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Superintendent of Schools

## April 30, 2014 District Reorganization Transition Plan (RTP) Update

The purpose of this communication is to update the community regarding our initial steps in our district Reorganization Transition Plan, referred to at the RTP. These updates will take place throughout the transition period, be announced through our messaging and alert systems, and will be posted at our district's homepage. As you are aware, our Board of Education approved "Scenario I" as a district reorganization plan on April 1, 2014. This Board approval was the result of a two year consolidation project to determine how to better utilize our buildings while saving costs in the mid to long range. The final official reorganization report is found at this link:

<http://www.kenton.k12.ny.us/cms/lib/NY19000262/Centricity/Domain/1753/Consolidation%20Final%20Report%20-20-14%20rev.pdf>

Scenario I officially starts with the beginning of the 2016-17 school year and it reorganizes the school district into grades K-4 elementary schools, grades 5-7 middle schools, and grades 8-12 high schools. Final revisions to Scenario I created a 100% feeder pattern whereby ALL elementary students in certain elementary schools only go to a certain middle school and then only go to a certain high school. This overall feeder pattern improvement will increase familiarity between students as they progress through the entire grade level education span leading up to graduation. The final Scenario I, including current and future feeder patterns, building capacity loads, and cost benefit analysis is at this link:

<http://www.kenton.k12.ny.us/domain/1753>

We realize there are many questions regarding the reorganization transition plan, starting with, which schools will my child(ren) attend? We have created two school locator applications for your use. One indicates all the schools your child will attend starting with the 2016-17 school year, and the other indicates which schools your child attends now. Click on the link(s) and insert your full address where indicated. You will see a depiction of each school in either locator. The schools are also linked to driving, walking, or bicycling maps from your house to each school (these are for demonstration purposes, not recommendations)

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***To use the 2016-2017 Scenario “I” school locator click here:***

<http://locator.decisioninsite.com/?StudyID=162013>

***To use the current school locator click here:***

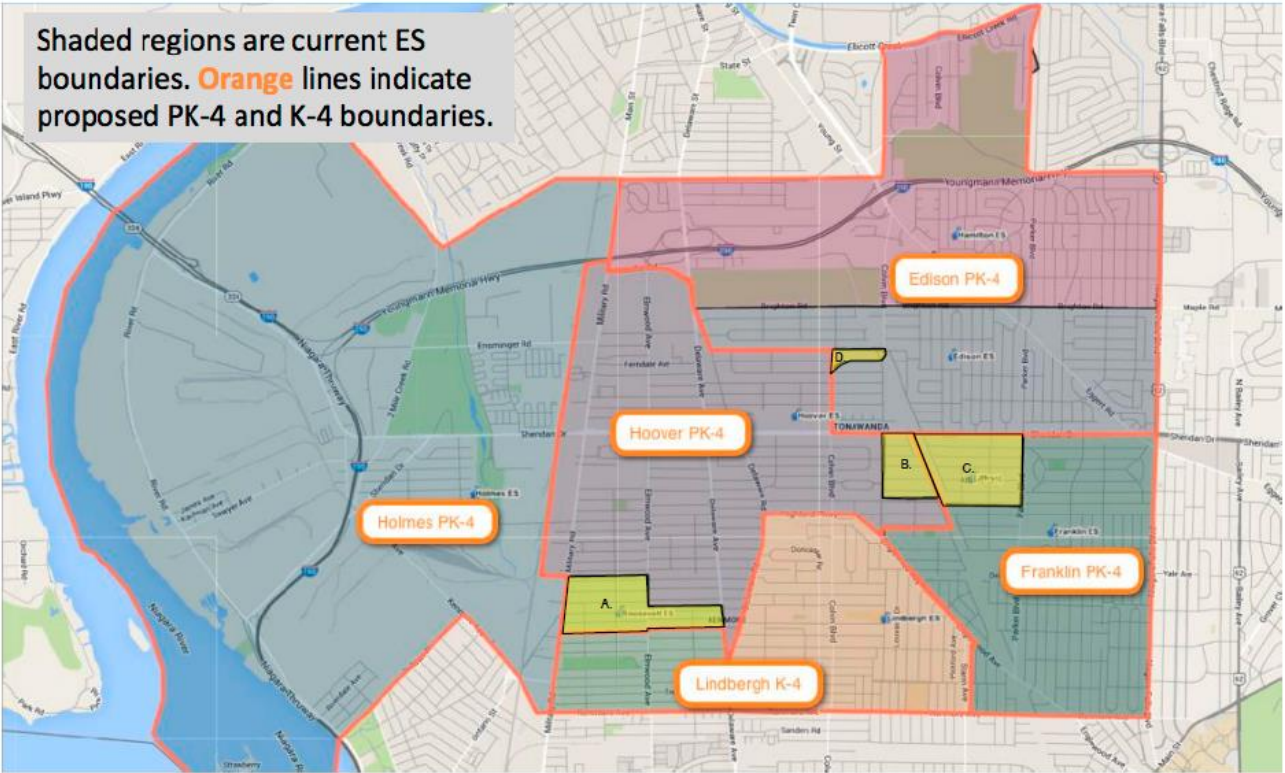
<http://locator.decisioninsite.com/?StudyID=138444>

We received some transition questions during the public forums. For example, some West students will move to East when the 2016-17 school year starts. If my child is a junior at West during the spring of 2016 will they be able to stay at West for her 2016-17 senior year? I have a child who is scheduled to go to Kenmore Middle ...is there any chance I can have him start at Hoover Middle, his 2016-17 middle school ahead of time so that he does not have to switch middle schools twice ? My former Jefferson child was already transferred to a different school and feeder pattern and has to again. Is there a way to reduce future transitions for my child? I live in one of the smaller five “crossover” zones where my feeders completely change transitioning to Scenario “I”. Is there a way to reduce the transitions for my child? Can I open enroll my child now instead of waiting for the 2016-17 school year? Will transportation eligibility mileage requirements change to reflect the new building grade levels for 2016-17? Will this scenario require any capital building work? What is happening to the Jefferson building?

We are sure there are many more questions, but these seem to be the most prevalent right now. We are currently working through modeling meeting the transition needs these questions bring up. More specifically, we are modeling:

1. How many West students would be moving to East, including seniors, and what would it take to keep those who would transition at West through graduation?
2. How many current and projected students are in the four “cross-over” feeder zones (see map below) and what would it take to lessen their transitions?
3. How many former Jefferson students would now have to switch schools again and is there a way to lessen their transitions?
4. What would be the impact if we STOP Kindergarten entrance to Roosevelt and Hamilton starting in 2015-16 and send these students to their eventual elementary school a year early?
5. What is the impact if we STOP grade six entries to Kenmore Middle School in 2015-2016 and send these students to their eventual middle school a year early?

These are the five groups of student transition issues we are currently working on, and we will announce the results to the Board of Education and community as soon as we can. Meanwhile, we are continuing to work on the other elements of the RTP, including possible sale of the Jefferson school and any other program and capital changes that may be needed. We will communicate directly with parents through the mail regarding the outcome of eventual transition modeling as described in parts 1-5 above. There could be more student transition modeling we will pursue as well. The small “displaced” household areas in the reorganization are depicted below (a, b, c, and d) that we are working on:



Meanwhile, continue to contact either your principal or Superintendent if you have questions.

Part of this communication is our first frequently asked questions section which contains many of the questions we heard either at the public forums or since the Board of Education voted. We understand that school district reorganization is a challenging event, and we will work to meet as many needs as we can.

***Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District Reorganization Transition Plan  
Frequently Asked Questions # 1  
April 30, 2014***

When does the new district organization officially start?

- ***September of 2016.***

I have a current freshman at West who will be a senior starting September of 2016. Can he finish with his classmates at and graduate from West?

- ***We are working on arrangements to make this happen and parents of students will be directly informed of our progress.***

My younger children are in an elementary school that is closing effective 2016-17. Can I open enroll them to the eventual school of attendance now for the 2014-15 school year?

- ***We are working on a transition plan that STOPS incoming kindergarten classes to Roosevelt and Hamilton effective for the 2015-2016 school year. The goal is to allow students to start their school experience in their eventual school a year early thereby avoiding a transition. We are investigating following a similar procedure for entering grade six students for KMS. In terms of the open enrollment process, it would be difficult to approve large numbers of these transitions across grade levels starting with the 2014-15 school year.***

My child will eventually be an eighth grader at East. They will be playing in the modified program. How will the grades 7-8 modified program work since their aligned grade 7 counterparts will be at Franklin Middle School?

- ***We have determined that we will use an after school bus to transport the grade eight students to either Hoover or Franklin where they will practice together with their middle school feeder. Instead of getting on the after school bus to go home these students will board a bus at the same time to go to their respective middle school feeder. We project the need to run these transport buses around five months of the school year. As is the case now, we will not be transporting students home after their middle school modified practice or obligation.***

Why are we following through with the Scenario I reorganization plan?

- ***Our two year consolidation project had the main purpose of investigating better ways to run our school district more efficiently. This scenario maintains a neighborhood elementary school in all five geographic locations and increases our total school district building per pupil capacity use to 80% from what would soon be only two thirds full.***

Is it possible that the school district would reorganize further in the future?

- ***That will depend on longer term elementary enrollment patterns.***

My children had to transition to other schools from Jefferson after it closed. Some of us have to switch schools again depending on where we live. Is it possible to lessen our amount of scheduled transitions?

- *This is one of the student transition issues we are currently working on.*

Are there any capital improvements needed for this reorganization?

- *It would be wise to do some capital improvements at both East and West. The district is already planning a December 2014 Phase Two capital project community referendum vote and any suggested reorganization work will be folded into the larger project.*

What will happen with the Jefferson building?

- *Selling the building is part of the "CORE" recommendation in the reorganization project. The Board of Education must approve the building going to sale and the community must eventually approve of the sale to the known purchaser. This may also be a part of the December 2014 community wide referendum vote.*

What will happen with the eventual three buildings that are being closed? The buildings will be needed right up to the 2016-17 school year.

- *Another part of the CORE recommendation is to sell the Philip Sheridan building on Elmwood Avenue. That possible sale would be coordinated with the three building close and one of the buildings would still be used for programming. The plan is for Kenmore Middle School to house the Big Picture program, some district offices, Community Education classrooms and other programs currently in the Phillip Sheridan building.*

Will the grade level transportation eligibility limits change again as a result of this reorganization?

- *The community must approve changes to the current eligibility guidelines. More than likely, a referendum will be offered to at least make the same groups of grade levels in the newly arranged schools the same. For example, currently grades 9-12 students must reside more than 1.8 miles from the school to be eligible. Starting in 2016-17, does the community prefer that grades eight through 12 reside more than 1.8 miles from the school to be eligible?*

Will school start times change as a result of the reorganization?

- *It was suggested to start both 8-12 schools earlier than now to better manage the transportation department routing. One positive about such a change, besides cost savings, would be that older siblings would be home to help watch younger siblings who would get out of school after they do.*

Where will the eighth grade students be housed at East and West?

- *Where they were scheduled to be placed if Scenario J had been chosen. At West – grade 8 students will have most classes on the second floor and their lockers will be on the second floor as well. At East – they will also be on the second floor in the "south" wing, and a bathroom specifically for them will be added to that wing through the capital project.*

We've noticed that the Holmes Elementary School population remains small. Why wasn't the boundary changed to capture more students?

- *If Scenario I was operational THIS school year it would have only 291 students. However, the projections for Holmes in 2016/17 (under Scenario I) were showing 333 students and the "out year" of 2019/20 projects 343 students. Therefore, it was better thought to leave the boundary alone. At one point there was talk of creating some application seats for this school's "expeditionary learning" theme. If the projections do not hold and/or this concept ends up being pursued, application seats to attend the Holmes theme school would be a future option. Also, additional Pre-K and other district wide special classes could possibly be scheduled at Holmes in the future.*