

# School Board Briefing / Proposed Action Report—Olympic Hills

**DATE:** October 19, 2015  
**FROM:** Olympic Hills Elementary community members, including Olympic Hills Building Leadership Team, Olympic Hills Race and Equity Team, administrative leadership, and PTA and community leaders (see undersigned)

## I. TITLE

Amendment of the Proposed Growth Boundaries 2017-2018, Olympic Hills Elementary Attendance Area

For Introduction: 10/21/15  
For action: 11/4/15

## II. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

Board Action is necessary per the approved “Growth Boundaries Plan for Student Assignment” enacted on November 20, 2013.

Board action is crucial **now** to correct future inequities and imbalances in the Olympic Hills Elementary attendance area for the 2017-2018 school year. Board action **now** will provide certainty of assignment for underrepresented families living in an extremely high-poverty area of Lake City (“the slice” -- see below), allowing those families to plan on inclusion in the newly-constructed state-of-the-art Olympic Hills building opening in fall 2017, providing consistency and predictability for families already experiencing higher stress and transition. Similarly, board action **now** will prevent the creation of an ultra-high-poverty school at the newly opening Cedar Park Elementary, which otherwise is set to open at approximately 90% free and reduced-price lunch (FRL), based upon localized demographic data, contrary to this Board’s prior resolution. Board action **now** will serve the Board’s stated goal of reducing opportunity gaps and providing high quality, equitable services to all students.

## III. FISCAL IMPACT / REVENUE SOURCE

This Olympic Hills Elementary proposed amendment to the staff-generated 2013 Growth Boundary Plan has zero negative fiscal impact. There will be no additional transportation cost as a result of this proposed change; in fact, the change may save transportation costs.

## IV. POLICY IMPLICATION

While Policy 3130 governs School Assignment and Enrollment, Board action is also appropriate under Policy 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, which calls upon the district to “[e]liminate ... disproportionality in all aspects of education and its administration” and “provide every student with equitable access to a high quality curriculum, support, facilities and other educational resources, even when this means differentiating resource allocation.” Policy 0030 requires the district to use an equity analysis tool to ensure that administrative actions do not create adverse impacts to historically-underrepresented groups. Application of Policy 0030 in

this case results in a clear imperative: amend the 2013 Growth Boundary plan to allow students in “the slice” to be reinstated into the Olympic Hills Attendance area, providing a consistent, predictable, and equitable educational path for families already highly impacted by poverty and historic barriers to success.

V. **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move to amend the 2013 Growth Boundary plan as follows: I move that the area bounded by Lake City Way on the east, NE 145<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, 30<sup>th</sup> Ave NE to the west, and NE 123<sup>rd</sup> Street to the south be reinstated into in the Olympic Hills Elementary attendance area for school year 2017-2018.

VI. **BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Seattle Public Schools enrollment planning staff members generated a growth boundary amendment that does not address Olympic Hills, despite significant community concerns. Contrary to Policy 0030, the Growth Boundary plan fails to adequately consider inequitable adverse impacts on highly vulnerable children and families in “the slice” (see below), most of whom receive free or reduced-priced lunch and a significant majority of whom are English learners. In addition, the staff-generated plan also fails to address area demographic needs at any school in the surrounding area (Olympic Hills, Cedar Park, and John Rogers).

VII. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Olympic Hills Elementary has been torn down, and our community is excitedly awaiting the construction of a brand new building designed by community members to meet our needs, opening in fall of 2017. We are thrilled that the new OH will house a health center for families living in poverty, small-group spaces for supports for our English learners, a kitchen space dedicated to families and community members, a large counseling area, and many other features specifically designed to support our school’s community—a community that for many years has included a large percentage of English learners. Every year just under 80% of our students receive free or reduced-priced lunch, over a third receive ELL services, and approximately 20% typically receive special education services.

In the Growth Boundary plan enacted in 2013, we were shocked to see that our most vulnerable families were (without demographic or equity rationale) sliced out of an area traditionally containing the largest number of our highest-need students (see Appendix). Upon talking with high-level enrollment planning staff at the time, we were told that since the district currently did not have a permanent demographer, and since it was known that there were many areas in which the boundaries did not provide the best fit, that we should not worry because problems would be addressed in subsequent amendments. In fact, our reasonable expectation after significant advocacy since 2014 was that OH boundaries for 2017-2018 would be adjusted in this year’s iteration, similar to proposed boundary changes to Meany, Mercer, and Washington, in order to provide certainty and predictability for our families most impacted by poverty and barriers to success.

The effect on our most vulnerable, high-poverty families is doubly exacerbated because instead of moving with the community to the brand new Olympic Hills, which was designed specifically with their needs in mind, **our most vulnerable families are currently assigned to stay at an overcrowded and substandard Cedar Park when it opens.** Cedar Park has received some updates, for which we are thankful. None of the updates, however, can mask that there is only **one bathroom** each for boys and girls in the *entire school*, or that all available space is currently being used for portables, or that the library is among the smallest in Seattle Schools. There is certainly no room for a health center or family support area. There will be no computer lab. There will be no room to house ELL and special education services. We are currently overcrowded at Cedar Park with 300 students. We cannot imagine how the district anticipates fitting its slated 375+ students at Cedar Park when Cedar Park's "landmark status" disallows any further portables, there is no other land that is legally available, and state-level class size directives may generate the need for reduced ratios.

The district's recently-released five year enrollment projections also support a motion to reinstate affected families in "the slice" to Olympic Hills. While Cedar Park as described above will be overcrowded, the new Olympic Hills building would be significantly under-enrolled if the status quo persists. The district calculates that in 2017-2018 the newly opened Olympic Hills will contain only 214 students. Demographically and equitably, such a skewed enrollment that overwhelmingly affects families living in poverty violates district policy as well as best practice.

Not only does the prior growth boundary plan improperly overcrowd Cedar Park for 2017-2018 and deprive the most vulnerable Lake City families of access to quality educational services, it creates an ultra-high-poverty elementary, with a reasonable prediction of 90% of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch. Since the district at the time of Growth Boundary adoption had no permanent demographer and VAX migration was under way (not to mention Tracy Libros retiring), it is not difficult to see how demographic and equity-related mistakes were made, errors that contradicted the district's own equity policy requiring equity analysis prior to institutional acts.

When ELL heat maps (which demonstrate where students receiving ELL services live) are reviewed, it is clear that **almost every student receiving ELL services in the Lake City area is now reassigned to Cedar Park for 2017-2018.** Please refer to the ELL Services heat maps that are superimposed over the district-adopted 2017-2018 boundaries, attached in the Appendix. Historically, SPS (and Olympic Hills) have had very low enrollment from the view properties at the top of the Cedar Park ridgeline (extremely expensive properties, also several cliffs containing no housing or extremely large lots). Currently fewer than ten students enrolled at Olympic Hills / Cedar Park live in this higher-income ridgeline area. While ELL services are not a proxy for free or reduced-price lunch, there is an extremely high correlation in our community, nearly 1:1. Nearly all of our students receiving ELL services also receive FRL. In fact, the 141 students currently living in "the slice" who would be shunted to Cedar Park, if not reinstated, comprise nearly all of our English Learners, and overwhelmingly receive FRL. Likewise, nearly all ELL students living in the John Rogers attendance area are reassigned to Cedar Park.

**The Board can easily correct these impactful errors.** Because Olympic Hills is located in the far NE corner of Seattle Public Schools, few "ripple effects" exist. Our proposed boundary

adjustment supports, rather than detracts from, other local school communities. By reinstating families living in “the slice” to their traditional Olympic Hills community, the Board solves several problems-- the newly opening Cedar Park will be less overcrowded, starting off at reasonable numbers rather than over capacity, and Cedar Park stands less chance with boundary adjustment of beginning its educational life at 90% FRL. Research supports that the creation of ultra-high-poverty schools is inconsistent with academic and social success for students.

It is for this reason, among others, that state law provides that state dollars cannot be used in school construction / remodeling where the population is expected to exceed 75% FRL (WAC 392-342-025). Since the district has already accepted and spent this money, with the Board passing a resolution in Spring 2014 affirming that the attendance area for “the proposed or modernized school facility will not create or aggravate racial imbalance,” it is especially crucial that the Board adjust the boundary to reinstate our students to Olympic Hills per the above motion. It would be concerning for Cedar Park to vastly exceed the legally-mandated FRL limit on its opening day.

In fact, under Policy 0030, district departments are mandated to use the Racial Equity Analysis Tool (REAT) when enacting, proposing, or continuing major policies, such as the Growth Boundary Plan. According to the REAT, staff must consult with stakeholders to determine whether a proposed policy “will increase or decrease educational and racial equity.” Staff must also examine whether there are “negative impacts for specific student demographic groups, including English language learners and students with special needs.”

Here, as our Building Leadership and Race and Equity teams have advocated for a significant time, it is clear that equity, demographics, and common sense support a Board motion to reinstate the above-described geographic area to the Olympic Hills 2017-2018 attendance area. **In order for impacted families to be able to equitably plan to rejoin the Olympic Hills community as we celebrate the building of a new campus, the motion and amendment should be made now in Fall of 2015.** To wait would exacerbate significant hardships on our most vulnerable families.

In short, Board action now is crucial to correct current inequities and mitigate significant future inequities. There is zero cost, no ripple effects, and it is by all analyses, equity-based or demographic, the right thing to do.

#### VIII. STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Whether to approve the Growth Boundary plan with an amendment reinstating “the slice” as part of the Olympic Hills Elementary attendance area.

#### IX. ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to the proposed motion above is an inequitable and disproportionate status quo that with the opening of two new schools (Olympic Hills and Cedar Park) will result in significant adverse impacts to underrepresented student populations. Keeping the staff-generated

Growth Boundary Plan as currently written is not recommended since this status quo continues and exacerbates inequities in violation of Board policies and best practices, and will generate adverse effects to multiple elementary schools in the geographic area.

X. **RESEARCH AND DATA SOURCES / BENCHMARKS**

Please refer to the Appendix, containing the ELL Heat Map and the Cedar Park Boundary overlay.

XI. **TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Upon approval of this amended motion, the Growth Boundary Plan will be amended as to Olympic Hills Elementary, changing the 2017-2018 attendance area as described above. The revised Olympic Hills Elementary attendance area will go into effect in 2017-2018, when the newly-constructed Olympic Hills Elementary reopens.

XII. **ATTACHMENTS**

Please refer to the Appendix, containing the ELL Heat Map and the Cedar Park Boundary overlay.

Respectfully submitted,

*Olympic Hills Building Leadership Team, Race and Equity Team, and community members:*

Helen Joung (Principal)	Stephanie Nash (parent, PTA member)
Stacy Crum (Assistant Principal)	James Nash (parent, PTA member)
Savannah Stannard (parent)	Celia Diaz Caro (ELL IA)
Kevin Hilman (parent)	Kelly Erdmanczyk (special education teacher)
Maggie Cheung (parent)	Nichola Deisler (teacher)
Jeremy Whiting (teacher)	Eileen Barracoso (teacher)
Nancy Smith (teacher)	Kathryn Hanson (counselor)
Tanya Yoshida-Rude (special education teacher)	Jennifer Rothmeyer (administrative assistant)
Nuzhat Mustafa (teacher)	Jennifer Hurley (teacher)
Andrea Baumgarten (teacher)	Jackie Gayan (special education teacher)
Susie Henderson (teacher)	Claire Brostrom-Smith MSN RN (school nurse)
Lucy Taskar (ELL teacher)	Erin Carroll (occupational therapist)
Christina Zecha (IA)	Paul Brown (teacher)
Aron Bodwich (teacher)	Katy Pence (teacher)
Melissa Ye (teacher)	Sally McWilliams (special education teacher)
Ann Hilman (PTA Past President, Secretary)	Lynne Lingafelter (nutrition services)
	Ryan Johnston (teacher)

# Appendix

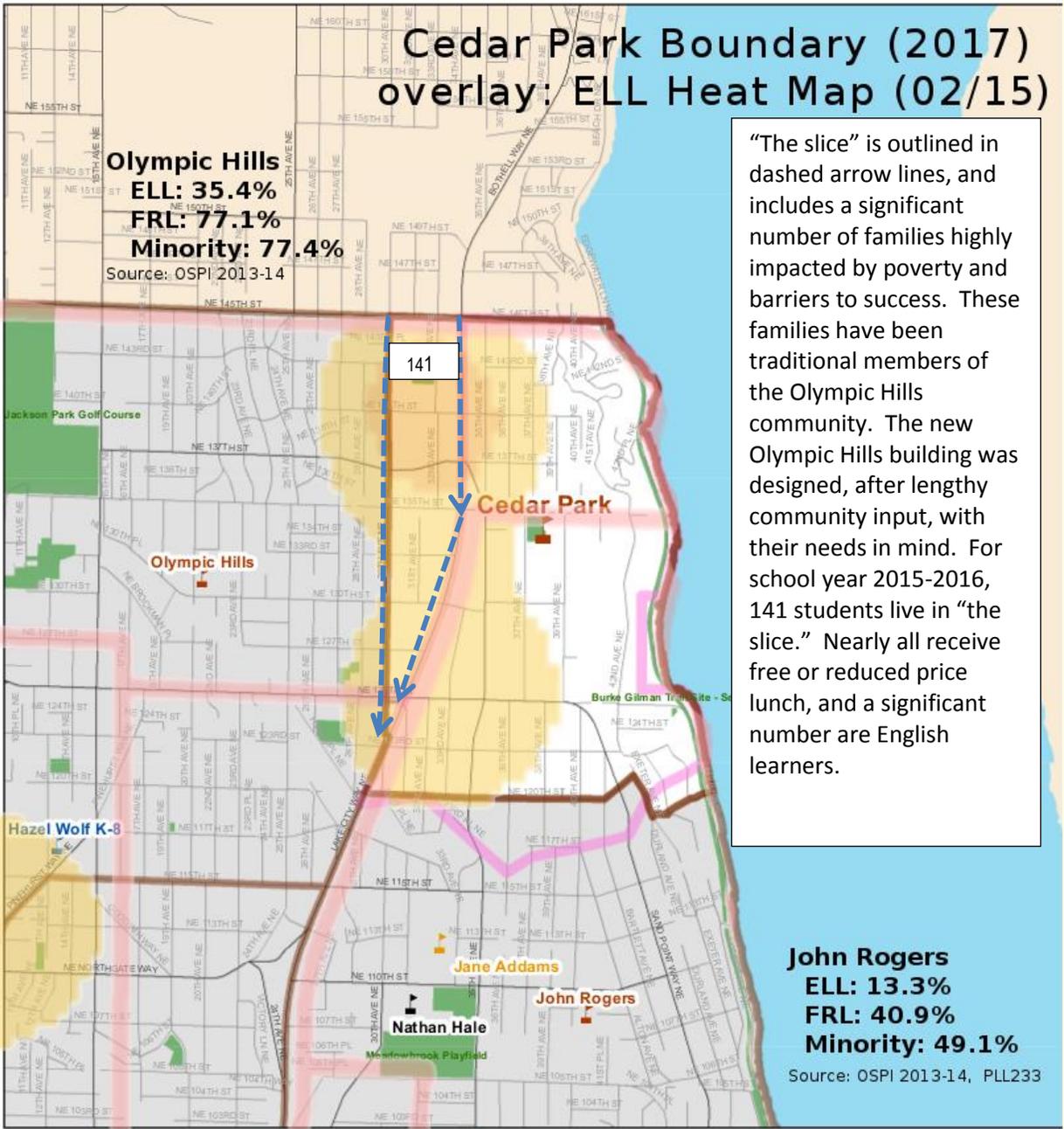
## Future Growth Boundary Cedar Park Elementary School Attendance Area

### Cedar Park Boundary (2017) overlay: ELL Heat Map (02/15)

**Olympic Hills**  
**ELL: 35.4%**  
**FRL: 77.1%**  
**Minority: 77.4%**  
 Source: OSPI 2013-14

“The slice” is outlined in dashed arrow lines, and includes a significant number of families highly impacted by poverty and barriers to success. These families have been traditional members of the Olympic Hills community. The new Olympic Hills building was designed, after lengthy community input, with their needs in mind. For school year 2015-2016, 141 students live in “the slice.” Nearly all receive free or reduced price lunch, and a significant number are English learners.

**John Rogers**  
**ELL: 13.3%**  
**FRL: 40.9%**  
**Minority: 49.1%**  
 Source: OSPI 2013-14, PLL233



- Attendance Area
- Walk Zone
- AA Elementary School
- Option Elementary School
- AA Middle School
- AA High School
- Option High School
- Service School

Map last updated: 3/12/2015  
 Map data: Future Growth Boundaries and Sites. Approved Nov. 20, 2013.

The names on this map are not intended to reflect the official name of any school building. They are instead intended to ensure better public understanding based upon familiar reference, particularly in situations where program and school building names differ. This information has been compiled by SPS staff from a variety of sources and is subject to change without notice. SPS makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, as to accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or rights to the use of such information. SPS shall not be liable for any general, special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages including, but not limited to, lost revenues or lost profits resulting from the use or misuse of the information contained on this map. Any sale of this map or information on this map is prohibited. MapFile: AA\_ES\_2020\_20150311\_1152



2014-15

# Where Grade K-5 Students Live Who Receive ELL Services

Map data:  
2014-15 School Year  
Last updated: 2/10/2015

