

Community Forum
for the
EASD Board of School Directors
to Discuss Results from the most recent
Community ThoughtExchange:

***Future Decisions Regarding the Possible Closing of
Mill Road and Rheems Elementary Schools***

Elizabethtown Area School District
September 29, 2021



HOW DID THE POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION COME ABOUT ?

- Decision Insite Report
 - September 11, 2018
- Impact of Debt Service - Long Term Borrowing Scenarios
 - November 13, 2018
- Lower Level MS Renovation/ Subsequent Grade Reconfiguration
 - February 26, 2019
- Consolidation considered due to available learning space at East High and Bainbridge Elementary Schools
 - February 5, 2020
 - March 10, 2020
- Decision Insite Reports
 - March 23, 2021 (Complete Report: Residential & Enrollment)
 - August 24, 2021 (Updated Residential Report)



BUILDING PROJECT INFO

- Archived presentations concerning Mill Road/Rheems *(December 2014 through the present)* can be found on the District website at

www.etownschools.org/domain/1095

- Click on Phase 3 - Rheems & Mill Road



THOUGHT EXCHANGE

Question:

- *What questions or concerns are still outstanding that the Board of School Directors needs to consider with regard to consolidating our K-2 schools?*

When:

- September 15 - 22

Participant Breakdown

- 567 participants
- 401 thoughts
- 12,738 ratings
- 349 parent/guardian current student, 96 employees, 37 community members



THOUGHT EXCHANGE

| Theme (Key Words) | # of Comments | Overall Rating |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Neighborhood Schools | 70 | 3.8 |
| Finances | 42 | 3.0 |
| Class Sizes | 41 | 4.1 |
| Transportation & Traffic | 37 | 3.6 |
| Masking | 27 | 2.4 |
| Community Growth | 26 | 3.9 |
| Full Day K | 24 | 3.7 |
| Faculty & Staff | 15 | 3.5 |
| COVID Concerns | 11 | 3.5 |
| Post Closing Plans | 10 | 3.4 |
| Academics | 10 | 3.4 |
| Special Education | 8 | 3.3 |
| Social - Emotional Health | 2 | 4.2 |

Please note, within each of the thoughts, typically there are opposing viewpoints receiving ratings all with the same theme.



NEIGHBORHOOD vs COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

School District Composition

- **Elizabethtown Borough** *(still a neighborhood school serving the community with which the students reside)*
 - Majority of the Mill Road attendance zone lies within 2 miles of East High Street Elementary
- **The Town of Bainbridge** *(still a neighborhood school serving the community with which the students reside)*
 - No change to the town of Bainbridge and school zones
- **Rheems**
 - Could be redistricted to either Bainbridge or East High Street Elementary Schools
- **Rural**
 - Could be reassigned to East High Street or Bainbridge but require bussing regardless of consolidation or not



NEIGHBORHOOD vs COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Small School Atmosphere

- Proposed Bainbridge (215 to 230 students including 60-70 Kindergarten)
- Proposed East High (510 to 540 students including 160 to 175 Kindergarten)
- Focus on establishing an equitable learning environment that is best for student learning



NEIGHBORHOOD vs COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Social-Emotional

- We desire to make connections with every one of our students to bring out the best in them, regardless of the school they attend
- EASD employs numerous Social Emotional Learning strategies to address the diverse social, economic, emotional, and family backgrounds of our students regardless of the school they attend

Academics

- No cuts to elementary specials
- Class sizes remain under board-established guidelines
- As is currently the case, the number of support staff would be commensurate with the need at our schools
- Ability to provide consistent and equitable programs and services

Special Education Services

- Consolidation could afford equity in both schools, meaning students might not need reassigned to a school other than their neighborhood school



CLASS SIZE

Board Class Size Targets

- 23 at Primary Level
- 25 at Intermediate Level
- 28 at Secondary Level

Consolidation will allow for more equitable class sizes across the district



FACULTY & STAFF

- Goal is always to be efficient, effective, and sustainable in delivering programs and services
- We review all staffing decisions (admin, professional, support) annually and/or upon resignation or retirement
 - *Does it need to be filled as is? Repurposed? Reassigned? Removed?*
- Consolidation alone does not cause teacher reductions (anticipate same number of students with consolidation)
- Attrition is the preferred method in staff reductions including our support staff



COMMUNITY GROWTH & BUILDING CAPACITY

DecisionInsight Studies and Reports

- September 2018 - Presentation from Architect & DecisionInsite Demographic Analysis
- December 2020 - Board reengages DecisionInsite for district enrollment & residential housing development studies
- March 2021 - Presentation from DecisionInsite on updated District Enrollment Projections including residential home projections
- August 2021 - DecisionInsite Residential Development Projections Update

Residential Development Analysis

- September 2018; February 2021; July 2021: DecisionInsite works with Mount Joy Township, West Donegal Township, Elizabethtown Borough, and Conoy Township to updated the Residential Development Research

This Fall 2021

- After the District has the October 1 Student Enrollment data, DecisionInsite will run an updated set of Student Enrollment Projections.



10 DAY ENROLLMENT REPORT

(9/8/21)

Maximum Student Capacity K-2 using all existing 36 designated classrooms

At Bainbridge - not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, "STEAM" classroom, "CUBS" classroom and any Small Group Instruction (SGI) rooms

At East High - not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, music classroom, art classroom, technology classroom and any SGI rooms

Scenario 1: 1/2 Day K

| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2021-22 10-day | "Extra" Capacity |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| K (1/2 day) | 6 | 276 | 226 | 50 |
| 1 | 13 | 299 | 247 | 52 |
| 2 | 14 | 322 | 249 | 73 |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 13 | 11 |
| Total | 36 | 921 | 735 | 186 |

10 DAY ENROLLMENT REPORT

(9/8/21)

| Scenario 2 - Mix of 1/2 & Full day K | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2021-22 10-day | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (1/2 day) | 4 | 184 | 226 | 50 | 8 1/2 classes |
| K (Full day) | 4 | 92 | | | 4 Full Day |
| 1 | 12 | 276 | 247 | 29 | |
| 2 | 13 | 299 | 249 | 50 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 13 | 11 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 875 | 735 | 140 | 84.0% |

10 DAY ENROLLMENT REPORT

(9/8/21)

| Scenario 3 - Full day K | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2021-22 10-day | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (Full day) | 10 | 230 | 226 | 4 | 10 Full Day |
| 1 | 11 | 253 | 247 | 6 | |
| 2 | 12 | 276 | 249 | 27 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 13 | 11 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 783 | 735 | 48 | 93.9% |

This very high Utilization will be challenging with 2 set attendance areas.

DECISIONINSITE MODERATE (MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2028-29

MAXIMUM Student Capacity K-2 using all existing 36 designated classrooms

At Bainbridge - not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, "STEAM" classroom, "CUBS" classroom and any Small Group Instruction (SGI) rooms

At East High- not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, music classroom, art classroom, technology classroom and any SGI rooms

Scenario 1: 1/2 Day K

| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2028-29 Moderate | "Extra" Capacity |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| K (1/2 day) | 7 | 322 | 280 | 42 |
| 1 | 13 | 299 | 294 | 5 |
| 2 | 13 | 299 | 297 | 2 |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 |
| Total | 36 | 944 | 891 | 53 |

DECISIONINSITE MODERATE (MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2028-29

| Scenario 2 - Mix of 1/2 & Full day K | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2028-29 Moderate | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (1/2 day) | 4 | 184 | 280 | -4 | 8 - 1/2 classes |
| K (Full day) | 4 | 92 | | | 4 Full Day |
| 1 | 12 | 276 | 294 | -18 | |
| 2 | 13 | 299 | 297 | 2 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 875 | 891 | -16 | 101.8% |

This would require more classrooms through an addition to EH or usage of some of the “special” classrooms EH &/or BB

DECISIONINSITE MODERATE (MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2028-29

| Scenario 3 - Full day K | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Students | 2028-29 Moderate | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (Full day) | 11 | 253 | 280 | -27 | 11 Full Day |
| 1 | 11 | 253 | 294 | -41 | |
| 2 | 11 | 253 | 297 | -44 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 783 | 891 | -108 | 113.8% |

This would require more classrooms through an addition to EH or usage of some of the “special” classrooms EH &/or BB

DECISIONINSITE CONSERVATIVE

(MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2026-27

Maximum Student Capacity K-2 using all existing 36 designated classrooms

At Bainbridge - not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, "STEAM" classroom, "CUBS" classroom and any Small Group Instruction (SGI) rooms

At East High - not included in the "classroom" count - gym, cafeteria, library, music classroom, art classroom, technology classroom and any SGI rooms

Scenario 1: 1/2 Day K

| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2026-27 Conservative | "Extra" Capacity |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| K (1/2 day) | 6 | 276 | 250 | 26 |
| 1 | 13 | 299 | 266 | 33 |
| 2 | 14 | 322 | 270 | 52 |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 |
| Total | 36 | 921 | 806 | 115 |

DECISIONINSITE CONSERVATIVE

(MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2026-27

| Scenario 2 - Mix of 1/2 & Full day K | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Seats | 2026-27 Conservative | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (1/2 day) | 4 | 184 | 250 | 26 | 8 - 1/2 classes |
| K (Full day) | 4 | 92 | | | 4 Full Day |
| 1 | 12 | 276 | 266 | 10 | |
| 2 | 13 | 299 | 270 | 29 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 875 | 806 | 69 | 92.1% |

DECISIONINSITE CONSERVATIVE

(MARCH 2021)

HIGHEST PROJECTED YEAR 2026-27

| Scenario 3 - Full day K | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Grade | Possible Classrooms | Possible # Students | 2026-27 Conservative | "Extra" Capacity | |
| K (Full day) | 11 | 253 | 250 | 3 | 11 Full Day |
| 1 | 11 | 253 | 266 | -13 | |
| 2 | 11 | 253 | 270 | -17 | |
| Special Ed | 3 | 24 | 20 | 4 | Utilization |
| Total | 36 | 783 | 806 | -23 | 102.9% |

This would require more classrooms through an addition to EH or usage of some of the “special” classrooms EH &/or BB

TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC

Key considerations:

Continue to Collaborate with Etown Borough (as we've done in past) for most effective traffic pattern

- *Secondary - Peak AM - 7:10 AM - 7:50 AM*
- *Secondary - Peak PM - 2:20 PM - 3:00 PM*
- *Elementary - Peak AM - 8:20 AM - 9:00 AM*
- *Elementary - Peak PM - 3:20 PM - 4:00 PM*

Historical Enrollment Perspective - East High Street ES

- *2010-2011 Enrollment - 611 students at East High Street ES*
- *2015-2016 Enrollment - 506 students at East High Street ES*
- *2020-2021 Enrollment - 349* students at East High Street ES (May 2021 enrollment)*
- *2021-2022 10-Day Enrollment - 285 students at East High Street ES*
- *2022 -2023 Proposed enrollment with consolidation 510 to 540 students at East High Street ES*

* Enrollment figured cited does not include EASD Online Students



TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC

- Redistricting with goal of maintaining the current guideline for “seat time” on a bus at a goal of 60 minutes or less
 - District-wide Bear Creek (*elementary run*) and Secondary bus runs are to a single site and all are scheduled to be 60 minutes or less
 - With consolidation, district-wide Primary Elementary bus runs would be to two sites and we would expect all scheduled runs to be 60 minutes or less
 - Seat time for some students will increase but all will remain under 60 minutes
- Redistricting with goal of maintaining the current number of buses
 - Buses can be used more efficiently when driving to 2 schools rather than 4 schools
 - Unknown if additional buses would be needed until final school boundaries are established (*approximately 50 walkers would become bus riders*)



FINANCES

Overall Goal:

- Effectively deploy a finite set of resources so all learners K-12 have equitable experiences and opportunities for success as defined by our vision and mission.

Pivot Point *(originally presented at the November 13, 2018, school board meeting)*

- Amount of funding to cover renovations of Mill Road, Rheems and EAMS/EAHS complex would require EASD to dedicate 1.3% of every tax increase for 18 years simply to cover debt
- Assuming a 3% annual tax increase, all other costs would need to be controlled at 1.7% annual growth *(not possible without additional cost controls and staff/program cuts which may impact educational offerings/ opportunities)*



FINANCES

Mill Road:

- Projected cost: \$10 - \$13 million (*prior to Covid*)
- Increase in Yearly Debt Service Payment: \$600,000 (18 years)

Rheems:

- Projected cost: \$12 - \$15 million (*prior to Covid*)
- Increase in Yearly Debt Service Payment: \$700,000 (18 years)

EAMS/EAHS Complex:

- Preliminary Projected cost: \$50 - \$80 million (*prior to Covid*)
- Increase in Yearly Debt Service Payment: \$3 - \$4.5 Million (30 years)



FINANCES

East High Street (*if needed*):

- Preliminary cost estimates: \$5.7 - \$6.6 million (prior to Covid)
- Includes 9 new full-sized classrooms
 - Includes conversion of some current classrooms to collaborative learning spaces to mirror the same opportunities as Bainbridge
 - potential for increased full day K offerings



FINANCES

Operational Savings:

- Combination of savings through elimination of ongoing repair costs, utility reductions, building supply reductions, attritional staff savings if both schools are closed
- total roughly \$700,000 annual (these do not include cost of building renovations)

What would happen to buildings if schools are closed

- Similar to the closing of Fairview Elementary, the school board would assess all options in the final disposition of the school(s) for the benefit of our taxpayers
- Minimal operational costs to “mothball” a closed school or schools



FULL DAY K

Key considerations:

- Cost associated with adding teachers
- Both renovation and consolidation options could allow for full day K
 - Consolidation could require a few extra classrooms to be added to be able to offer full day K, but at a cost of about \$15 million less than renovation at both schools
- Do we partner with outside organizations?
- Do we consider impact of pre-K partnerships?



POSSIBLE K-2 OPTIONS

- Keep & renovate Mill Road & Rheems
 - Renovation cost: \$22 - \$28 million
- Keep & renovate Mill Road OR Rheems
 - Renovation cost: \$10 - \$15 million
- Close Mill Road & Rheems, Remain with ½ Day K
- Close Mill Road & Rheems, Add Full Day K - likely need an addition to EH
 - Renovation cost: \$5 - \$6 million
 - Additional staff cost to add Full Day K



THE CENTRAL QUESTIONS

WHERE should the district spend the finite financial and human capital resources of the school district given the commitment to existing contracts and services?

Do we prioritize Programs and People **OR** Facilities and Maintenance?



NEXT STEPS

October 12, 2021 - Workshop

- Administration/Board reviews school alignment options including possible school closing(s) scenario(s)
 - Board discussion to find consensus on best option to move forward.
 - **If** consensus is to close a school(s), vote on starting closure process at the **October 26, 2021, Action Meeting**
 - Formal hearing November 2021
 - Final vote February 2022



CLOSING COMMENTS



**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
TONIGHT'S COMMUNITY FORUM**