

***The Educational Impact of*
***School Consolidation*
in Hull****

January 23, 2017

Purpose

To present the educational impact that school consolidation will have on the education of the students of Hull.

Current Mandates

- MCAS 2.0
- Increased on-going assessment (DDMs)
- Anti-bullying legislation
- Education for suspended/excluded students
- Sheltered immersion for English Language Learners
- 990 hours of instruction
- Increased requirements for acceptance at all colleges and universities
- Study halls no longer permitted
- Legal requirement to educate students with special needs, ranging from age 3 to 22, in the least restrictive environment, which is the local public school, whenever possible

Additional Requirements

- Computer labs
- Technology education
- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Dedicated space for:
 - Speech therapy
 - Occupational therapy
 - Physical therapy
 - Title I academic support services
 - Substantially separate special education programs

Additional Challenges

- MA State Frameworks
- College and Career Readiness
- Increased testing
- Increase in low-income population
 - 14⁰% increase over the past 10 years
- Increase in special education costs and requirements
- Increase in students struggling with emotional and behavioral challenges
- Foreign language lab

Grade Configuration

- The Capital Planning Committee recommended the following grade configuration:
 - Jacobs Elementary School: Pre-K to Grade 6
 - Hull High School: Grades 7 to 12
- In contrast, based upon space availability, the school leadership reached a different conclusion. If building consolidation does occur, it will result in the following grade configuration:
 - Jacobs Elementary School: Pre-K to Grade 7
 - Hull High School: Grades 8 to 12

Impact on Students Grades 6-8

- Loss of “Middle School Concept” and additional supports to address:
 - Rapid biological growth and development
 - Transition from standards-based to performance-based curriculum and assessment
 - Transition from highly-structured and self-contained learning to more independent learning
 - Dramatic increase in the complexity of interpersonal relationships
 - The need for social experiences in an age-appropriate environment where students acquire and practice the skills necessary for acceptable peer interactions
- Loss of school community

Impact on Students Pre-K to 7

- Science labs not available for 6th and 7th grade students at Jacobs Elementary School
- Less access to computer labs
- No specialized reading instructional space
- Reduced space for the Team Based Learning (TBL) program (specialized program for students with severe and moderate disabilities who were previously tuitioned to out-of-district placements)
- No technology/engineering space, leading to the loss of the pre-engineering education for students in 6th and 7th grades
- Loss of large group spaces for inter-disciplinary teaching and learning

Impact on Students Pre-K to 7

- Inability for all grade levels to attend art, music and physical education classes in specialized spaces
 - Some art classes taught as "art-on-a-cart"
 - Many general music classes not in sound-muffling rooms due to band and chorus occupying the dedicated music classroom
 - Some physical education classes sharing gymnasium space
- Field use for 6th and 7th grade physical education classes limited by recess at the Jacobs Elementary School
- No spaces for middle school students to change into proper clothes for physical education classes

Impact on Students Pre-K to 7

- Not possible to physically separate the grade 6 and 7 students from the elementary students
- Daily interaction between 5 and 13 year olds on buses, in bathrooms, cafeteria and hallways
- Increased behavioral concerns due to increased population with different developmental needs

Impact on Students 9 to 12

- Minimal science lab facilities available to 8th grade students at Hull High School
- Lack of space for students to attend specialists (i.e. art, music, computer, physical education)
- No Advisory Program due to lack of space (NEASC requirement)
- Difficulty providing necessary gym space for all physical education classes and co-curricular activities
- Reduction in special education resource space (i.e. specialized academic support, testing and therapies)
- Reduced space for the Team Based Learning (TBL) program (specialized program for students with severe and moderate disabilities who were previously tuitioned into out-of-district placements)
 - Age 14 – 18: currently in place – academic with life skills program
 - Age 19 – 22: planned expansion as current students become of age - life skills and job training program

Impact on Students 9 to 12

- Teachers required to share rooms
 - Teachers have no access to their classrooms, computers or materials during planning periods, before and after school
 - Decrease in group activities, projects, labs, simulations and other forms of student-centered learning
 - Decrease in individualized instruction for all students
 - Serious impact on the quality of instruction
- Daily interaction between 13-year olds and 19-year olds on buses, in bathrooms, cafeteria and hallways

District-Wide Impacts

- South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC)
 - Currently, ten (10) classrooms devoted to the SSEC, which provides a \$110,000 annual building usage for the district
 - No classroom space available in district for SSEC
 - Without this program, twelve (12) Hull students (currently) would have to travel up to an hour to attend other out-of-district programs, resulting in additional transportation costs of approximately \$144,000 annually
 - 12 students X \$200 per day X 180 days = \$144,000
 - Due to program sizes and appropriateness of the program), our students would likely be distributed to at least four different communities
 - Estimated annual cost avoidance by having the SSEC in our buildings **\$254,000**
 - Prior to expanding our relationship with the SSEC, the annual cost avoidance was **\$109,000** (2014)

District-Wide Impacts

- South Shore Educational Collaborative...continued
 - Having SSEC programs in our schools increases the likelihood of transitioning Hull students back into HPS
 - Having SSEC students in our schools allows Hull children to be educated in Hull with access to typical peers
 - SSEC students are able to participate in physical education, art, music, content classes
 - Team Based Learning (TBL) students on a case by case basis are allowed access to specialized SSEC programs (adaptive PE, yoga, music therapy, swimming and extended day) during the school year and summer.
 - Hull High School students have internship opportunities working with the students in the SSEC program

District-Wide Impacts

- Since September 2014, Hull Public Schools must comply with legislation which requires substantially separate space.
 - Requires districts to provide educational services to students expelled or suspended under Chapter 71, Sections 37H or 37H^{1/2}.

District-Wide Impacts

- Substantially Separate Special Education Programs:
 - “The ages of the youngest and oldest student in any instructional grouping shall not differ by more than 48 months.” (603 CMR 28.00)
 - TIDES
 - TBL
 - Academic Support
 - Satellite
 - Therapeutic groups

Other Issues to Consider

- No space for unforeseen mandates
- Additional buses required
- Additional lunch periods required
- Age appropriate bathrooms
- Parking and its impact on neighborhoods and commuters
- Lockers at the Jacobs Elementary School
- Ability to attract and retain talented faculty and staff
- Impact on student migration to private and charter schools
- Cost of technology upgrades
- MSBA financial impact
- Impact on real estate values

Summary

- We conclude that:
 - Consolidation would have a substantially negative impact on the education received by the students of Hull;
 - The quality of students' education would be significantly diminished;
 - The schools' ability to address the social and emotional needs of Hull's students would be compromised, therefore;
 - It is not in the best interest of the children of Hull to consolidate the schools.



Questions

Response to the Capital Planning Committee's Request for Suggestions

- Current School Administration wing at the Jacobs Elementary School could house many town offices or library.
- Investigate the availability of:
 - DCR properties;
 - HRA properties;
 - Hadassah Way offices, and;
 - 5 classroom modular units (excellent condition) offered at no cost from the Town of Hingham and the feasibility of placing them in the Hadassah Way parking lot or other available space.
 - **These modular units are no longer available but the concept remains viable.**
- Determine the fair market value of the current Town Hall, library, and other previously identified surplus town-owned properties which may provide a source of funding for leasing town office space.
- Consider electronic storage of town documents.
- Consider the possibility of making some town hall functions virtual.