

MSAD #11
Ad Hoc Committee to Access Space Needs
Thursday, January 27, 2011
Minutes

Present: Sara Cotnoir, Al Ghoreyeb, Lynn Izzi, Sai-Lee Markos, Adam Newton, Denise Smith, Jon Stonier, Tony Veit, Pat Hopkins

Others Present: Becky Fles

The Committee began the meeting by processing the feedback collected by members of their local Parent Teacher Organizations.

West Gardiner Parents

- Pleased that so many options are being discussed
- Hope for a global solution that does not just target Helen Thompson children
- Need to look at a reallocation of resources across the district in an effort to equalize class sizes throughout the district
- Preference would be to move all grades 4 and 5 to one school and turn the neighborhood schools into K-3 schools

LER/RV Parents

- Were appreciative of being asked for input in advance of a decision being made
- Relocating all Pre-Kindergarten classes into one facility will impact the students' transition into neighborhood schools.
- Best option is to move the Helen Thompson grade 5 students to T. C. Hamlin

Pittston Parents

- Parent group has not yet met
- Staff were not supportive of turning Pittston into a grades K-2 school and Hamlin into a grades 3-5 school
- Concern was expressed that parents would not support splitting up their neighborhood

TC Hamlin Parents

- No concerns were raised about reconfiguring the Hamlin and Pittston Schools
- Teachers are generally supportive about reconfiguring the schools since it would create an opportunity for collaboration, which would enhance curriculum and instruction.

Additional Area of Discussion

1. Modular Units at Helen Thompson – a permanently attached four classroom unit would cost between \$700,000 - \$900,000
2. Used modular units can be purchased, but they are in high demand and are that much cheaper than new units since they are completely refurbished before being resold.
3. Could we move the 8th grade up to the high school and the 5th grade to the middle school? The high school would have to find 8 classrooms. It would be difficult, but they might be able to do it. The transportation department would not be able to accommodate grade 5 on the high school/middle school run, so additional buses would have to be added (roughly \$30,000 per additional bus per year). Educationally, members of the Committee did not feel that such a move would be in the best interest of the students. They did not support having 8th graders exposed daily to some of the activities older students engage in. While the attempt to keep the 8th graders separated from the older student population, interaction would occur.

The Committee discussed at length all of the options presented to the Committee and made the following short-term and long-term recommendations to the School Board for consideration:

Short-Term Recommendations

1. If due to budget constraints the district is not able to hire an additional 3rd grade teacher at grade 3 for the Helen Thompson School for the school year 2011-2012, keep the current configuration as it.
2. If the district is able to hire or move a teacher from an existing school to the Helen Thompson School in the 2011-2012 school year to help address class sizes, move the Pre-Kindergarten program to LER. Also, move the Pre-K program at TC Hamlin to LER so all of the Pre-K programs are in one location. Move the autistic program at LER to Hamlin to make room for all of the Pre-K programs.

In order to logistically make this plan work, all Pre-Kindergarten students from Pittston, Randolph and West Gardiner would have to attend the morning program, meaning all Gardiner Pre-Kindergarten students would have to attend the afternoon program.

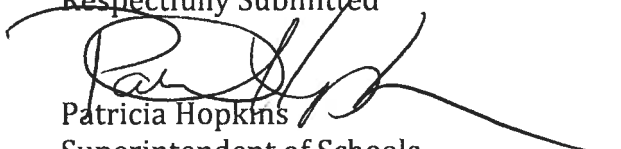
3. At Helen Thompson the art program could be placed on a cart in order to free up additional classroom space.
4. Seriously consider reconfiguring the Pittston and Hamlin Schools to grades K-2 and grades 3-5 schools. Doing so will help equalize class sizes and should free

up needed space at Pittston. The Pittston School is at capacity and if their enrollment continues to climb, they will be in the same situation the Helen Thompson School is currently in.

Long-Term Recommendations

1. Permanently add four (4) classrooms to the Helen Thompson School
2. Continue to pursue new construction for a consolidated Pittston/TC Hamlin School

Respectfully Submitted


Patricia Hopkins
Superintendent of Schools