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Northwest and North Central French Immersion Program

World Café Discussion – Option 1

Option 1: Boundary Changes

This option involves changing boundaries/designated communities of a school attendance area.

Guided by the CBE values and planning principles, the CBE establishes and reviews boundaries for schools and programs on a regular basis. If boundary changes are required, CBE Planning works collaboratively with schools and area directors to re-adjust boundaries based on enrolment growth and data trends. Sometimes this may mean adjustments to existing boundaries or it means re-designating an entire community to a different school.

Questions to be discussed

1. Discuss opportunities of this option.
2. Discuss challenges of this option.



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World Café Discussion – Option 2

Option 2: Grade Configuration Changes

This option involves expanding or reducing the grades that are offered for a specific program at a school(s).

Grade configurations in schools relate to the way in which schools are organized to support learning. The CBE aims to provide a continuum of learning across kindergarten to Grade 9 such that cohorts of students remain together for as long as possible and to minimize the number of transitions students have to make throughout these schooling years.

At the elementary level, the CBE has schools which include grade configurations of K-2, K-3, K-4, K-5 and K-6. At the middle school level, the CBE has schools with configurations including Grades 4-9, Grades 5-9 and Grades 6-9. We also have junior high schools where the grade configuration is Grades 7-9. All CBE high schools offer Grades 10-12.

Factors considered when determining the grade configuration of a school include:

- The capacity of the school (number of students the school can accommodate).
- The feeder schools (schools students will attend before or after).
- School design.
- A new school might not open with a full grade configuration the first year (i.e. school is designed as K-4 but opens in first year as K-3).
- Program expansion (i.e. school might open Grades 5-7 in year one and expand a grade a year until the program reaches the full grade configuration of Grades 5-9).

Once the school's grade configuration is determined, the school establishes the organization of the grades. Some schools are multi-aged, meaning the grades are intentionally combined while other schools do not combine multiple grades in the same classroom. School organization of grades is determined by the principal in consultation with school staff.

Questions to be discussed

1. Discuss opportunities of this option.
2. Discuss challenges of this option.



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World Café Discussion – Option 3

Option 3: Program/Location Expansion

This option involves increasing the number of school sites that offer a specific program. Program expansion may involve boundary changes and/or grade configuration changes to balance enrolment between the schools.

Over the past two years, the CBE has opened new schools and many students can now or will soon attend school in their own communities. This has resulted in space becoming available in the schools these students previously attended. When space becomes available, options open up for the use of that space. As not all schools have space available, the CBE must be strategic about where programs expand based on demand and the space available for options.

In previous CBE engagements on the use of learning space, stakeholders suggested there could be opportunities to expand alternative programs. For the expansion of a program into a new location, an alternative program requires a minimum number of students to ensure sustainability over time. An expression of interest is often conducted to determine if there will be a sufficient number of students registered in the program.

Space is one part of the equation. In addition to space, there must be the resources required to begin and subsequently grow the program. For example, for a language program, does the CBE have qualified staff to teach the language? Is there funding for learning resources?

Questions to be discussed

1. Discuss opportunities of this option.
2. Discuss challenges of this option.



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World Café Discussion – Option 4

Option 4: Enrolment Cap

This option involves setting an enrolment limit per grade for a specific program at a school that is at or over capacity.

From time to time in any given program or school demand may exceed space available. In these situations, principals work with their area directors and the CBE Planning department to consider enrolment options. One of the ways to reduce enrolment pressures is to set a cap on enrolment. The CBE Planning department develops projections of student enrolment numbers for each school and program over one-year, three-year and five-year periods. Based on current data and historical trends, a recommendation is made regarding the number of students that can attend a school or program for the current year and into the future. In this manner, CBE is able to make effective use of learning space in schools and communicate enrolment caps to parents and the community prior to registration.

Questions to be discussed

1. Discuss opportunities of this option.
2. Discuss challenges of this option.