

# Rebuilding Stronger Reorganization Plan Committee

## Small Group Committee Discussion Notes

April 14, 2022

### Reflection:

### Demographic Analyses

(see slides 24-29)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - Proximity boundary drives access to specific schools.
  - Disproportionate # of white students at choice schools.
  - Choice schools over enroll white students W/R/T IPS demographics – opposite is true for neighborhood schools W/R/T families of color.
  - Growth in neighborhood schools is Latino/Hispanic.
  - White students are not attending IPS schools proportionate to population – LATINX is the opposite (2-3X proportion).
  - Choice underutilized by students of color – white families at higher % in choice.
  - Notable increase in enrollment of Latino students.
  - Increase of Hispanic enrollment, decrease of black student enrollment and white stays pretty steady.
  
- What does the data make you wonder?
  - What obstacles and policies are we self-imposing to cause these discrepancies?
  - Why has IPS allowed the inequitable lottery practices to continue?
  - Can application process be more accessible/evenly diverse?
  - Is information about choice reaching non-white students – access to resources?
  - Is access to transportation an obstacle for those wanting to enter a choice school?
  - Are white students more willing and able to leave neighborhood schools due to access to non-IPS transport?
  - I am wondering why we have not discussed the noticeable increase in enrollment of Latino students as we talk about racial equity.
  - To what extent will IPS consider fully transitioning to choice model? What would that mean for families who enroll late?
  - How do we get info on choice to all families of color so that they have the same access?
  
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
  - What policies can be cut? What is our will to cut?
    - Any of our lottery policies not required by state or federal law can be changed, and the Rebuilding Stronger initiative is an opportunity to look at what we should change. We'll continue to explore our broader community's desire for change throughout this spring, summer, and early fall.
  - Is IPS providing equitable funding for neighborhood schools?

- IPS budgets using a resource allocation method called Student Based Allocation. One of the guiding principles of this formula is to promote equitable funding across schools based on characteristics of student need. We moved to this method in the 2017–2018 school year and continue to make greater strides towards equity.
- How much is the cost difference in teaching a neighborhood student versus choice? What is allocation of funds at each school type?
  - On average, IPS spends ~\$315.00 per student at choice schools on programmatic resources. Due to choice schools having higher than average enrollment their total dollar-per-pupil allocations are closely aligned with the district average.
- Given that CFI is so popular, do we have data about how many families would be interested in the IB model?
  - CFI schools in any given year receive between 3 to 6 times the number of first-choice applicants as they have available seats, meaning that there are many more interested families than IPS is able to currently serve.
- Will CFI and Butler Lab models be duplicated in other geographic areas to serve a more diverse population?
  - Two of the guiding principles in Rebuilding Stronger address this directly: “Ensure equitable geographic distribution of high performing & high demand programming” and “Grow and replicate schools/programs with demonstrated academic success in supporting all students to both improve under-performing schools and explicitly close the opportunity gap for students of color.” While no decisions have been made, we are beginning to think about various ways to fulfill these guiding principles.
- Have we studied to what extent Black and Latino families are interested in enrolling their students in the CFI and Butler Lab models?
  - Enroll Indy’s application data shows that overall applicants to CFI and Butler Lab schools are much more diverse by race than the students who are accepted into the schools. The data presented on 4/14 shows that this difference is primarily driven by sibling and proximity priorities, but it also means that families of color, although often not able to win a seat in the lottery, do want to enroll in these popular programs.
- Will IPS change sibling/proximity enrollment policies, given that they appear to exacerbate existing inequities?
  - One of the guiding principles in Rebuilding Stronger addresses this directly: “Address inequities that may exist in the school proximity boundary policy.” We haven’t made any decisions yet for the future plan, but are thinking about ways to address the guiding principle.
- What is the process of getting info on choice to all parents?
  - Currently, IPS and Enroll Indy work collaboratively to spread the word about the choice lottery process and choice schools to all families. Students in transition grades (Pre-K, 6th grade at K–6 schools, and 8th grade) hear about school options and the lottery process directly from their school, and IPS and Enroll

- Indy track and follow up with families that have not participated in the lottery (families can apply to choice and neighborhood schools through the Enroll Indy lottery). IPS and Enroll Indy also partner with community organizations and daycare centers to reach out to younger families.
- Are parents aware?
    - See above, but not all families participate in the lottery process. Others may decide not to participate because they want to enroll in their neighborhood school and don't need to participate in the lottery.
  - How is neighborhood gentrification playing into this?
    - For as long as the lottery process advantages families based on their address (proximity priority), a family's ability to afford a house near to a high-demand choice school will influence their chances of earning a seat in the lottery. We have seen housing prices increase across all of the IPS district, but some of the neighborhoods near our highest-demand programs have seen a particularly sharp increase in housing value.
  - Will the lottery system be revisited?
    - IPS has the ability to revisit the lottery rules at any time, and Rebuilding Stronger presents a particularly clear opportunity to think about what changes might need to be made to the lottery process. One of the guiding principles in Rebuilding Stronger addresses this directly: "Address inequities that may exist in the school proximity boundary policy."
  - How do you take into consideration family structure and dynamics – families in need of resources? How do we support them in being able to get to the choice school?
    - IPS has made multiple changes to the choice enrollment process that have all increased access for low income families and for families of color. These changes include (1) a transition from a paper-based application to an online and a phone-based application, (2) the introduction of multiple application rounds with seats held back for distribution in later rounds, and (3) the reduction of proximity boundaries from 1.5 miles to .5 miles. All of these changes increased access for families from low-income backgrounds and for families of color, but the data presented on 4/14 shows that we still have an opportunity to achieve greater equity of access.

## K-8 Enrollment and Mobility Data

(see slides 30-35)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - If you don't have a "program" – kids go somewhere else.
  - The stability slide speaks volumes.
  - Choice enrollment increasing and very stable population/enrollment – neighborhood schools are exact opposite.
  - IPS neighborhood enrollment decrease.
  - Sibling/proximity data is very high.

- Choice is driving enrollment.
- Transportation is affecting enrollment.
- What does the data make you wonder?
  - How are less “stable” schools staffed differently to support needs? And funded differently?
  - Why hasn’t IPS acted on this data before now?
  - Look at application process – especially in kindergarten.
  - Why are families choosing?
  - Are there more efficient ways to transport students?
  - Who decides choice parameters/process?
  - Are students serving students of color at a similar level as those of white? Or is the chasm bigger than the state/district level?
  - What is driving the decrease in neighborhood enrollment?
  - Achievement gap difference by race.
  - Why are some buildings K-6 and some are K-8?
  - If neighborhood schools are not at capacity – what is our plan to correct that?
  - How do we offset the challenges that some parents are experiencing?
  - How do we replicate and expand choice schools?
  - Create programs and seek grants that can support the challenges and barriers that may be prohibiting families from taking advantage of the opportunities and benefits of choice.
  - More options could be the reason why mobility isn’t an issue at choice schools.
  - Parents don’t always have the same challenges as those in neighborhood schools.
  - Teacher retention?
  - Family dynamic and financial situations could also be impacting mobility.
  - How do we replicate the choice school experience?
  - How can we get those kids back with the neighborhood challenges?
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
  - How can we work with community partners to support family transiency?
    - IPS has partnerships with many community-based organizations, and these partners support IPS students and families in myriad ways. One of the most powerful examples of a partnership that has resulted in decreased family transiency is between the John Boner Neighborhood Center and Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School 15. The work that the Boner Center does to help house and stabilize families within the School 15 boundary has significantly decreased family transience, which has positive impacts on student learning and school effectiveness. IPS is eager to expand on the success of these types of partnership with other community organizations.
  - Will changes/decisions/next steps be made in a timely manner to interrupt these trends and increase equitable access?
    - Yes. Rebuilding Stronger is a community-based initiative meant to reimagine IPS for the future, and the goal is to develop and implement a plan for the district that is grounded in the guiding principles developed by the IPS community.

- When a student transitions at 7-8 they are choosing from choice – what role is K-6 transition affecting this change to choice?
  - Slide 37 of the enrollment presentation shows that K-6 schools, with the natural middle school transition point, has a much higher attrition rate than K-8 schools, without a natural middle school transition point. 34% of 6th grade students at K-6 schools leave the district, compared to just 15% of 6th grade students at K-8 schools who leave the district.
- How does the district support students and families through the transition from one school to another (i.e. 6th to 7th)?
  - IPS works directly with families at transition points. Schools make sure families are educated about their school options, and schools and Enroll Indy track and follow up with families to encourage all families to apply as early as possible.

## 6th to 7th Grade Retention Data

(see slides 36-39)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - Neighborhood schools have greatest number of students enroll in township schools for 7th grade.
  - Transitions are more stable in choice schools.
  - K-6 has worse retention rates than K-8 model.
  - With schools near township schools — there aren't as many choice options — less opportunity to transfer to a logistically adjacent choice school.
- What does the data make you wonder?
  - Why have K-6, K-8 and middle schools? Should they all be K-8?
  - Why do we have K-6 schools at all?
  - What role do facilities play in families leaving?
  - How much did most recent voucher laws affect students leaving for private schools?
  - How do you envision increasing retention from 6th to 7th grade?
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?
  - Can we have high school data?
    - Yes. We didn't present high school data since Rebuilding Stronger is focused on IPS' K-8 schools, but high school transition data was presented to the IPS board in October of 2021 and can be found on [slides 35-38 of this public presentation](#).

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## Small Group Public Discussion Notes

April 14, 2022

### Reflection:

### **Demographic Analyses**

(see slides 24-29)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - Neighborhood schools are outperforming choice schools when providing equity for students of color.
  - The inequities of the popular choice schools. However, schools like 56, with their strong race equity focus, balance out the choice numbers.
  - Notice that we are not retaining students for high school.
  - The data brings up concerns about equity and access.
  
- What does the data make you wonder?
  - Why are popular programs not duplicated in neighborhood schools?
  - With the number of schools in IPS' portfolio (open/closed), how did the schools become unbalanced with programming?
  - Wonder if the boundaries need to be looked over.
  - Narrow the spectrum between choice and neighborhood students/schools.
  - Proximity boundaries should be revisited to better serve families of color.
  - Invest in more programs to support neighborhood schools.
  
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?

### **K-8 Enrollment and Mobility Data**

(see slides 30-35)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - Notice neighborhood school's enrollment is decreasing
  - Within our own program (Montessori) – there are demographic discrepancies.
  
- What does the data make you wonder?
  - Where are the neighborhood school's students going?
  - What is mobility based on race?
  - Are exit surveys done to learn why families are choosing outside options?
  - Are families exercising choice in other options, then returning? (NW Indianapolis growth)
  - Encourage Enroll Indy to go into the schools to support families in the process.

- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?

## **6th to 7th Grade Retention Data**

(see slides 36-39)

- What do you notice about the data?
  - Families are choosing options for athletics and must do that by middle school to participate.
- What does the data make you wonder?
- What additional information or questions do you have after reviewing the data?