

District Realignment Meeting, 1/14/21

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Barrett Mohrmann, Chris Sherman, Dale Simpson, Ryan Thompson, Lisa Murray, Carla Mings, Ken Heintz, Roger Hottinger, Jeff Moe, Chris Miller, Deanna Biros, Ron Lime, Chip Herr, Phillip Freeman, Jim Bratton, Scott Sampson

- Chris Sherman began the meeting at 6:05 p.m.
- Phil Freeman led the participants in the Pledge of Allegiance, the Scout Oath, and the Scout Law.
- “We’ll start volunteer and professional staff leadership.”
- “I have still have a couple of districts to reach out and connect with.”
- “I continue in the information gathering stages. I’ve had very little feedback thus far. But, I didn’t expect to receive immediate feedback...staff evaluations and needs, most reliable resources, etc. I will post all of this on the google drive. I hope to have more by our next meeting as well. I’ve had some feedback, but not enough to form a consensus opinion.”
- “She did her best to match the schools districts with our current youth. If you download the map in the membership folder, that might save you some time in creating those scenarios. That might help you visualize a little bit better what the areas are.”
- “With regards to the polygon, Ron I know you have a mapping system. We can easily see on the E-map some numbers. It’s going to take some time drawing those districts.”
- “We should be able to pull that in and build the new buckeye district is this district plus this district. I wouldn’t bother drawing it by hand.”
- “I’ll continue researching that. What we did with Lois’ numbers, we were trying to separate by district and look at total available youth as well as membership related to staffing of the volunteers. It made sense to have a couple districts join together down south with three districts in the Columbus area. I was not here when they went back through and did the redistricting. I think we’re totally being open and throwing everything out the window to recreate things. How do we go about supporting them and making sure there’s available youth, and support the current people in those districts?”
- “When we get talking about the realignments and proposals, I can show those files real quick.”
- “Nothing from our last report.”
- “I know Jeff reviewed about Susan had penciled in last time. Does anyone have any questions? We’re also trying to get a handle on what could be contributing companies in those areas.”
- “I know Susan had sent us some data to post to the google drive as well. Unit needs and expectations?”
- “We got one may unsolicited email from someone in the chief logan district. I think her concerns we’ve already considered and will keep it in mind.”

- “So, I’ve been polling a lot of people around in my district and the neighboring district. I guess in the past there have been units down south that feel they need to go above and beyond BBs. I just never thought of that.”
- “With a safety aspect, that I hadn’t really considered. There have been reports of units doing their own thing.”
- “The intention is to have a unit serving executive in the south. It is absolutely our intention to have executives in the south.”
- “That’s going to need to draw more attention.”
- “It’d be a good idea to survey units and see what their expectations are of the council. Deanna and I talked a little more about that yesterday. I sent you that draft about an hour ago by email. It has really a number of questions that we should probably survey the units on, both at the cub scout and scouts bsa level. RT is working with staff to formalize that survey and get that ready to go out. The concept is we’d send the survey to one key person in each unit to get their thoughts. If you want to look at that, that’s great. It very much follows the work that Ron and Scott and Roger did last week on the spreadsheet.”
- “Then separate it out by the same categories that Ron, Scott, and Roger had. This is really following the structure of a traditional district. I think on the spreadsheet we also had some other items: places to purchase advancements and supplies, etc. Any thoughts there? The thought is to finalize this and get this out in the next few days.”
- “If we’re consolidating districts, there may be things districts have done in the past that the council would pick up. Two, we should see if we can source the answers that they see by Cub or Scouts BSA. Some of these wouldn’t apply to one or the other.”
- “I see my.scouting on here but I don’t see Scoutbook support on here.”
- “I think we have to frame this as services you see from the district and the council.”
- “Or do two sections.”
- “I think as commissioners we provide a lot of support for my.scouting.”
- “I’m not sure either one of those should be struck, though at the district level there are things we have to go back to the council one.”
- “We’ve been trying to reinforce this idea of commissioner first. I think this would be good if we hit most of the key leaders in every type of leader.”
- “If we think we can get some quick feedback from some of the operating groups, I think this is an opportunity that we could get some valuable input from. If some of our operating committee chairs have some input, in case we missed anything.”
- “My only thought is the scale of one to four forces people to be pro or con. It eliminates that person who might be on the fence. It’s helped a couple times we’ve done surveys.”
- “One is identification of merit badge counselors. Is that a council thing or district thing? The other would be blue and gold celebrations. To what degree is the district involved with those?”
- “I know the merit badge counselor list is a hot button issue some time. I’m not sure about blue and gold. Maybe we work that into district support of unit level activities.”
- “My thought was what are the big things that they work on.”

- “Any more discussion? If you take a look at that offline, send me a note and we’ll try to get those things included. We’ll we’re talking about surveys, you may recall that back in the spring we sent a survey to our units to try to get a handle on how engaged they were in the early stages of the pandemic. We had some concerns, especially about the cub scout program. We’re thinking/planning to follow that up in a couple of weeks on a similar survey, maybe in a little more detail to gauge unit engagement. Are they more engaged now than they were? We don’t want to create any survey fatigue, but those are two important surveys to get out. We need to make it clear to our volunteers that we’re here for support. Any other discussion there?”
- “If everyone can continue to work those metric subgroups, with the idea that next week we have some pretty good data to use and overlay some district boundary scenarios. We talked about creating two scenarios. The four-district group, anything to report there?”
- “What you’re looking at is the unit first google drive and the membership folder is all of our work products. This map of school districts in Ohio would be pretty useful in trying to visualize this. This is currently our district alignment, with the school districts in each district. The volunteers were pulled in the best possible. Each of these scenarios creates hypothetical districts. Let’s do some sorts by quadrant. Let’s equalize the number of schools per district. That’s essentially what each of these scenarios do. Most of our kids in Columbus City Schools are in other districts. I think we’re going to continue with the scoutreach service area, with four additional districts.”
- “Because we’re in the midst of the recharter campaign, it’s very wonky trying to pull this data.”
- “Some of the questions we need to answer is to not only look at membership but where are these communities going to fit best. That’s what we’ve been talking about. We can fidget with these borders and equalize. You can download these spreadsheets and see what school districts we put into these four scenarios.”
- “The example that we have for this quadrants was equalizing on number of youth served. But, this one ignores some important things like travel and population centers. This might be a nice thing to look but not the best way to go forward. Looking at these massive southern districts is a big concern. It’s something we need to take into consideration. Because the southern district may be so large, we may not need to put the same number of people in there. Those are some of the things we were thinking about.”
- “Equaling out our opportunity to join. There’s about 100,000 available youth in each of the smaller circles. There’s about 75,000 youth down that way. As big as it is, the opportunity to join is slightly smaller. We talked about staffing. We want to pursue a double staffed model. That’s about as far as we can stretch two people. That’s just the staffing we have and what’s available to us.”
- “Putting aside the issue of double professional staffing across the board, as David said, it’s two massive districts in the south. Anyway we cut the south, it doesn’t sound like we’re going to get the same number of potential membership as we get in the north.”
- “For the sake of discussion at the moment, if we took these models, and kept it basically the same and drew two horizontal districts in the south, would that help to shrink the size of the southern districts? Do the drive lines look better?”

- “I think we would still have the same concerns with driving.”
- “It looks very overwhelming, but I’ll add there will be two professionals. We would divide that out in Scoutnet. We could still use 23 as a dividing line for the subdistricts.”
- “Other than the total available youth, it seemed like there was advantage to shrinking the southern one.”
- “Inside that southern district, you have the really rural with Lancaster. The people serving that need to understand the different needs.”
- “We need to talk about what kind of a district do they feel the most comfortable with?”
- “We have every district represented. I guess,
- “I kind of like the middle one and what RT was talking about. I feel even Hillsboro and Greenup, that’s kind of different. But I like the big South.”
- “We’re kind of leaning toward the multiple roundtables. That way travel time doesn’t have to be such an issue. I could definitely see someone on the eastern side of Athens coming over to Jackson. Whatever we come up with, we’ll figure it out.”
- “It’s not an easy choice. Being on the far end, it’s a lot of travel.”
- “I think we’re doing our best. That’s the conversation here. If we show the different models, I don’t see anyone saying this is my area. Everything is on the board.”
- “There was some strong feelings of looking at a five or six, understanding that the staffing would be different on that. Is that something we’d like the other group to look into.”
- “I’ll just say, thank you for a nice springboard.”
- “Can the professional staff support five or six districts? With four, there’s two district executives in each district and one for Scoutreach. If you’re saying six is too many, let’s look at five.”
- “That district typically operates 40 scouting units, with a team of 20 program aides. That person really can’t be stretched into traditional scouting.”
- “Do you want two district executives or do you want some flexibility with two assigned to some, and one assigned to others?”
- “If we aren’t entirely sold on four districts, we should task the other group with five or six. Understanding, if we land on five or six, we’re going to have to do single executive staffing somewhere and accept that. In some ways, I think we owe it to ourselves to look at a five or six district scenario and then answer the staffing question.”
- “In effect, we’ve touched on a five district layout by dividing that southern district. I think we ought to consider just to exhaust all of those options.”
- “Your input is so valuable from the south, I want to be sure we’re equally serving the expectations of our volunteers and youth in the south. I understand your preference is a fairly large southern district with two DE’s serving it than any other scenario. Where I’m headed, if we look at five, and scrunch that bubble, we’re opening the possibility of four in the north with the understanding that the DE assignments are different.”
- “The benefit to having two staff is covering each other’s backs. I don’t want to talk about one big district but people whispering that it’s two districts.”

- “It would be the shared resource of a district committee, elevated program quality because we’re combing the best resources into one assimilated pod.”
- “Setting recharterers aside, we haven’t been running programs for our scoutreach kids because we don’t have school access.”
- “That 1300 kids was served by three staff in the past.”
- “The pandemic has put us in a position where we’re intentional in how we apply our resources. Consider the program is delivered through our program assistants. One single program assistant could handle 10 programs a week, so it’s let on the commissioned professional’s side.”
- “One of those nine DE’s needs to be allocated to Scoutreach, no questions about that. We shouldn’t expect that person to multi-task anywhere else. Should we count more of those toward Scoutreach?”
- “I’m comfortable with one right now.”
- “Do we want the other group to look at a larger scenario?”
- “I think we should do it.”
- “What’s our decision point going to be on who gets one and who gets two?”
- “Years ago, only two districts had two staff.”
- “That’s the unique opportunity that we have here. For personal growth, sometimes it’s good to change scenery and step into a new district.”
- “David, do you want to further crank one or two of those models overlaid with some of those metrics.”
- “Yeah, maybe we can get it up there with school district.”
- “Any other discussion on metrics or alignment scenarios? Deanna, do you want to do an update on communications?”
- “Our minutes and our Q&A are out there. We talked about it at our family forum on Tuesday. We had a few questions and comments but not a lot. I’ve think we’ve done a nice job sharing the information so far. The survey will be the key next step. That’s where we are.”
- “Any other comments or questions before we close this evening?”
- “I just wanted to thank everyone for doing this. Thank you for all of the efforts and to Chris for taking the ball. Great appreciation for your efforts.”
- “I also appreciate everyone’s approach. It’s not territorial at all.”
- “Keep us dialed in on your progress and if you have any questions.”
- “I had a few questions about names.”
- “My thought on that is the district names get developed by the new districts and by the new committee and commissioner teams. I don’t think we should be trying to push an agenda on that. That’s part of the teambuilding and part of the fun. That’s how we felt in Darby Creek several years ago. That was all part of it in getting that group going. I’d like to think that’s part of why we broke down some of the barriers in Darby Creek when we started up.”
- “OA is effected by this, isn’t it? Do we have anything to consider?”
- “I don’t think it’s a big consideration to district alignment.”

- “When do we do our chapter officer elections? We might be able to grant a grace period to allow for current officers to serve all of their term and implement the change down the road. I look to others who are more engrained in the OA to provide some guidance there.”
- “To some degree, this alignment gives an opportunity to strengthen our OA chapters, like with our committees. Anything else? Alright, thanks everyone.”
- Chris Sherman ended the meeting at 7:32 p.m.