

We looked at the data Jack Jacobs, the head of JCPS student assignment, shared with the school board on May 29. Here is a table that shows the absolute best JCPS could be integrated (which could only happen if every school in a cluster was completely integrated to that cluster’s average, which we never quite get to in the real world) under the current 6-cluster plan versus the proposed 13-cluster plans. The table shows the cluster with the highest and lowest numbers in the current 6-cluster plan in green, and in the proposed 13-cluster plan in red. Smaller numbers are good because they mean greater equity and greater integration. Notice how much less equitable the red numbers are compared to the green numbers....

<u>Cluster Plan Integration Comparison</u>			
	High	Low	Diff
6-Cluster Avg Diversity Index	2.14	1.69	0.45
13-Cluster Avg Diversity Index	2.36	1.51	0.85
6-Cluster % Free/Reduced Lunch	83	52	31
13-Cluster % Free/Reduced Lunch	92	37	55
6-Cluster % All Minorities	54	46	8
13-Cluster % All Minorities	64	24	40
6-Cluster % African American	41	29	12
13-Cluster % African American	55	13	42

We saw that, according to Jack Jacobs’s data, even if the 13-cluster plan worked perfectly, there would still be much bigger differences between schools than with the 6-cluster plan, which would mean the schools would be less integrated. We are very concerned that one cluster could be 55% black and another could be only 15% in the 13-cluster plan. That’s a 42% difference, compared to only a 12% difference at the most in the 6-cluster plan. In a similar way, we saw that the range from high to low in the diversity index would be almost twice as great in the 13-cluster plan. Socio-economic differences would be much greater too.

The worst thing the district can do to set teachers back and diminish their chances of helping all the kids in their classes succeed is to put them in front of classes with concentrated poverty and concentrated low levels of parental educational attainment. For the teachers Dee and I represent, we believe the school board should go with the plan that does the better job of integrating our schools, and that is the 6-cluster plan. We are basing this on the data Jack Jacobs gave the school board on May 29. We created the table above from the information on pages 19 and 22 of Jack’s PowerPoint presentation.

We totally agree with those who point out that Hal Heiner is a MAJOR threat to our public schools, but we don't believe that going with a 13-cluster plan will silence him or the tea party on the issue of student assignment, and when we look at Jack Jacob's data, it looks like Hal Heiner and David Williams will have pretty much won if we go with the 13-cluster plan because the 13 clusters will be like 13 sets of neighborhood schools, with much greater disparities than the 6-cluster plan.

Whatever we might save on buses is sure to be less than what it takes to pay for all the interventions it will take to try to reach kids where schools in the cluster have very few positive role models for the kids in the classes. It sure seems like this past year went a lot smoother with the major improvements that were made to the 6-cluster plan. The school board should stick with the current plan.