

**Future Forecast Committee  
Council Chambers  
March 29, 2016  
9:00 a.m.**

Present:

J. Erardi

J. Vouros

T. Einhorn

R. Harriman-Stites

K. Holden (by phone)

C. Moretti

A. Uberti

L. Rodrigue

L. Weindenhamer

R. Bienkowski

G. Faiella

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Dr. Erardi spoke about the February 29, 2016 enrollment report centering on the grade 3 enrollment figures. If all grade 3 classes were in one school the class sizes would be 22 and 23 per class. Presently we have 15 classrooms in four schools. Moving this grade to one building would mean a reduction of two teachers and still remain within the class size guidelines. In fourth grade there has to be a qualifier which is Sandy Hook School where we committed that they will have a smaller number of students per class until they aged out of that building. They will have four sections. If fourth grade was in its own cohort there would be a total of 13 sections with a reduction of two sections. In the enrollment study from last year the K-3 school option allows the cohort to move as quickly as 4<sup>th</sup> grade. He asked if the committee was comfortable to make the statement that we believe the Milone & MacBroom enrollment projection from the summer of 2014 is still an accurate assessment of where we are with students. The committee agreed.

There was a conversation about the K-3, K-4, 5-7, and 8-12 options from last year's enrollment study. There are three options around the middle school which is the second piece to our charge. The K-5, 6-8, 9-12 option was the second recommendation. We determined to close the middle school and the intermediate school would become a 6-8 school. It wasn't the primary option because of portable classrooms.

Dr. Erardi will ask all elementary principals to play their space forward and how they would hold onto an additional grade level. They will need at least three or four additional classrooms.

Mrs. Uberti said there is a discrepancy on actual school capacity which also has to be looked at. Dr. Erardi will ask each principal to set up a community forum at their PTA meetings to share this work publicly along with the Board's charge. He spoke to Betsy Paynter last week and she will be attending our May 4 meeting with Pat Llodra.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked to see how much it would cost to close a school and move to another location. We have to show that we aren't just saving money if we close a school.

Mr. Moretti said that in looking at no schools closing we would investigate endless possibilities of what we could do with the space such as offering new programs and seeing where pockets of space could be arranged in the building to possibly let a community group use the space and if a separate entrance was needed.

Dr. Erardi said an example was the health clinic in the middle school.  
Dr. Weidenhamer suggested an expansion for special services.

Dr. Erardi said that Deborah Petersen would speak to that. We are looking at community opportunities or revenue producing space in the schools. We could also talk about expanding the adult ed program.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites referred to the pay to play money given to the town, what the implication was if we make a profit on renting out space, and how we can keep that revenue.

Mr. Bienkowski said that according to Board policy the charge for space usage goes into the custodial account because we maintain the space. If there are larger amounts of money we would have to discuss it with the Board of Finance. Money from tuition students goes to the general fund as revenue.

Dr. Rodrigue said we have to look at what makes most sense educationally. Is the goal to put all of these possibilities to the public or is it our charge to decide what should move forward as an option.

Dr. Erardi said the charge is next steps for existing schools regarding the declining enrollment.

Dr. Wiedenhamer asked if there was an International Baccalaureate high school in this area.

Dr. Erardi was not certain but thought there might be one in East Hartford.

Dr. Wiedenhamer said these schools are regional and would pull in students from other towns.

Dr. Erardi would check other locations in our area. The only downside is that there is a moratorium on magnet schools in Connecticut.

Dr. Erardi was going to ask the Board if they were expecting a listing if space is available in the high school.

Mr. Moretti said if we are investigating different types of outside agencies who could use space in our buildings we have to become aware of their requirements such as bathroom availability, handicapped accessibility, etc. to help us find pockets of space.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites wants to understand what it would take to reopen a school once it's closed and the possibility of reopening a closed school.

Mrs. Uberti asked if it would make sense to drill down what is the best option if a school were to close, position that against the alternative for not closing a school and determine what those options would be. What would be the best one to close, what savings there would be, and if those savings are going to be worth it.

Dr. Weidenhamer thought we should see if nonprofit groups such as SCAN might be interested in renting space in a school. We should think about raising money.

Mr. Einhorn stated that at the middle school there are a number of community-based programs that wait until school is out to meet because there is no available space during the day. If there are open spaces during the day we may be able to move them to daytime.

Dr. Erardi said the lead question to the Board is if they are looking at a list of recommendations in order of priority or a list of options for not closing a school.

Mr. Harriman-Stites said we should share options with the Board as they come up and get their feedback before we gather more information.

Dr. Eardi said the Board is expecting a comparison and analysis of every option with our cost savings. He will ask the Board if they want this to be a reoccurring agenda item.

Submitted: Kathy June