



Willow Run Community Schools and Ypsilanti Public Schools Communication and Collaboration Task Force Quarterly Report January 18, 2012



This is the first in a series of quarterly reports from the Communication and Collaboration Task Force of the Willow Run and Ypsilanti School Districts as prescribed at the group's formation. It is intended for both Boards of Education and Representative David Rutledge.

- The Communication and Collaboration Task Force of the Willow Run and Ypsilanti School Districts was formed on August 24, 2011 at a joint meeting of the two Boards of Education. At that time, the boards passed resolutions calling for the formation of the Task Force and appointed board members to serve. The Task Force was charged with exploring and recommending additional opportunities for collaboration and sharing between the two districts.
 - Acknowledging it as a continuation of work that the districts have already been doing, each board resolved to pursue all viable options to maximize learning opportunities for all students in the community. Both boards resolved to continue efforts to:
 - minimize the impact of shrinking dollars on programs and services in order to maximize educational opportunities for students and families.
 - improve our effectiveness.
 - maximize available resources.
 - achieve viable efficiencies and economies of scale.
 - benefit from the power of working together.
 - preserve community control of our local schools.
 - be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.
 - The Task Force consists of five members from each school district (two board members, superintendent, Education Association member, plus one member selected by the superintendent). The Willow Run and Ypsilanti Board Presidents are ex-officio. Its progress will be reported quarterly to both Boards of Education and Representative David Rutledge.
 - The Task Force began its monthly meetings, facilitated by Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) staff, on September 19th. At that meeting the group developed norms and set its meeting schedule.
 - At its October 17th meeting, the group set three priorities, gleaned from a survey conducted of its members: Transportation Facilities, Business Services and Universal High School Access.
 - At its third meeting on November 21st, the group reviewed data, discussed logistics and considered costs related to the operation and maintenance of their student-transportation facilities.
 - Based on the information presented and the subsequent discussion, the Task Force recommended that each board authorize its superintendent to work together to develop the safest, most efficient and cost-effective way for a shared transportation facility to be co-located as soon as possible.
 - Both boards of education officially considered the November 21st recommendation, advancing the collaboration process.
 - At its fourth meeting on December 19, 2011, the group received and considered additional data related to transportation facility options.
 - At its fifth meeting on January 12, 2012, the Task Force authorized administrators from both school districts to make two separate recommendations to their respective boards of education, no later than January 31, 2012, stating that:
 - A) The two school districts enter into a contract to co-locate their transportation operations, staff, fleet and maintenance in the Willow Run School District with modifications to the Sampson Building to accommodate the additional workers and fleet.
 - B) The two school districts jointly issue a Request for Proposals to subcontract for a single transportation system that would serve both the Willow Run and Ypsilanti school districts.
[See the other side of this page for details.]
 - The Willow Run Board will consider the recommendations on Thursday, January 19, 2012. The Ypsilanti Board will consider them on Monday, January 23, 2012.
 - The next Task Force meeting is Wednesday, February 29th at 5:30 p.m.
- NOTE:** A Steering Committee comprised of the board president, superintendent, plus one from Ypsilanti, Willow Run, and WISD is meeting every other month through the end of the school year to ensure the process moves forward, to plan for next steps, and to report on quarterly progress. Its initial meeting was on November 9th. The remaining Steering Committee meetings are set for January 18th, March 14th, and May 16th. Representative Rutledge will be invited to the January and May meeting for the quarterly report/update.

Communication and Collaboration Task Force Recommendations/Key Points January 12, 2012

On January 12, 2012, the Communication and Collaboration Task Force of the Willow Run and Ypsilanti School Districts met to continue exploring opportunities for collaboration between the two districts. At its meeting, the Task Force authorized administrators from both school districts to make two separate recommendations to their respective boards of education, no later than January 31, 2012, stating that:

- A) The two school districts enter into a contract to co-locate their transportation operations, staff, fleet and maintenance in the Willow Run School District with modifications to the Sampson Building to accommodate the additional workers and fleet.
- B) The two school districts jointly issue a Request for Proposals to subcontract for a single transportation system that would serve both the Willow Run and Ypsilanti school districts.
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Key Points

- The group agreed that, after considering its November 21st discussion and gathering additional data from an outside architectural firm, the co-location of the transportation operations at Willow Run Community Schools remains the best short-term option for student safety, operation efficiency, cost savings and future collaboration.
- The group also agreed that Willow Run Schools would join the Ypsilanti Schools' vendor-supplied system of just-in-time, school-building delivery for custodial supplies. Since the Sampson Building also warehouses Willow Run's custodial supplies and Willow Run does not employ a facilities manager, this supply-delivery system will save personnel time, money and valuable floor space—all of which can be repurposed to better serve students and support the co-location of transportation.
- If both school boards approve Recommendation A, district representatives will work together with Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) to identify and plan for the modifications needed to co-locate all of the transportation operations, staff, fleet and maintenance from both districts as the next step in developing a comprehensive transportation solution for the two districts.
- If both school boards approve Recommendation B, WISD would be available to assist the districts with the Request-for-Proposals development.
- The Willow Run Board meets on Thursday, 1/19/12 at 6:30 p.m. The Ypsilanti Board meets on Monday, 1/23/12 at 7 p.m. The Communication and Collaboration Task Force members from each district will voluntarily attend the board meeting of the other district to demonstrate support.
- These are the latest steps in the process that was formally launched on August 24, 2011 when the two boards of education met jointly and formed the Task Force to explore and recommend additional opportunities for collaboration and sharing between the two districts. These recommendations are consistent with the process that was established when the Task Force was created.

Background

- At its November 21, 2011 meeting, the Communication and Collaboration Task Force of the Willow Run and Ypsilanti School Districts reviewed data, discussed logistics and considered costs related to the operation and maintenance of their student-transportation facilities.
- Based on the information presented and the subsequent discussion, the Task Force recommended the following, consistent with the process established when the Task Force was created:
 - that each board authorize its superintendent to work together to develop the safest, most efficient and cost-effective way for a shared transportation facility to be co-located as soon as possible.
 - that they work together with Washtenaw Intermediate School District to identify and plan for the modifications needed to co-locate all of the drivers and buses from both districts as a first step in developing a comprehensive transportation solution for the two districts.
 - that they bring this recommendation to their respective boards of education for consideration no later than January 31, 2012.
- Both boards of education officially considered the November 21st recommendation, advancing the collaboration process.

Next Meeting

- The Communication and Collaboration Task Force of the Willow Run and Ypsilanti School Districts meets again on Wednesday, February 29th at 5:30 p.m. at Willow Run Community Schools to continue discussing additional opportunities for collaboration and sharing between the two districts including Business Services and Universal High School Access.

For more information, contact the superintendent's office in Ypsilanti or Willow Run.
