attendance areas will be designed to incorporate entire neighborhoods, keeping neighborhood children together and contributing to an efficient, effective and economic transportation configuration.
    - ii. Redistricting shall strive to assure schools are left with a capacity that allows for growth from new neighborhoods.
    - iii. Every attempt will be made to not require the moving of students who moved due to a prior redistricting.
    - iv. When attendance boundaries are changed, high school students with one year remaining in their present school will have the option of remaining.
  - d. Publicly Advertised Meetings
    - i. 04/14/25 Boundary Advisory Committee Meeting #1
    - ii. 04/29/25 Community Meeting #1
    - iii. 05/12/25 Community Meeting #2
    - iv. 05/21/25 Boundary Advisory Committee Meeting #2
    - v. 08/05/25 School Board Work Session
    - vi. 09/09/25 School Board Public Hearing
    - vii. 09/16/25 School Board Action
6. **Boundary Development Process, Feasibility & Methodology** – Dr. Michael Kemp, COO
- a. The Boundary Advisory Committee Members have the following focus:
    - i. **Relieve overcapacity** at Venice High School and North Port High School
    - ii. Meet **Level of Service (LOS)** requirements to open Wellen Park High School
    - iii. **Geographic Information System (GIS)** and **Student Information System (SIS)** platforms used to drive feasibility with boundary scenarios
  - b. School District Policy 5.20IIC. identifies Primary Variables utilized to create boundary scenarios and to assist the Boundary Advisory Committee in ensuring

Florida Statutes and School Board Policies are being met prior to presenting the scenarios to the School Board.

- c. The Primary Variables outlined in School Board Policy 5.2011C., associated Florida Statute and additional School Board Policies, if applicable, are as follows:
  - i. *Use Natural Boundaries* – Bridges, Waterways, Major Thoroughfares/Roadways
  - ii. *Current Capacity and Utilization Within the Study Area Impacted* – Level of Service (LOS)
    - 1. Florida Statute 163.3180(6)(a) Concurrency
    - 2. School Board Policy 7.78 - Adequacy of Educational Facilities and Growth Management
  - iii. *Address Growth* – Allow Room for Growth from Current and Projected Planned Development
    - 1. Florida Statute 163.3180(6)(a) Concurrency
    - 2. School Board Policy 7.78 - Adequacy of Educational Facilities and Growth Management
  - iv. *Portable Reduction Act* – Impacts LOS; Address Safety-Age/Security-Hardening (Unfunded Mandate)
    - 1. Florida Statute 1013.21
    - 2. School District Capital Improvement Plan Annual Portable Utilization Report
  - v. *Geographic Proximity* – School Boundary includes a financially feasible number of students to operate a new school facility; staff, programs
  - vi. *Transportation Efficiency/Logistics* – Impacts on Routing, Costs, Etc.
    - 1. Florida Statute 1006.21 - Transportation
    - 2. School Board Policy 8.32 - Bus Routes
  - vii. *Safety Considerations* – Hazardous Walking Conditions Within a Two-Mile Radius, Etc.
    - 1. Florida Statute 1006.23 - Hazardous Walking Conditions
    - 2. School Board Policy 8.31 - Student Transportation
  - viii. *Avoid Division of Students Within the Same Neighborhood/Street* – Incorporate entire neighborhoods, Efficient, Effective and Economic Transportation Configuration
  - ix. *Avoid Multiple Moves* – Moving Impacted Students in a Study Area Twice
  - x. *Programmatic Equity* – Specialized Program Opportunities for High Schools
- d. Reviewed an illustration showing students as red data points, school locations, existing boundaries and potential boundaries for a new school as an example of data driven, geographic proximity and primary variables considered when determining feasible school boundaries. The Student Information System (SIS) and the GIS systems are synced. In looking at developing a new boundary for WPHS, the main factor that drives the process is where students actually reside. Student residences from the SIS are geocoded in the GIS system. Starting with the new school and expanding outward, student addresses are captured to

create an acceptable level of service needed to open WPHS, while simultaneously reducing the overcrowding issues at VHS and NPHS.

- e. The current Bi-County Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Charlotte County will be amended to eliminate the Lemon Bay High School attendance zone within Sarasota County.
  - i. An estimated 175 students living in Sarasota County attend Lemon Bay High School and are included in the data for each scenario.
  - ii. Notified the School Superintendent and COO of Charlotte County in April of 2025, students currently districted to Lemon Bay High School will be zoned to Sarasota County Schools. The ILA will need to be amended by both Boards over the next year.
- f. Dr. Kemp defined the difference between Zoned Enrollment and Actual Enrollment.
  - i. **ZONED** - All students *living in* the attendance boundary; Charter School students, Choice, Virtual School students; SREF requirement and best practice – 90% capacity threshold. Zoned enrollment is utilized in boundary development because the district is required to reserve seats in case students who reside in the attendance zone were to return to their home school.
  - ii. **ACTUAL** - all students *physically attending* the school; Students living in zone and attending school; Students on Choice Assignment attending school.
- g. Dr. Kemp reiterated the purpose of the BAC is to assist the district team in developing feasible scenarios to present to the that reduce overcrowding at VHS and NPHS, while also creating an acceptable level of service to open WPHS by applying the primary variables required by SREF, Florida Statute and best practice. Dr. Kemp stated at the end of the day there are only so many ways the geocoded resident data can be dissected in accomplishing the task.

Dr. Kemp recognized that the process of redistricting can be very difficult because it is impossible to accommodate everyone's wishes simply based on the location of their residence or available capacity for choice options. He reiterated the goal of the district is to be as understanding as possible regarding the angst, concerns, and questions impacted families may have. Dr. Kemp encouraged the BAC, to recognize concerns and help families understand the process, data and variables that must be followed to open WPHS and understand the decision the Board must make based on the district and BAC team feasible recommendations is not isolated to current students being impacted...it is a decision that impacts generations to come.

- h. The Boundary Advisory Committee goal is to objectively review each scenario in accordance with the methodology's Primary Variables to present feasible rebalancing options which meet the Florida Statutes and School Board Policies to

assist the School Board in their final decision-making process to establish new attendance boundaries for WPHS, VHS and NPHS.

7. **Initial Scenarios & Supporting Data** – Ms. Diane Cominotti, Director, Planning
  - a. Key data sources:
    - i. The Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) is a database used by the Department of Education (DOE) to track all school facilities within the State.
    - ii. Department of Education (DOE) Utilization Rate is 95% of total student stations to calculate each high school’s capacity
    - iii. FISH Permanent Capacity does not include Portables Capacity and is the number of students that may be in a school facility based on the design of the space.
    - iv. The 2024-25 October Enrollment (40-Day Count) is utilized for in each scenario as this is the student count reported to the DOE
    - v. The 2024-25 October Zoned (40-Day County) includes the number of students residing/living with in the school attendance zone or school boundary
  - b. Calculations:
    - i. The Percent of Actual Enrollment Utilization is calculated based on the 2024-25 Actual Enrollment divided by the Permanent FISH Capacity to calculate the Level-of-Service or Actual utilization of the school facility.
    - ii. The Percent of Zoned Student Utilization is calculated based on the 2024-25 Zoned Students divided by the Permanent FISH Capacity to calculate the Level of Service or the utilization rate of the school facility if all students attended their Zoned School.
  - c. Reviewed current High School Capacity at Venice High School with 140% and North Port High School with 113% Zoned Student Level-of-Service/Utilization.
  - d. Each scenario was designed to provide a feasible Level-of-Service and meet the Primary Variables as outlined in School Board Policy 5.20.
  - e. Scenario Overview:
    - i. Scenario A – Adjust Venice High School boundary only
    - ii. Scenario B & C – Adjust both Venice High School and North Port High School boundaries
8. **Programmatic Equity** – Dr. Megan Green, Chief of High Schools
  - a. Our number one goal is to provide quality schools, mirror opportunities that exist at our other schools and provide innovative programs or new opportunities not available at other high schools.
  - b. The advanced course work provided at Venice High School is the International Baccalaureate (IB) two (2) year program for grades 11 and 12 and at North Port High School is the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)

program providing courses designed at a similar level to that of college courses. The AICE program will remain at NPHS.

- c. The School District is committed to working towards providing programmatic equity across all comprehensive high schools. WPHS will open offering IB and advanced placement course offerings consistent with VHS and NPHS (excluding AICE).
  - d. The School District plans to incorporate staff and student input for opportunities for new or unique clubs and extracurricular activities.
  - e. The district administration, with the support of the Board, remains committed to ensuring WPHS opens with the appropriate level of service needed to support program parity.
  - f. Dr. Green communicated high schools will have the same program offerings:
    - i. Academics
    - ii. Athletics
    - iii. Arts Music
    - iv. Extracurricular Activities
    - v. CTE programs – Some the same, some new
9. **Choice & Controlled Open Enrollment** – Mrs. Millie Wheeler, Supervisor School Choice
- a. Florida Statute 1002.31, School Choice Controlled Open Enrollment (COE), allows residents to apply to attend any school within the State that is not at capacity based on guidelines and conditions.
  - b. School Choice Applications are accepted in February each year and evaluated based on current School Board Policies and Procedures.
  - c. **Will redistricted SENIORS be allowed to remain at their school?**  
**YES.** In order to maintain continuity throughout the student’s high school experience, upcoming seniors may choose to remain at their current school.
  - d. **If my student is a current Choice student, can he/she remain at their currently assigned school as a Choice student?**  
Yes, as defined by Florida Statute 1002.31, all **current** students on traditional Choice (COE) at North Port High and Venice High **may remain at the chosen school by the parent until the student completes the highest grade level at that school.**
  - e. **If I am rezoned, can I apply for Choice to remain at my current school?**  
Yes, you may apply and if the adjusted enrollment after rebalancing is **less than 90%** capacity, Choice and Reassignments will be evaluated in accordance with current policies/procedures.
  - f. **If my child is remaining at the current school (ex. HS Senior), will a younger sibling be permitted to attend?**  
This depends. The younger sibling(s) can apply for Choice/Reassignment and may be placed in accordance with current policies/procedures.

10. **BAC Input/Suggestions/Questions**

**a. What is the main access road to Wellen Park High School?**

Wellen Park School is located at:

Wellen Park High School  
10801 Manasota Beach Road,  
Venice, FL 34293

The school is currently accessed via US 41, turning onto S West Villages Parkway, which intersects with Manasota Beach Road.

Additional information on area roadway improvements can be found at the following websites:

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
<https://www.swflroads.com/projects/County/Sarasota/Future>

Sarasota County Government  
<https://www.scgov.net/government/public-works/transportation-planning>

City of North Port  
<https://www.northportfl.gov/Building-Planning/Projects>

City of Venice  
<https://www.venicegov.com/government/engineering-stormwater>

**b. Please provide clarification of the “Grandfathered” policy for students redistricted to be able to remain at their present school attendance zone.**

Students with one year remaining at their current zoned school may choose to remain at their current zoned school.

At the start of the 2026-27 School Year 12<sup>th</sup> Grade High School Seniors may choose to remain at their currently zoned school.

As defined by Florida Statute 1002.31, all current students on traditional Choice (COE) at North Port High and Venice High may remain at the chosen school by the parent until the student completes the highest grade level at that school.

Younger siblings of students who choose to remain at their currently zoned school, may apply for School Choice/Reassignment and are not guaranteed placements but may be placed in accordance with current policies/procedures which is based on available capacity.

In accordance Florida Statutes 1002.31 certain eligible students must receive a preference for example: Military Families, relocation due to Foster Families, court-order change in custody, students residing in the school district.

**c. Will students living in Sarasota County in the Lemon Bay High School attendance zone be included in the redistrict process?**

The current Bi-County Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Charlotte County will be amended to eliminate the Lemon Bay High School attendance zone within Sarasota County.

- i. An estimated 175 students living in Sarasota County attend Lemon Bay High School and are included in the data for each scenario.
- ii. Notify the School Board of Charlotte County by December 1, 2025, students currently districted to Lemon Bay High School will be zoned to Sarasota County Schools.

**d. Can students Choice back into Lemon Bay High School attendance zone?**

Yes, students may apply for School Choice/Reassignment through the School Board of Charlotte County.

**e. Can a student Choice into Wellen Park High School?**

Yes, you may apply for Choice and Reassignments which will be evaluated in accordance with current policies/procedures based on available capacity.

**f. How long does it take to become an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School and will Wellen Park High School open as an IB School?**

The process is comprehensive and the time it takes to become an IB School can vary. School District staff are currently in the process of obtaining IB Status for Wellen Park High School. Having more than 16 months until WPHS opens, the district is confident with the time remaining to complete the IB process.

**g. Will Wellen Park High School open with a JROTC Program?**

The School District is currently working on a Marines Program which includes opportunities for students to relocate with their current ranking.

**h. Will Wellen Park have the same athletics programs?**

All athletic programs are being planned for the new high school. The campus will feature the following athletic spaces:

- Artificial turf athletic field with rubberized track, bleachers, lighting, concessions, and locker facilities
- Tennis courts
- Baseball field
- Softball field
- Beach volleyball courts

- Indoor gymnasium with concessions, bleachers, locker rooms, and restrooms
  - Indoor wrestling room and weight room
- i. What is the hiring process for staff at the new school?**  
The Sarasota Classified Teacher Association (SCTA) bargaining process and surplus guidelines for staff will be followed to ensure the success of impacted schools.
- j. What is the radius used to determine attendance zone?**  
One of the main factors in determining the attendance zone area is to provide efficient, effective and an economic transportation configuration providing the least amount of transportation time and mileage. The radius is dependent upon the final scenario selected by the Board.
- k. Are these the only three (3) boundary scenarios?**  
Yes. The Office of Planning analyzed the student resident data driving multiple scenarios and the three scenarios presented tonight surfaced as options best meeting minimum requirements to relieve overcapacity at VHS and NPHS as well as establish a Level of Service necessary to financially operate WPHS.
- l. Why are there not more North Port High Schools students redistrict?**  
The roads and waterways created a restriction on the number of students living in the North Port High School attendance zone that were redistricted. The School District also tried to comply with geographic proximity to NPHS and avoid redistricting students residing very close to NPHS.
- m. Are there plans for additional capacity at North Port High School?**  
There are plans for a temporary wing as part of an upcoming Refresh Project at North Port High School. Additionally, the School Board owns property for a future high school site located within the Woodlands Development of Regional Impact (DRI).
- n. How many students is Wellen Park projected to generate and other area residential developments?**  
The School District utilizes a Student Generation Rate based on the number and type of dwelling units to project the number of students.  
To be provided (Planning Team)
- o. How many high school students from each zip code are impacted?**  
The number of students will vary depending on the scenario adopted by the School Board.  
To be provided (Planning Team)

**p. How many middle school students will be impacted by the high school boundary change?**

WPHS will open Fall 2026. Current VMS and HCMS 8<sup>th</sup> graders will attend 9<sup>th</sup> grade either VHS or NPHS next year based on the current high school attendance boundaries; however, these students will be subjected to new attendance boundaries after their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year.

The number of students will vary depending on the scenario adopted by the School Board.

To be provided (Planning Team)

**11. Questions from General Public – District Team**

- a. No questions were posed from the general public during this meeting.

**12. Next Steps & Meeting Dates – Dr. Michael Kemp, COO**

- a. All information provided this evening will be posted on the Wellen Park High School website.
- b. After reviewing the initial scenarios presented, BAC members are encouraged to share the information with their respective SACs, faculties, and communities, and contact the district planning team if they have additional suggestions or would like for the planning team to apply different variables to presented scenarios to determine if it increases feasibility.
- c. Encourage stakeholders to submit questions/concerns/suggestions via the WPHS website. Keep track of stakeholder questions you receive to ensure they are included in the FAQ section on the WPHS website so the public can see all questions and responses.

**13. Meeting ended 7:42 pm**