

June 26, 2009

It's time for school board to take action

West High recently was recognized by the magazine Newsweek as the 846th best high school in the country based upon the number of advanced placement tests taken by their students. City High was not listed in the top 1,500.

As the enrollment gap between the two schools widens, so does the gap in the number and type of classes each school can offer. This fall, West High will have 90 more classroom sessions per day than City High. West High is now over its capacity of 1,800 students while City High is more than 150 students under its capacity of 1,600.

For the past 10 years, the superintendent and his staff have largely ignored the growing disparities in enrollment and socioeconomic status among our schools. Board after board has chosen to follow the superintendent's example rather than deal with the reality that school boundaries must change periodically if each child in the district is to have equal access to our public educational resources.

This spring, more than 900 taxpayers signed a petition (www.copeiowa.org) asking the Iowa City School Board to change boundaries to ease the disparity in curriculum and socioeconomic status between our two high schools. I hope that this board has the courage to announce boundary changes this summer instead of passing the problem on to another board in yet another year.

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