



**KIEL AREA
SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

A Second Century of Excellence

TO: Board of Education

From: Louise Blankenheim, District Administrator
Chad Ramminger, Principal Meeme and Zielanis

Date: April 3, 2013

Re: Elementary Comprehensive Study

Background

Over the past four years the district has been experiencing declining enrollment at the elementary level (see table A below). Enrollment drives the staffing needs at each school and over the past two years there has been a reduction of elementary teachers in addition to a reassignment of a teacher from Meeme to Zielanis. The reassignment was approved to equalize the teacher to student ratio at each elementary school in addition to keeping the class sizes at a reasonable and desirable size.

On March 20th, the Board of Education requested that a comprehensive study process and timeline be developed for Meeme and Zielanis Schools. The purpose of this memo is to outline a seven month conceptual process for determining future recommendations for the elementary students and staff of the Kiel Area School District.

(Table A: Enrollment)

School year	PK-4 Meeme	P-K4 Zielanis
2009/10	101	496
2010/11	102	460
2011/12	98	464
2012/13	86	458

Purpose of the Comprehensive Study

The purpose of the study is to gather data including the enrollment data, costing, staffing and facilities plans for both buildings. This information will assist the Board in determining long range plans for elementary staff and students while determining the number of facilities that will provide elementary programming. The Board’s goal is to have a final decision on the future of the elementary buildings by the annual meeting in October 2013.

Timeline 2013/14

April

- Determine full Board or Board subcommittee to participate in study and develop recommendation for the future of elementary programming.
- Tour both elementary facilities.
- Develop understanding of elementary programming including special education.
- Meet with administration and staff of both buildings.
- Gather data report: enrollment projections, facility needs, cost per student, operating expenses, staffing, technology, classroom space, special education, art, music and physical education classrooms, square footage per student and transportation costs.
- Research charter status and its advantages and/or limitations.
- Determine transportation boundaries.
- Determine status of referendum upgrades scheduled.

May

- Schedule round table discussions and focus group discussions led by the Board of Education with the Meeme Governing Board , Zielanis PTP and Meeme PTO and with various municipality councils and organizational meetings to gather feedback on Meeme and Zielanis.
- Schedule open forums during the working session to gather input from community on the future of Meeme and Zielanis.

June

- Continue round table discussions and focus group discussions led by the Board of Education at various municipality meetings and organizational meetings to gather feedback on Meeme and Zielanis.
- Schedule open forums during the working session to gather input from community of the future of Meeme and Zielanis.

July

- Administration to collect minutes and input to develop summary of responses from open forums and panel discussions.

August

- Schedule Board discussion on future planning for elementary.

September

- Schedule Board discussion on future planning for elementary.
- Determine recommendation for the October Working Session

October

- Working Session recommendation: Future of Meeme and Zielanis
- Action on recommendation: Future of Meeme and Zielanis

November-June 2014

- Determine and carryout steps of recommendation transition.

Questions to be answered through study

1. Does Kiel operate with one or two elementary buildings?
2. While monitoring enrollment does Kiel transition all students or develop a phase- in plan?
3. Will the Zielanis building be able to meet the needs of all learners?
4. What is the cost per student at Meeme? Zielanis?
5. What dollar amount could be saved by closing the Meeme building? What are the ramifications of closing an elementary school?
6. Are there other options such as grade configuration that could be housed at Meeme?
7. Does the Meeme Charter contract continue? What are the advantages or limitations of charter status?
8. Would dividing boundaries help elementary enrollment?
9. How many teachers would potentially be reduced if the two schools merged?
10. What room availability would there be at Zielanis if the schools merged?
11. Would there be a need for building remodeling or addition expenses?
12. Are there repurposing options for using the Meeme building? (i.e. alternative school, early childhood center, Ag science project-based charter school?, etc.)
13. How have other districts handled the merging of elementary schools?

There may be other questions that will need to be answered as the community provides input throughout the study.

There may also be modifications to the above plan depending on the wishes of the Board of Education.