



Listening sessions with Jon Dean





Listening sessions – the ‘why’

- Introduction as new superintendent
- Addressed need for healing inside the district due to pandemic, reconfiguration, etc.
- Created an opportunity for people to feel heard
- Open to anyone in the community who wanted to attend



Listening sessions

- Held between May 27 and June 23, 2021
- Took place at all buildings, including Barnes and 389 St. Clair
- Approximately 120 community members (parents, grandparents, staff) in attendance – from two to 35 people at each
- One or more (no more than three) board members in attendance at each



Major themes

- COVID
- Learning Goals
- Staff Needs
- Business Questions
- Communication
- Relationships



COVID

- Questions on the opening of school
 - what will the next school year look like?
 - what will be the safety protocols?
- Lessons learned from the pandemic
 - Benefits of outdoor lunch
 - Zoom conferences
 - Technology



Teaching and Learning

- How is the fifth grade transition working?
- What does the Y5 to K transition look like?
- How to address learning loss from the pandemic
- Curriculum development process
- Middle school electives, advisory, recess
- Importance of social-emotional learning



Staff

- How do we support our teachers?
- Meeting staff needs after a difficult year
- School funding and teacher compensation
- Hiring practices to attract and retain diverse staff
- Importance of teacher voices during changes



Business

- Strategic planning process
- Enrollment and budget
- Future of early childhood center
- Transfer policy



Communication

- GPPSS needs to do a better job communicating
 - two-way communication
 - more opportunities for feedback
 - upgrade website to make information more readily available
- Creating partnerships with families and restoring trust



Healing

- Impact of the reconfiguration on students' and teachers' mental health
- Transparency from the board and administration around decision-making
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Importance of building community and creating common experiences



Future plans

- Outstanding turnout is a reflection of our community and that people found value
- Plan to schedule more listening sessions this fall
- Held outdoors in May and June; what are the options for the winter?
- Maintain ongoing communication with open door policy