

ONTEORA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Board of Education

Laurie Osmond President

Ann McGillicuddy Vice President

Donna Flayhan

Tony Fletcher

Dan Spencer

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Tom Hickey

TO: Task Force
FROM: Laurie Osmond, President
DATE: November 4, 2010

Thank you for volunteering for this Task Force. Our most current enrollment report follows this memo.

Please be sure to select chair and set the next meeting date.

Here is your charge:

The Task Force's purpose will be to advise the Board of Education of an educationally desirable, sound direction for the structure of the Middle School, and shall also consider whether the existence of a Middle School is the ideal model, or whether some other configuration would be more educationally and fiscally sound.

In order to accomplish this, the Task Force will take into consideration the past recommendations of the Future of the District Committee, Middle School Steering Committee, KSQ Architects as well as broader current data and educational findings. The Task Force shall also meet with the Interim Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent of Business, Director of Buildings and Grounds, Administrative Cabinet, Board Facilities Committee, Presidents of OTA and ONTEA, PTA presidents and student representatives to gather input and feedback.

The Task Force shall present its recommendations to the Board of Education by the end of January 2011. These recommendations will take into account the unique nature of the District, school configuration, student population, available facilities and budgetary impact. The Task Force will meet at least once a month.

The lap top is set up to show the information from our web site with the past committees' work on the Smart Board. Any new information you bring, is welcome and if you want any other information from the district, please report that to the board at the BOE meeting Tuesday.



2010-2011 Middle School Task Force

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Members of the Task Force

Stacey Anderson	Nancy Hilgendorf	Rita Vanacore	Trip Ingalsbe
Cynnie Boyer	Jennifer O'Connor	Richard Merck	Bobbi Schnell
Gabriel Buono	Robin VanKeuren	Lance Edelman	Linda Sella
Tanya Davis	Holly George-Warren	Cybele Nielsen	Sharon Wood
Charlotte Gregory			





Review of OCS History

- The committee first reviewed the work of the previous Middle School Steering committee, facilities committee, KSQ Architects presentation, budgetary advisory committee, current data, sited educational research and FACTS Report 2009.
- The Board of Education verbally requested that the committee look at every possible configuration.





K-8 in all 3 elementary schools

Pros

- Increase population of each school
- MS curriculum could be fit in three years

Cons

- Sports- loss of modified
- Empty space of HS-
- Busing issues – full elementary – empty HS
- Lack of space in elementary school/renovations required
- Busing-
- Cannot entertain pre-K- due to size of physical schools
- Cost- hiring more staff, staff will need to travel which cost more money
- Cost – tech rooms (need 3), gym space, etc
- Shared teaching Loss
- No accelerated courses for 8th grades

Conclusion: K-8 in one, two or three buildings are not viable options



5-8 in One Building in MS/HS Building

Pros

- Consolidation of services- all 5th and 6th grade teachers are together – possible cost savings
- More extra-curricular – clubs, etc
- Team teaching
- Creating a greater sense of community

Cons

- Renovations cost
 - 5th grade maturity and curriculum issues
 - Age related concerns
 - Classroom space for various needs
 - Adjustment for incoming grade-congested hallways- decreasing population may mitigate issue; net population will decrease over time
 - Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns
-



5-8 in One Building in - Bennett

Pros

- Consolidation of services- all 5th and 6th grade teachers are together – possible cost savings
- More extra-curricular – clubs, etc
- Team teaching
- Creating a greater sense of community - separate identity – separate building - Physical separation – Separate and distinct facilities
- Can share campus – MS and HS – fields, etc
- Small class size
- Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns





5-8 in One Building in - Bennett

Cons

- Renovations cost- lack of state aid due to additional space in high school
- No auditorium for MS
- 5th grade maturity and curriculum issues
- Age related concerns
- Classroom space for various needs
- O/S Bond for renovations in 2003
- Current Bennett elementary students will have longer commute
- Potential increased transportation costs
- Over populate Woodstock/Phoenicia elementary schools and under-populate HS building
- Loss of only central elementary school
- Issues regarding teacher certification (7-12)



6-8 in One Building (Bennett)

- Bennett - Discussed but not considered viable due to over-population of outlying elementary schools.
- Please see the Pros-Cons in grades 5-8 configuration for Bennett Elementary.





6-8 in One Building in MS/HS

Pros

- Minimal cost – in next 3-4 years
- Middle School teaching model allows more flexibility and time
- NYS recognizes 6-8 configuration – languages, technology, home and careers, music, art, etc
- Team teaching possible within grades due to increased population
- Current configuration allows for pre-K in the elementary buildings

Cons

- Renovations cost
 - Adjustment for incoming grade-congested hallways- decreasing population may mitigate issue; net population will decrease over time
 - Classroom space for various needs
 - Some parent resistance to moving 6th graders to MS
 - Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns
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7-8 Building in MS/HS – Current Configuration

Pros

- No additional expenses in regard to physical renovations
- Currently performing well on state testing
- Shared staff with high school eases transition
- Easy transition to 9th grade
- Current configuration allows for pre-K in Bennett
- Allows more space for creative programs in the secondary

Cons

- Limits curriculum to 2 years
- Limited school culture based on 2 years
- Limited diversity
- Shared space with the high school
- Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns



7-12 Building (Jr/Sr)

Pros

- No additional expenses in regard to physical renovations
- Currently performing well on state testing
- Shared staff with high school eases transition
- No transition to 9th grade
- Current configuration allows for pre-K in Bennett
- Allows more space for creative programs in the secondary
- Better space utilization
- Challenges staff to offer a greater variety of programming

Cons

- Lose the distinction of a Middle School
- Increased exposure to more students (not age and age- related)
- More difficult transition from elementary to secondary level
- Challenges the district to find more adequate space
- Loss of a building leads to much administrative complications (paper work for state reporting)
- Administratively not desirable, difficult and inefficient model
- Does not meet the needs of 7-8th graders (this is why Middle Schools were created)
- Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns



7-9 Middle School in MS/HS Building

Pros

- No physical renovation
- Creates a three-grade level school

Cons

- Transcripts from two schools
- Transcripts would be cumbersome to manage administratively
- Academic Requirements for 7-8 versus 9 are very different
- Ownership of the school would be conflicted due to graduation requirement and school culture
- A middle philosophy conflicts with 9th grade requirements
- Does not address decreasing enrollment
- Timing of transition leads to social, behavioral and developmental concerns



NYS Description of Middle Level Education

- Below is an excerpt of NYSED's web site. Under its Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) site are a series of pages to help define the requirements of middle level education. To find out more please click on the link below.
- The Middle Level Education site provides guidance materials, tools and resources to assist districts and schools in developing and maintaining high quality middle level programs that adhere to the Regents Policy Statement on Middle Level Education, and the Essential Elements of a Standards Focused Middle Level Program. Information is available regarding regulatory requirements, program development and recognition for schools with middle grades.
- <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/mle/home.html>
- Another resource to help define the essential elements of a Middle School is the National Middle School Association <http://www.nmsa.org/>



Educational Research Service (ERS)

- Superintendent Gregory subscribed to this provider to present research. She summarized the research posted on the web site and concluded by stating there is research to support or negate any perspective. She charged this community to determine what are the needs of this district and make a decision that will best serve the children. Middle School must implement the components of the Middle School Concept in order for it to be successful---no matter what grades are placed where!





Our recommendation (3-5 years) is a
6-8 Configuration that includes:

- Interdisciplinary teaming
- Transition programs
- Distinct and separate MS Identity
- Strong, expanded, distinct media center/library
- Planned three grade level curriculum
- Proper facilities and staffing





Summary and Conclusions

- Although the research supports various configurations, the consensus of the 2010-2011 Task Force is to recommend a 6-8 Middle School configuration. This configuration will require commitment, support and resources from the Board of Education, administration and all educators to make it successful.





We have come to this conclusion after considering the following perspectives:

- Interim Superintendent-Charlotte Gregory
- Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
- Assistant Superintendent for Business
- Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Administrative Cabinet
- Facilities Committee
- Presidents of OTA and ONTEA
- Presidents of PTAs
- Student Representative
- Teacher Representatives

