

Lower Merion Schools

Proposed New High School Attendance Zones

September 8, 2008

Foundation for this Report

Phase I: Community Engagement – input from community members resulting in key findings along with Board Guidelines which served as guiding principles for this report.

Phase 2: Data and facility analysis-enrollment projections on a district-wide and individual school basis; an inventory of available classrooms in each building, utilization of GIS system to locate students and schools on a map of the District.

Phase 3: Proposed plan and community engagement through public presentations, communications, and the District website.

Key Findings on Community Values

1. Social networks are at the heart of where people live, and those networks expand as people grow older.
2. Lower Merion Public Schools are known for their excellence: academic as well as extracurricular.
3. Those who walk should continue to walk while the travel time for non-walkers should be minimized.
4. Children learn best in environments where they are comfortable—socially as well as physically.
5. Explore and cultivate whatever diversity—ethnic, social, economic, religious, and racial—there is in Lower Merion.

Guiding Principles

1. The enrollment of the two high schools and two middle schools will be equalized.
2. Elementary students will be assigned so that the schools are at or under the school capacity.
3. The plan may not increase the number of buses required.
4. At a minimum, the class of 2010 will have the choice to either follow the redistricting plan or stay at the high school of their previous year.
5. Redistricting decisions will be based upon current and expected future needs and not based upon past redistricting outcomes or perceived past promises or agreements.

Elementary and Middle Schools

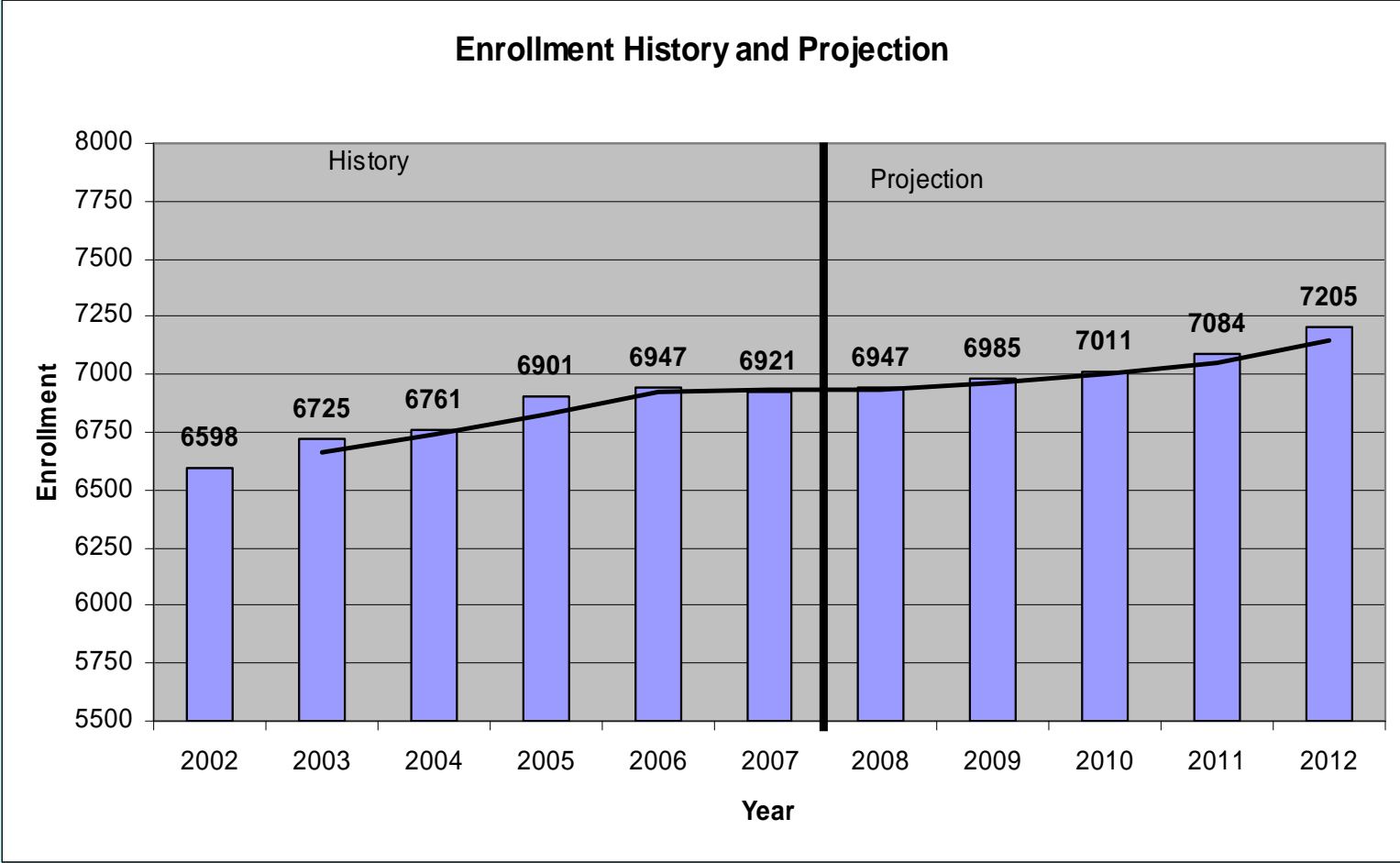
Proposal:

1. No redistricting take place at the elementary schools.
2. All students remain with cohorts in grades K – 8.
3. Penn Valley Elementary School changed to feed Bala Cynwyd and Penn Wynne Elementary School to feed Welsh Valley.

Basis of Recommendation for Elementary and Middle Schools

1. Projections indicate that the schools can accommodate current and future enrollments for, at a minimum, five years.
2. Each of the elementary schools will be able to remain within class sizes guidelines for each grade.
3. There is no one school which has the room to accommodate “overloads” from any other school based upon a redistricting model.
4. The physical location of the elementary schools make any practical redistricting difficult with regard to keeping communities intact.
5. Any unanticipated or rapid growth (as in any large scale development) may not be resolved by redistricting alone.

District Wide Enrollment Projection



Elementary School Projections

2008	K	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
BH	54	72	80	85	75	81							447
CYN	56	87	95	94	86	84							502
GI	53	89	98	86	108	117							551
Merion	56	99	93	84	80	94							506
Penn Vall	57	76	76	82	77	82							450
Penn Wynne	73	102	102	97	96	111							581

2009	K	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
BH	56	65	76	89	84	73							443
CYN	56	85	91	100	91	88							511
GI	54	91	92	103	87	116							543
Merion	51	90	102	96	88	80							507
Penn Vall	52	72	77	77	84	81							443
Penn Wynne	74	97	106	103	103	100							583

2010	K	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
BH	56	68	70	85	91	85							455
CYN	56	85	89	96	97	94							517
GI	50	93	94	98	105	94							534
Merion	53	82	92	105	101	89							522
Penn Vall	54	75	74	78	79	88							448
Penn Wynne	74	98	100	107	109	106							594

2011	K	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
BH	55	69	72	78	87	89							450
CYN	56	85	90	84	93	100							508
GI	52	86	97	100	99	113							547
Merion	54	85	84	96	111	101							531
Penn Vall	55	71	76	74	80	83							439
Penn Wynne	73	98	102	101	113	113							600

2012	K	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
BH	56	69	73	81	79	85							443
CYN	56	85	90	94	91	96							512
GI	52	90	89	103	101	107							542
Merion	54	86	87	87	101	111							526
Penn Vall	55	71	72	77	76	84							435
Penn Wynne	74	98	102	103	107	117							601

There is a small variance between the totals of the school based projections and the district wide projection. The variance ranges from .86% in 2008-09 to 2.86% in 2012-13. This is within the margin of error +/-3% for five years.

Current Middle School Projection

Bala Cynwyd				
Year	6	7	8	Total
2002-03	268	289	298	855
2003-04	295	290	296	883
2004-05	278	301	289	870
2005-06	246	294	309	851
2006-07	269	253	295	819
2007-08	249	292	259	802
2008-09	265	263	297	825
2009-10	301	280	268	849
2010-11	279	318	285	882
2011-12	302	295	324	921
2012-13	330	319	301	950

Welsh Valley				
Year	6	7	8	Total
2002-03	253	283	279	815
2003-04	268	251	290	811
2004-05	263	275	259	799
2005-06	244	276	288	810
2006-07	264	248	281	795
2007-08	265	268	253	788
2008-09	256	272	276	804
2009-10	267	263	280	810
2010-11	273	274	270	817
2011-12	264	280	282	826
2012-13	283	271	288	843

The balance between the two middle schools can be equalized by moving Penn Wynne to Welsh Valley and Penn Valley to Bala Cynwyd.

High Schools

Current High School Attendance Zones with Elementary Attendance Zones



Current High School Feeder Patterns

Lower Merion HS

Cynwyd -All

Merion —All

Penn Wynne—All

Penn Valley—Ardmore

Belmont Hills—Narberth Borough

Harrilton HS

Gladwyne--All

Belmont Hills-All except Narberth
Borough

Penn Valley—Penn Valley and
Haverford

Current Middle School Feeder Patterns

Bala Cynwyd

Cynwyd

Merion

Penn Wynne

Welsh Valley

Belmont Hills

Gladwyne

Penn Valley

Proposed Realignment of High School Attendance Zones



The area inside the solid black line is the proposed new Harriton HS attendance zone.

Current High School Attendance Zones with Elementary Attendance Zones



Feeder Patterns Based on Proposed HS Attendance Zones

HHS

Penn Wynne (all)

Gladwyne (all)

Belmont Hills (all except Narberth
Borough)

Penn Valley-Haverford & Penn Valley

LMHS

Cynwyd (all)

Merion (all)

Belmont Hills-Narberth Borough

Penn Valley-Current walk zone
and Ardmore

Proposed Middle School Feeder Patterns

Bala Cynwyd

Cynwyd

Merion

Penn Valley

Welsh Valley

Belmont Hills

Gladwyne

Penn Wynne

Statistics for New High School Attendance Zones

Total Enrollment	LMHS	HHS
	1,137	1,108
Diversity		
Socio-Economic	207	206
Children with Disabilities	203	187
Asian	78	67
African American	103	110
Hispanic	28	20
Am Ind/Pac Isl	4	8
White	924	901

Meeting the Guiding Principles

1. The enrollment of the two high schools and two middle schools will be equalized.

This scenario equalizes the enrollment at the high schools. By changing the middle school feeder patterns (moving Penn Wynne to Welsh Valley and Penn Valley to Bala Cynwyd) greater balance is achieved. That is because Penn Wynne is growing at a faster rate than Penn Valley.

2. Elementary students will be assigned so that the schools are at or under the school capacity.

Not applicable—there will be no redistricting of the elementary schools.

3. The plan may not increase the number of buses required.

According to the Transportation Department this plan can be implemented without increasing the number of buses needed.

4. At a minimum, the class of 2010 will have the choice to either follow the redistricting plan or stay at the high school of their previous year.

It is recommended that all students remain in the high school to which they were assigned, no child, unless it is requested, will be moved from the high school in which they started.

Students entering the high school in 2009 will attend the school for which they are zoned.

5. Redistricting decisions will be based upon current and expected future needs and not based upon past redistricting outcomes or perceived past promises or agreements.

All decisions have been made on objective criteria and in the best interest of students and the school district and on no other basis.

Schedule of Events

September 8, 2008, 8PM – Initial presentation of a draft of the redistricting plan to the Board of School Directors of Education.

September 11, 2008, 8PM—Special meeting on redistricting at which time the Board will Receive public comments on the first draft of the redistricting plan.

September 12-25, 2008—The board will accept comments on the first draft of the redistricting plan. These comments may come via e mail (redistricting@lmsd.org), or by letter via US Mail.

October 20, 2008, 8PM—Board of Directors meeting to review any revision of the Phase 3 redistricting plan.

October 23, 2008, 8PM—The Board will receive comments on the revised draft of the Phase 3 plan.

October 24-Nov 6, 2008—Public comments period..

November 17, 2008, 8PM—Presentation of any revisions to the 3rd draft of the Phase 2 plan.

November 19, 2008, 8PM—The Board will receive public comments on the Phase 3 redistricting plan.

November 20-27—Public comment period.

December 5, 2008—Final redistricting plan completed. The Board will publish the final redistricting plan on the lmsd.org and via a presentation to be announced.