

Hanover Public Schools Hanover School Committee October 14, 2015

School Configuration Sub-Committee



Members

- Kimberly Mills- Booker, School Committee
- Debbie St. Ives, Assistant Superintendent
- Thomas Raab, Business Manager
- Jane DeGrenier, Principal Center /Sylvester
- Michael Oates, Principal Cedar
- Kathy Caulfield, Teacher Cedar
- Jill Joy, Teacher Center
- Sarah Kelser, School Psychologist Cedar
- Lori J. McKenna, Teacher Hanover Middle School
- Doug MacLellan, School Council Center/Sylvester
- Erin McAvay, School Council Cedar



Committee Meetings

- Committee had 7 scheduled meetings
- First meeting was in February 24, 2015
- Last meeting October 6, 2015
- Other dates: April 28, 2015, May 26, 2015, June 23, 2015, August 4, 2015 (quorum not present), and September 15, 2015.



Current Configuration

- Two elementary school districts in Hanover.
- Cedar Elementary.
- Center /Sylvester Elementary.
- These schools are located less than 2 miles apart.
- Hanover currently utilizes a “neighborhood” school configuration.
- Cedar school houses Hanover’s entire Preschool program, as well as approximately 390 students in K-4th grade.
- Center/Sylvester is a split campus; there are approximately 574 K-4th grade students in the two buildings.



Sylvester School

- Built in 1927.
- No longer a suitable educational facility for many reasons, including but not limited to safety, lack of handicap accessibility, overcrowding, insufficient learning space and obsolete heating, plumbing and electrical systems.



MSBA

- MSBA =Massachusetts School Building Authority.
- Hanover was invited into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to conduct a feasibility study to mitigate the handicap accessibility and equity concerns.
- Hanover unanimously approved funding for the feasibility study at the May 2014 Town Meeting.
- Because the Town is working with the MSBA, the MSBA will reimburse the Town for approximately 50% of approved construction costs.



Design Numbers

- Build to 890 students (MSBA's projected capacity); current enrollment is 964).
- This projection does not include current or future Preschool students.
- Cedar school is not eligible for addition or renovation under MSBA regulations for this project.
- Center School projected enrollment is based on the capacity at Cedar.



School Configuration Proposals

- Retain Neighborhood Schools
 - Center- K-4 (415 students)
 - Cedar- K-4 (475 students)

Would require redistricting of a significant population of students from Center/Sylvester to Cedar

Need to determine Preschool placement; could not remain as is.

- Change to Town Wide Schools
 - Cedar- Preschool, Kindergarten, and First grade (approximately 400 students including Preschool).
 - Center- Second, Third, and Fourth grades. (560 students)



School Configuration (continued)

- Current physical layout would not support K-2nd grade at Cedar since the enrollment would exceed MSBA capacity and not eligible for reimbursement.
- Fifth grade cannot revert into the two elementary schools due to space limitations and MSBA enrollment guidelines.



Total Population Based on Configuration

Center/ Sylvester

<u>Grade Configuration</u>	<u>Student Population</u>
Neighborhood : Preschool, K-4	415 students (+30Preschool)
Town Wide: 2-4	560 students (0 preschool)

Cedar School

<u>Grade Configuration</u>	<u>Student Population</u>
Neighborhood: Preschool,K-4	475 students (+ 30 Preschool)
Town Wide: Preschool-1	330 students (+59 Preschool)



Curriculum Alignment

- The town conducted an audit in 2013; it is referred to as the “Abrahams Report”.
- In finding number 3, the report stated the town needed to work on elementary grade level concerns including horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment.



Curriculum Alignment (continued)

- The Abrahams report stated the teachers should work collaboratively to develop a learning culture (see findings 3, 5, and 6).
- Physical proximity could provide greater opportunity for teachers to have grade wide professional development, daily collaboration, and opportunities for teachers to work on grade alignment.



Technology

- Center School addition and renovation will be constructed to support future technology needs.
- We need to ensure Cedar school has sufficient infrastructure (technology, materials, furniture, etc) to support future learning needs in any configuration.
- Town wide schools could allow for grade level focus for technology and appropriate age level resources.



Advantages of Town Wide Schools

- Focused specialization opportunities for Professional Development.
- Concentration of age based expertise for teachers and staff.
- Age appropriate amenities and physical common space (PE Equipment, shared space, size of furniture, etc.).
- Town wide schools would allow class size equity at each grade level.



Advantages of Town Wide Schools (continued)

- Town wide schools allow for greater staffing flexibility during enrollment fluctuations.
- Town wide schools would provide more options for class/teacher placements to best match students with teachers.
- Better resource management for standardized testing (technology, supervision, etc.).



Advantages of Neighborhood Schools

- Fewer transitions for all students once the project is completed.
- We have a current configuration that works.
- More leadership opportunities for older students.
- Additional cross grade social/educational opportunities (ie: reading buddies, etc).



Advantages of Neighborhood schools (continued)

- Siblings are together longer.
- Investment in school pride.
- More time to cultivate relationships with students and families.



Special Education

- Town wide schools could allow for more equitable use of resources (materials, staff caseloads, etc).
- Town wide schools could allow for more peer opportunities.
- Potential concern for special education as we may need to replicate district wide programs in both schools requiring careful planning.



Special Education Transition Challenges

- Town wide schools would provide shorter relationships with administrators, service providers, and teachers.
- Lack of continuity in services in some situations (school based teams).
- Support for students would be required for the each transition.



Transportation Option 1 – K-4 on same bus

- K-4 on same bus.
- Siblings picked up and dropped off at the same time.
- First drop off at Cedar.
- Second drop off at Center.
- More travel time for students on the bus.
- Opening time would stagger approximately 20 minutes between the two schools.
- May need an additional bus to keep total ride time within reasonable limits.



Transportation option 2- K-1 and 2-4 on separate buses

- Cedar and Center would open approximately 30 minutes apart.
- Two pick up and drop off times K-1 and 2-4.
- Hanover had this schedule in the past and it often resulted in later afternoon drop off at home.
- There may be a shorter bus ride as all buses are used but siblings would have two pick up times.



Transportation – parent pick up and drop off

- To determine traffic patterns and flow, parents will register their child for (free) bus transportation to assist with planning purposes.
- Student pick up may require parents to wait until busses depart before leaving campus.
- Establish clear rules and signage for drop off to eliminate safety concerns.



Redistricting

- Neighborhood schools will require re-districting a significant population from Center/Sylvester families to Cedar due to MSBA enrollment projections.
- Neighborhoods and homes would be determined for redistricting the year before the Center school addition comes on-line.



Budget

- Town wide schools would generally be budget neutral as compared to neighborhood schools.
- May be able to create economies of scale in town wide schools that are not present now.
- Creating equity in technology would have to be addressed at the conclusion of the project.
- Capital updates to Cedar school would need to occur.



Advantages and Challenges

- Town wide schools would allow all students to benefit from the new construction.
- We have a current configuration that works, but the town needs a successful Center School project.



New Construction

1. The Village Commons: 130 condos (26 1-bdrm, 79 2-bdrm, 25 3-bdrm); est. completion 2016.
 - a. Location: Washington St. (Rte 53) & Park Dr. (Center School District)
2. Webster Village (affordable housing), 76 For Rent units (31 1-bdrm, 45 2-bdrm); est. completion 2016.
 - a. Location: Main access located between 301 Webster Street and 283 Webster Street. (Cedar School District)
 - b. Status: Permitted though 40 B, Comprehensive Permit. Construction is moving forward. Clearing and grading of site is underway.
3. Kennedy Building (Cardinal Cushing Centers): Building conversion to 37 For Rent units (8 1-bdrm, 25 2-bdrm, 4 3-bdrm); est. completion 2015-2016 (Center School District)
 - a. Location: 369 Washington Street
 - b. Status: Permitted though 40 B, Comprehensive Permit.
 - c. Comments: This project is currently applying for funding and historical grants. The developer is the Office of Urban Affairs, a non-profit organization.
4. Projected Building Permits (not for persons over 55)
 - a. 2014: 26 Single Family; 76 Multi-family
 - b. 2015: 23 Single Family; 107 Multi-family



Conclusion

While we can question the
configuration options
there is no question
that a Center/Sylvester project needs to
go forward in the best interest of our
students, families, and the Hanover
community.



Questions?

