

## District Realignment Meeting, 1/28/21

### Meeting Notes

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

- Chris Sherman started the meeting at 6:04 p.m.
- Ken Heintz led the Pledge of Allegiance, Scout Oath, and Scout Law.
- “I know Chip mentioned he had not had an update from the District Chair side.”
- “What Chip and I are putting together is not going to effect how we realign but how we use resources after we realign. I’ve gotten a lot of great feedback from our district commissioners. Most of the feedback matched my preconceived thoughts. We’re trying to put together a plan that will most efficiently use the resources we have available. Defining responsibilities more clearly, developing clear lines of communication so we’re not going through ten people to find the one with the answers. All of this is aimed at freeing up DE’s and making their efforts more toward fundraising and membership so we can grow the program.”
- “Any comments or questions there from anyone. I know Lois, David, and Phil spent most of their time on the four district scenario. Any updates there this evening?”
- “Yes, we have an update and if I can share my screen...This is a four district options and I put a date on it. We messaged our original A,B,C, and D. The spreadsheet has also been updated. I created an archive folder under membership, so everyone can stay current on what we have. Yesterday evening, RT sent me some FOS numbers by zip code. I aligned the zip codes by school district. We seem to repeatedly talk about having a balance of geographic size and how we’re going to manage geographic size. The four quadrants didn’t make as much sense. I went with the model of this four, geographically similarly sized districts, but we’re very imbalanced. Number of schools, total available youth goes from 16,000 to 75,000. What this tells me, and I’d like some group discussion, the bottom line is we’re going to have geographically unaligned districts. What is too big? What is too small?”
- “We’re putting two DEs to a district, right?”
- “That would certainly help, but we can’t balance our numbers and geography both. We’re going to have to move beyond everything being the same size.”
- “It’s become obvious that balancing geography and youth is mutually exclusive. We’re going back to two districts in the south instead of the big south that we were talking about.”
- “This is our only example that has a two-district south.”
- “I’m not necessarily against that. One of my thoughts, and it was driven more by the comments we’ve received and things I’ve read on social media, expressed some concerns

about a big south. It might be worthwhile revisiting the idea of one big district in the south. The other comment I received and said I'd go back and share is there is clearly a sentiment about keeping current districts together. That seems to be an overriding feeling. That runs a little bit counter to what we talked about with the five district model."

- "That's a really good Segway into our option B. I call these northeast, northwest, south central, and the big south. I think our options have different sizes on the big south. I took Arrowhead, Delaware, and Licking districts and merged them together. The only one that was split up was Tri-Creek. The northwest became Darby Creek and Buckeye. In the south, it's just Chief Logan and Tecumseh. I'm leaning toward a four district model just because all districts have a two DEs. It's very uniform. There's no feeling of "Hey, you got two DEs, and I only got one." I'm partial to keeping Chief Logan and Tecumseh together. This is what I see as the smallest big south. Our total available youth is up and down. We have a high of 47,000 and a low of 29,000. Also a pretty big gap in the number of Scouts. A pure district merge doesn't seem balanced to me."
- "No matter which way we cut it, there's going to be a geography challenge. We can address that much better when we have two people. Or, we can be more intentional on certain communities with a five-district model. But, you lose something when you have multiple people in a district depending on how the priorities shake up. There's a lot of conversations to be had on operations. Specifically, the geography obstacle is a much easier problem when you have multiple people."
- "4B is a little more balanced than 4a. That's good. The question is by redrawing the light green jagged line between northeast and northwest, right there, by moving that line a bit, could we balanced northeast and northwest without killing the geography."
- "This was what I called the big south, but I should call it the really big south. We put Fayette, Pickaway, Athens, some of those more rural areas with the south. We get more compact in the Columbus area, but this is covering a very large area. Looking at total available youth, we're at 44,000 in the south."
- "That big south is probably bigger than half of the councils in the country, geographically."
- "What I have here is a big south, trying to balance TAY. Pickaway would go into the south, but makes the east quite big with Licking, all of Tri-Creek, and all of Hocking Valley. We have total available youth all in the 30,000. We're still a little heavy in the north, but more balanced in the east and west. Those were our four. What I did with the spreadsheet, and the other group is welcome to use this as well. There's just one data sheet. The data points are by school district. I added Scout count and FOS. This chart pulls up all the names of the district. In one of the models, if I wanted to move Hilliard to the north, you can go back and recalculates those numbers. This is the same information that's in the powerpoint deck."
- "This is a lot of good information and looks great. Any discussion on the four district scenarios right now?"
- "What do you think of all those options, what did you come away with making the most?"
- "Was there a four option that stood out to all of you?"

- “I think option D, with the balanced TAY, was where we were going. With two DEs, and transportation along 33, but I think there is room for conversation on where we put Fayette and Pickaway. We can figure just how much it changes the numbers to move some of those.”
- “Like we were saying, geography was going to be a challenge.”
- “I had a similar conversation this afternoon. It takes about 90 minutes to get from Athens to Falling Rock. Geography is going to be the challenge.”
- “Carla, David, Roger, thoughts on how big the south is in this scenario?”
- “Inevitably, we’re going to have a big south. I’m kind of leaning toward the 4D option with the eastside from Newark to Athens. It makes sense to split the area up. Transportation wise it makes a lot of sense. I think 4D is a better version of the big south than 4C.”
- “I moved this line down here. The south is Chief Logan and Tecumseh combined. The west includes part of Darby Creek, Pickaway, and Fayette. Our south went down to 32,000 available youth and the west jumped up to 40,000. There might be something I can pull out, but the west has gotten to be quite a bit bigger.”
- “Maybe we’ll have an occasional west side event, but Washington Courthouse is going to Ross County, I would think.”
- “Just because they’re in this district doesn’t mean they can’t participate in things if they’re closer.”
- “It’s just a matter of messaging that red line down. There might be a desire in Pickaway County to move to the south because they’re more culturally close with the south.”
- “How similar are Worthington and Dublin?”
- “Put Dublin in the north and move Worthington to the west, it’s now 36,000 and 39,000 in total available youth.”
- “Going back to what Chris said, I got reoccurring feedback on the desire that districts not be split up because of relationships.”
- “We want to minimize that, but I think it’s impossible to not split up some districts.”
- “I think it’s going to be a minimum of one, a maximum of four.”
- “What about Athens? It hasn’t pivoted in and out of the scenarios. Are they more affiliated on the east.”
- “It changes where they might be in the east or part of the big south.”
- “We’re not likely going to keep all of the districts together, but Phil, how will the folks in Grove city feel being broken away from Fayette and Pickaway?”
- “There may be some issues there. When you look at the dividing line, our district is top and bottom. As long as we can speak to them and show them the data, they’re just want to be sure that they were heard.”
- “I’m a little concerned in talking about getting the people from Marysville and Newark together, that’s just really wide. A lot of rural, a lot of suburban, it seems like a big split.”
- “Talking to Ken’s point, what’s the size look like if we took darby creek and Buckeye intact?”

- “This is option B. Let’s go to option b and move the southwestern school district to south central.”
- “That central is just as geographically and culturally diverse. There’s no way to cut this in the north when there’s an area that doesn’t have that disparity. It’s going to be present.”
- “Leaving Buckeye intact is difficult.”
- “If we’re driving for balance for opportunity to join, it’s difficult if we keep certain districts untouched.”
- “In the way we have this one drawn, the one that’s greatly out of balance is northeast. We would have to move something out of northeast into northwest. Could you pull Arrowhead and part of Tri-Creek over to Northwest? I would think that would pull Northeast down.”
- “That’s going to be Westerville and New Albany?”
- “I think our biggest moving pieces are Hilliard, Dublin, and Worthington. Those are the ones that are really going to swing the numbers.”
- “We could put all of Tri-Creek back into South central and move this line down.”
- “What Lois is doing is great, but I think it’s the next level of detail.”
- “This is what we had last time. This is 5B. It now looks like this. We had all of Ohio Valley together. There’s a lot of feedback that we need to look at this a different way. So this is 5C. If you think about the south, it’s 30,000. The north had nearly 70,000. The other two are more in line with the number RT gave us last week.”
- “Here’s who moved. They’re not that dissimilar. We looked at one model, and what we heard a lot of was move this back to Ohio Valley. We looked and said what if we moved Reynoldsburg north. The east drops down from 20,000 to 16,000. If you move Pickerington, the TAY drops down to 12,000. The east is considerably smaller than central. We kept the south as a we talked about. We then took the east and played with this portion and moved it into the central. It’s very similar to 5B except we split up the south-central district into two districts with one DE each. We like this move because it really helped balanced some of these and had a good mix of Cubs and Scouts BSA who are currently in the program.”
- “The south district would be based in Chillicothe and that’s a stone’s throw from the district line.”
- “According to my map, there’s one pack in the Adena school district.”
- “If you move Adena back into the south, most of the districts would remain intact. You’re just deciding what to do in this crucial part. We all came to the same conclusion that you have to split that area.”
- “This seems as balanced as we can get.”
- “Well, we still have the geographic spread but we only have one DE.”
- “When you start looking at council resources, when you reduce that number, you take the pressure off of events and dividing up the resources.”
- “I agree with that comment, Lois. We’re looking at trade offs of fewer districts and two DEs. The idea of the smaller number of districts is we’re going to leverage our volunteers better and grow the committees and commissioner teams. It becomes easier to offer

district programming. It also is easier to provide backup for professional staff when one leaves.”

- “Lois is absolutely correct. Every professional needs to be graded on an equitable set of terms. One person could do all the work and one could put their heels up on the desk. To the same benefit, the volunteers are working with one unified committee. We might have to have roundtables virtually or by counties, we’ll support that.”
- “Given that, wouldn’t we want to carefully look at our volunteer counts in the areas where we only have one DE? I don’t know if we’ve consolidated our volunteer corps. We need to look at volunteer counts as well as TAY.”
- “Ohio Valley might be our smallest district right now. If I were looking at a map, and we didn’t have any volunteers or units, I would put it in Ross. We need to draw districts that make sense for future planning and strategic alignment of the council, not just what we have on the table.”
- “There’s no empirical information, but there’s a chance that we could see council mergers relatively soon. I haven’t seen or heard anything, but we need to do this work but know it could be upended with a council merger. There’s no real way to know, but we can surmise a bit of where we might possibly see an additional number of folks. I don’t know if that happens, if we see it happen in the south. I have no information that this is going to happen or that it’s real.”
- “David has brought that up multiple times.”
- “I don’t know if we’d go across the border into Kentucky, but Muskingum seems like a real possibility. I just want to think about that. There’s no numbers to play with, but as much change as we’ve witnessed, I think there’s going to be more change. I think Simon Kenton will be the acquirer instead of the acquired. I think it’s likely larger councils will absorb smaller ones in the periphery, but I don’t know.”
- “My counterpart in Muskingum is retiring at the end of the month. When there’s a scout executive change, that’s an opportunity to make a serious change.”
- “Geographically, Muskingum Valley is not a huge council. Could that be brought in as a standalone district.”
- “If I was looking at it, we’d have to see the available youth and how it fit into our structure. That might be a time to examine the boundaries we’re setting now.”
- “Does four districts or five districts prepare us better? Does it matter in operating the organization from the business side?”
- “That’s a good question.”
- “I don’t know how to answer your question in terms of preparing to acquire another council.”
- “Usually there’s a reason for the acquisition. If we have an acquisition, it’s going to be because the entity we’re acquiring won’t survive. It’s an unusual circumstance that we could be put in, and we might not necessarily benefit.”
- “At some point, the rubber has to meet the road, and I don’t know if day to day operating the business of the council...What positions us best for an efficient foundation from

which to grow? Whether that's growth from acquisition or the economy rebounds and people want to jump back into Scouting."

- "The X factor is what's going to happen after the pandemic. We're hoping that things are going to explore but we don't know. The difference between four and five districts is minimal from that point of view. I think our staffing is going to change as well."
- "I'd like to hear more about what it takes to run the office. If we're going down a path and we're missing something."
- "I think we have the infrastructure staff-wise to expand."
- "We have struggled with the volunteer resource much longer than the pandemic and the current membership slump. From a council commissioner side, I would love to have a problem where the membership is soaring and we're trying to find projects for people and reverse the decisions we're making now."
- "I think we need to be prepared to adjust down the line as we get more kids."
- "Are we at a point where we need to decide if we're at a four or a five district model and move ahead on refining what model falls out of that."
- "The five district, I think we're there."
- "Lois did a lot of work on other slices and dices. We could put that into the mix as well. I think we're pretty close. One of the things we haven't talked about is the DEs. What is their benefit and what gets them excited so they stick around? That should weight heavily into the decision making."
- "I agree, I think it would be helpful to hear the pros and cons from Jeff and RT about retaining high quality employees."
- "That's part of my outreach is talking with the DEs. I think I heard tonight, looking at the four district model, you're basically bisecting those districts anyway. I think the south, we're in agreement, that's a two-person area based on geography more than anything else."
- "The desire to have the four district group refine a bit based on the discussions this evening. It sounds like we may be leaning toward a four but we'd like to refine that approach and compare it to the five."
- "I'll limit the agenda next week to a discussion of a four presentation and a five with the expectation that we choose between a four and a five and make any refinements after that that are necessary. We have two surveys that we're ready to push. That should be ready to push out to the Key 3s tomorrow. The professional side is certainly important. Not to minimize that, but early on in the prep material that went out before our first meeting, the definition of a district is really a geographic area that enables us best to serve the volunteers and the units. That's training, program, finance, and membership. I think in many ways it's important not to lose sight of that. Yes, we're there to leverage the professional staff as best we can, and we need to make an environment that makes the professional staff interested and rewarded, but the purpose of the district is the geographical boundary to better deliver the program."

- “When we send the survey out for input to the Key 3, it might be good to include a reminder where we’re posting all of the minutes from these meetings. Just so they’re not completely surprised when we’re getting more firm.”
- “I also want to point out that we have a Key 8 meeting in a couple weeks.”
- “Anything else this evening?”
- “This is just to give you an idea of what I have to work with. I’ve mapped every unit and we can really zoom in. I can create a union of the school districts and draw maps using that information. You can go around here and look at districts. There’s a lot of good information. It will give us something to start working with once we come up with a solution.”
- “Anything else?”
- “Thank you all for the tie and energy. Truly, we’ll benefit the Scouts and Scouters, and we can say we did our due diligence.”
- “I appreciate everyone’s work this past week. Good night everyone.”
- Chris Sherman ended the meeting at 7:57 p.m.