

HERALD-WHIG

Task force presents 'compromise' school boundary plan



Quincy Public School District # 172
Boundary Advisory Task Force
Map 3.0 Revised

Task Force Goal

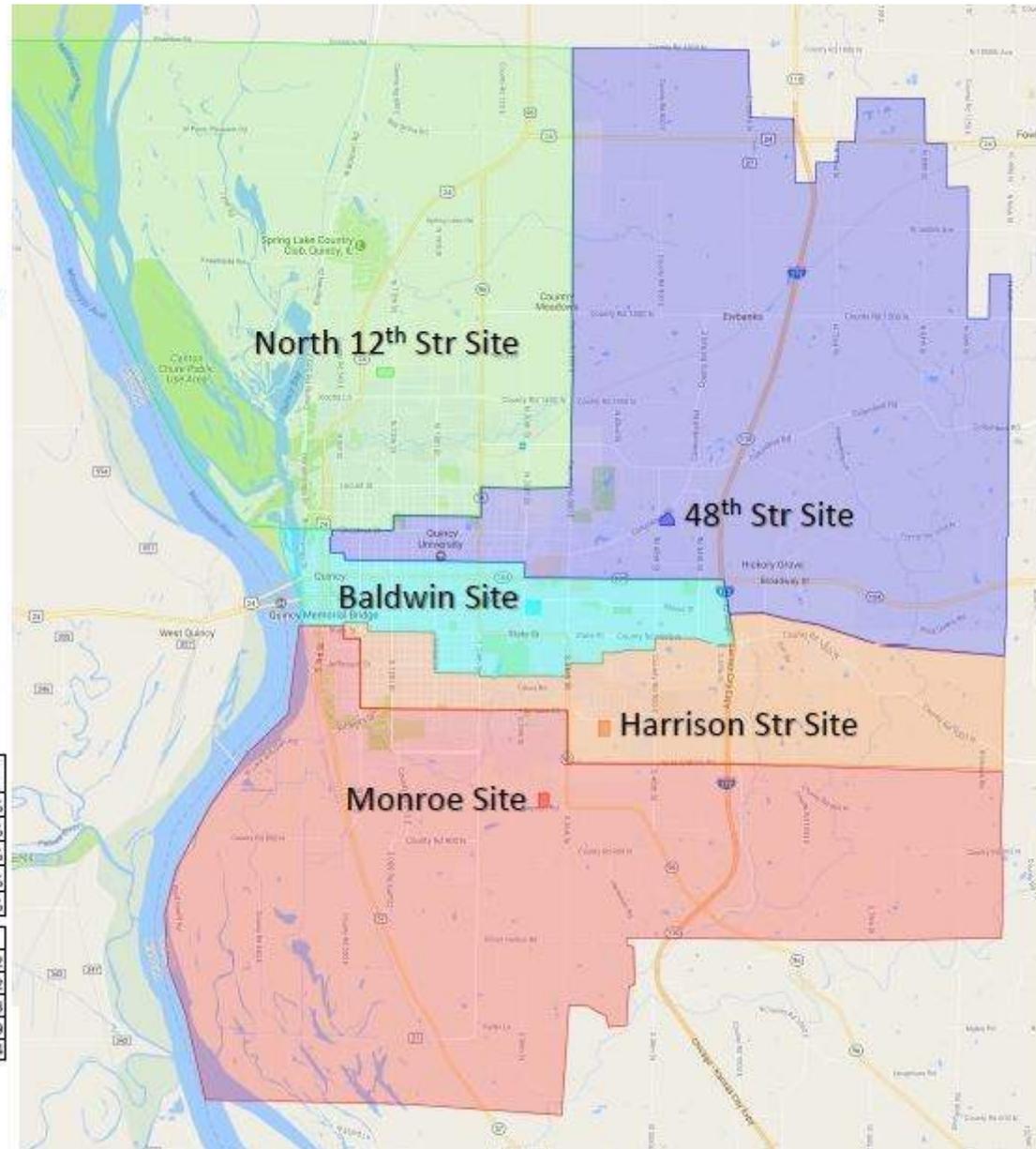
Improved Educational Outcomes and Opportunities for All Students

Guiding Principles

- Achieve a more balanced socioeconomic demographic among the five new elementary schools while evenly dispersing students by numbers to maintain balanced classroom sizes and school populations.
- Attendance boundaries should recognize district-wide needs. The attendance boundaries should reflect what is in the best interest of all students in the district.
- Attendance boundaries should recognize the importance of maintaining boundaries as long as possible, but recognize the reality that enrollment changes may require future changes in boundaries.

Kdrg - 5th Grade	Enrollment	% of Free & Reduced	% of Minority	% of IEP
North 12th Street	575	64.5%	21.9%	17.0%
48th Street	583	65.4%	24.0%	17.3%
Baldwin Site	581	66.8%	23.2%	14.3%
Harrison Street Site	587	59.5%	19.6%	14.0%
Monroe Site	577	61.0%	18.0%	15.8%

	K	1	2	3	4	5
North 12th Street	95	93	101	77	107	102
48th Street	81	103	106	93	108	92
Baldwin Site	105	96	98	97	92	93
Harrison Street Site	112	77	91	102	106	99
Monroe Site	96	107	96	87	87	104



By Deborah Gertz Husar Herald-Whig

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QUINCY -- Quincy Public Schools and its Boundary Advisory Task Force unveiled a new plan Tuesday night designed to address concerns and meet goals tied to creating five new K-5 learning communities.

A public forum at John Wood Community College offered maps, information and a chance to ask questions about boundaries proposed for the five new schools at the Monroe, Baldwin, 48th Street, North 12th and Harrison Street sites.

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All five sites will serve a portion of Quincy's population west of Eighth Street, but boundaries for the 48th Street and Harrison sites don't reach to the Mississippi River. The Baldwin site boundaries are the most compact, a narrow band stretching from the river to Interstate 172, and from basically Oak and Broadway to Madison and State.

"In some ways, it's a compromise," said QPS Business Manager Joel Murphy, who facilitated the task force's work.

School Board and BATF member Sheldon Bailey said the boundary lines on the plan "look more intact" than on two proposals presented in November.

"There will be some people probably more pleased with how it affects them personally," Bailey said. "Others may not be for the very same reason."

In developing the plan, task force members maintained the same criteria of creating learning communities with equal enrollment and more balanced socioeconomic demographics.

The Harrison site will have the largest projected enrollment at 587, just 12 students more than the smallest enrollment projected at North 12th. Baldwin will have the highest percentage of free and reduced lunch at 66.8 percent, compared to a low of 59.5 percent at Harrison Street. The largest minority population (24 percent) and percentage of students with Individual Education Plans (17.3 percent) will be at 48th Street.

"We did try to be very conscious of not dividing up neighborhoods if possible," Bailey said. "That's what I mean by the boundaries looking a little more intact, less convoluted than they did. We're ready, really, to approve this based on the input we get from the community."

The task force will meet again Feb. 8 to review feedback from Tuesday night's forum and a second session scheduled for 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at the Kroc Center and consider any changes to the map. Another meeting, if needed, is scheduled for Feb. 15.

"Our hope is that we would be able to put together a final recommendation to present to the School Board on Feb. 22," Murphy said.

An interactive version of the plan, available online at whig.com/qps-boundaries, allows people to determine school attendance by typing in an address, but Murphy cautioned that may not be "100 percent" accurate.

Additional tweaks still could be made to the map after it's approved and sent to the district's transportation department. He said that department's system is more accurate than Google Maps.

"But we're only talking maybe a handful of kids," Murphy said. "It's not like it will affect a large number in making those small adjustments."

The task force -- designed to improve educational outcomes and opportunities for all students by achieving balanced demographics among the five new elementary schools -- began its work in September.

Bailey and fellow School Board member Jim Whitfield, QPS Director of Transportation Shane Barnes, the five new K-5 learning community principals -- Chrissy Cox, Cindy Crow, Melanie Schrand, Jim Sohn and Brian Trowbridge -- and more than 30 community members serve on the panel.

Bailey praised task force members for their work to "get it right" for the community.

"I've been real impressed with the task force and how they stayed enthusiastic," he said. "The group felt what it was doing was necessary, worth doing."