

Community Forum for the
EASD Board of School Directors
to Discuss Themes from the following
Community ThoughtExchange:

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

Elizabethtown Area School District
June 29, 2021



THEMES FROM THOUGHT EXCHANGE

- Capacity and Enrollment (*slides 5-10*)
- Class sizes and Impact to Staffing (*slides 11-13*)
- Full Day K (*slide 14*)
- Traffic (*slide 15*)
- Neighborhood vs. Community Schools (*slides 16-20*)
- Transportation (*slide 21*)
- Finances (*slides 22-28*)
- Changes (*slide 29*)
- Timeline (*slides 30-31*)



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



PERSPECTIVE: WHAT DO WE VALUE

MARCH 10, 2020 - POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION (PAGE 8)

- **Safe, supportive, welcoming environments:** Our district continues to invest in a strong Social-Emotional continuum with the work of Stephen Covey's 7 Habits/Leader in Me districtwide; as well as ongoing investments in safety and security
- **People:** The people within our schools and communities are truly what support our students in their growth, development, and learning. We invest in our staff through effective hiring processes and ongoing, sustainable professional learning focused on the needs of our students
- **Equitable opportunities for students.** Leveraging district resources and community supports our goal is to provide high quality education for all students in the EASD.



CONSERVATIVE PROJECTIONS

MARCH 23, 2021 - DECISION INSITE ENROLLMENT PROJECTION REPORT (PAGE 14)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
K	220	229	232	241	249	250	250	250	249	248	247 (+27)
K-5	1,493	1,566	1,564	1,569	1,587	1,589	1,593	1,597	1,595	1,591	1,582 (+89)
6-8	928	899	851	834	833	839	818	806	796	793	798 (-130)
9-12	1,229	1,223	1,214	1,245	1,203	1,138	1,112	1,069	1,063	1,057	1,036 (-193)
K-12	3,650	3,688	3,629	3,648	3,623	3,566	3,523	3,472	3,454	3,441	3,416 (-234)
5-Yr Change						98%					96%

The 5-Year Change row represents the percent change projected over the enrollment five years prior

MODERATE PROJECTIONS

MARCH 23, 2021 - DECISION INSITE ENROLLMENT PROJECTION REPORT (PAGE 15)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
K	220	239	247	260	268	267	271	276	280	279	277 (+57)
K-5	1,493	1,591	1,619	1,658	1,683	1,673	1,702	1,730	1,759	1,753	1,740 (+247)
6-8	928	912	870	863	863	862	847	850	855	857	858 (-70)
9-12	1,229	1,232	1,241	1,287	1,246	1,173	1,148	1,120	1,128	1,117	1,090 (-139)
K-12	3,650	3,735	3,730	3,808	3,792	3,708	3,697	3,700	3,742	3,727	3,688 (+38)
5-Yr Change						102%					99%

The 5-Year Change row represents the percent change projected over the enrollment five years prior

CAPACITY VS. NEED (K-2)

MAY 11, 2021 - DEEPER DIVE INTO SCHOOL CAPACITY (PAGE 3)

	Bainbridge	East High	Mill Road	Rheems	Totals
Total Full Sized Classrooms	12	29	14	23	78
Less classrooms used for Special Ed and Specials (art, music, STEAM, CUBS)	2	7	2	3	14
Available Classrooms	10	22	12	20	64
2021-2022 (Needed)	7.5	11.5	6	6	31
2021-2022 (Open)	2.5	10.5	6	14	33

Dedicated Special Ed classrooms at East High (3) and Rheems (1) only

BAINBRIDGE & EAST HIGH

MAY 11, 2021 - DEEPER DIVE INTO SCHOOL CAPACITY (PAGE 4)

	Bainbridge	East High	Totals
Total Full Sized Classrooms	12	29	41
Less classrooms used for Special Ed and Specials (art, music, STEAM, CUBS)	3	7	10
Available Classrooms	9	22	31
Needed Class Rooms 2022-2023 (based on planned student enrollment, staffing, recommended class sizes)	9	22	31

Dedicated Special Ed classrooms at East High (3) and Bainbridge (1)

K-2 CAPACITY

MAY 11, 2021 - DEEPER DIVE INTO SCHOOL CAPACITY (PAGE 5)

	# of Classrooms	EASD	Capacity	4/30/21 Enrollment	2022-23 (Consv)	2022-23 (Mod)	Highest (2026-27)
K (1/2 Day)	6	46	276	224	232	247	250*
K (Full Day)	0	23	0				
1st Grade	12	23	276	238	247	262	266*
2nd Grade	13	23	299	266	258	266	270*
Total	31		851	728	737	775	786

Dedicated Special Ed classrooms at East High (3) and Bainbridge (1)

*Numbers found in Decision Insite Report from March 23, 2021, labeled "EASD without Residential Development Report" (page 3 which **includes** enrollment with Development)

BUILDING CAPACITY

Past School Board Decisions - 4-phase Building Program:

- Opened Bear Creek School in 2011
 - Increased seat capacity by around 600+ seats at K-3 level by removing grades 4 & 5
- Closed Fairview Elementary School in 2011
 - Decreased seat capacity by around 150 seats when school was closed
- Renovated East High Street (2012) and Bainbridge Elementary Schools (2018)
 - Separated gymnasiums and cafeterias
- Opening Lower Level Middle School (Fall 2021)
 - Increased seat capacity by around 300+ seats at K-2 level by removing grade 3



CLASS SIZE TARGETS

MARCH 10, 2020 - SCHOOL BOARD MEETING PRESENTATION (PAGE 18)

Class size targets:

- 23 at the primary level
- 25 at the intermediate level
- 28 at the secondary level



IMPACT TO STAFFING

- We review all staffing decisions 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
- Goal is always to be efficient, effective, and sustainable in delivering programs and services



CLASS SIZE ANALYSIS

MARCH 10, 2020 - SCHOOL BOARD MEETING PRESENTATION (PAGE 21)

	# of Classrooms	Students	Average
K (1/2 Day)	6 (12 sections)	250	20.8
1st Grade	12	266	22.1
2nd Grade	13	270	20.7
Total	37	786	21.2

Updated to reflect Highest Enrollment Projections and forecasted number of sections - 2026-2027

FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

Key considerations:

- Cost associated with adding teachers
- Available space for full day K
 - What is the most economical way to accommodate space needs if needed?
- Do we partner with outside organizations?
- Do we consider impact of pre-K?



TRAFFIC - EAST HIGH

Key considerations:

- Collaborate with Etown Borough as we've done in past for most effective traffic pattern
 - *High Tide AM - 8:20 AM - 9:00 AM*
 - *High Tide 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*
 - *2019-2020 Enrollment - 380 students at East High Street ES*
 - *2021-2022 Forecasted Enrollment - 525 and 575 students at East High Street ES*



NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 13)

Perceived **STRENGTHS:**

- Smaller overall student enrollment at individual buildings (BB 167; EH 268; MR 129; RH 126)
- Maintains local building traditions
- Continued focus on “whole child”
- An administrator oversees a smaller number of building staff
- Related arts teachers serve every building
- If 4 schools- split time among schools; If 3 schools-student supports staff may be available in every building
- May have more “walkers”



NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 13)

Perceived **WEAKNESSES / THREATS:**

- Ongoing costs for building operations, maintenance and staffing
- Unused classroom spaces across all K-2 buildings
- Inequitable special education programs and services/ not available in all buildings
- Limited ability to assign and repurpose staff without taking on additional costs
- Additional staffing would be required to provide some level of full day Kindergarten
- More variances in class sizes across the district at same grade levels due to boundary lines (inequitable class sizes)
- Increased debt service to complete elementary infrastructure improvements
- Change/unknowns



COMMUNITY-WIDE SCHOOLS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 14)

Perceived **STRENGTHS**:

- Continued strong focus on the “whole child”
- More funding directed to programs & services vs facilities & maintenance
- Equity of class sizes(23 or less), technology deployment & resources
- More consistency w/ instructional materials & practice, consistent community wide philosophy (already implemented 3-12)
- Greater opportunities for daily teacher collaboration & consistent job embedded PD
- Greater exposure to & support of the diversity in our student population further reducing anxiety moving into BC
- Equity of Special Education programs & services



COMMUNITY-WIDE SCHOOLS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 14)

Perceived **STRENGTHS**:

- Equity of Counselor, Reading Specialist & Instructional Support Team professionals
- Ability to repurpose staff & administration K-12 to better meet both student & organizational needs
- Could provide Full-day Kindergarten options without the need for additional staffing
- More focused support and resources in the areas of district wide programs/ services & safety and security
- Ability to reduce the scope of contracts for existing outsourcing
- Greater flexibility to capitalize on attritional savings
- Flexibility to address unanticipated increase in enrollment
- Reduced future debt service directed to elementary renovation



COMMUNITY-WIDE SCHOOLS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 14)

Perceived **WEAKNESSES / THREATS:**

- Reduction of small neighborhood schools & individual building traditions
- Potential loss of “walkers”
- Potential for more traffic during arrival & dismissal times
- Change/ unknowns



TRANSPORTATION REVIEW

- Redistricting with goal of maintaining the current guideline for “seat time” on a bus at 60 minutes or less
 - Bear Creek (elementary run) and our Secondary bus runs are district-wide and ALL are scheduled 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)



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

MARCH 10, 2020 - POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION PRESENTATION (PAGE 11)

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 tax increases for 8 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 significant cost controls and staff/program cuts)*



IMPACT OF FUTURE DEBT SERVICE

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 16)

Mill Road:

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

Rheems:

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

EAMS/EAHS Complex:

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



EXPANDING EAST HIGH

MARCH 10, 2020 - POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION (PAGE 27)

East High Street (if needed):

- Preliminary cost estimates: \$5.7 - \$6.6 million
- Includes 9 new full-sized classrooms
- Includes conversion of some current classrooms to collaborative learning spaces



OPTIONS TO ABSORB DEBT SERVICE

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGES 15-19)

Increase Revenue:

- Current level of taxation is enough to cover current budget growth so would need to go to index (about \$300,000 in additional revenue)

Reduce Debt:

- Refinance bonds (contingent on interest rates and bond refinancing call dates)

Close Buildings:

- Save on operational costs (about \$700,000 if both Mill Road and Rheems close)

Reduce Programs, Services & People:

- Identify “big ticket” items
- Attritional savings in personnel and expiring debt service



BIG TICKET ITEMS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGES 15-19)

Staff:

- Equivalent of 10 full-time employees equals \$1,000,000

Athletics:

- Account for roughly \$1,000,000 of expenditures

Technology

- Defer replacement of personalized learning devices, which saves around \$275,000 yearly

Independent Learning (Etown Cyber)

- Discontinue saving around \$270,000

Educational Alternatives

- Discontinue educational alternatives saving around \$250,000



BIG TICKET ITEMS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGES 15-19)

Leader in Me / SEL:

- Reduce or eliminate programs that address social and emotional needs. Leader in Me costs about \$200,000

Crisis Counseling:

- Terminate services for both trauma and crisis counseling, saving about \$185,000 of expenditures

Music / Theater

- EASD's music and theater programs account for \$160,000 of expenditures. Scale back offerings to meet the state standards.

Safety and Security

- Revisit safety and security efforts including SRO position to save about \$100,000



THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTIONS

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 21)

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?



WHAT CHANGED?

- Decision Insite Report
 - September 11, 2018
- Impact of Debt Service - Long Term Borrowing Scenarios
 - November 13, 2018
- Lower Level Middle School Renovation and Subsequent Grade Reconfiguration
 - February 26, 2019
- Consolidation considered due to available learning space at East High and Bainbridge Elementary Schools
 - February 5, 2020
- Decision Insite Report
 - March 23, 2021



2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

APRIL 13, 2021 - ALIGNING RESOURCES PRESENTATION (PAGE 5)

- Shift 3rd grade at each primary to Bear Creek and 6th grade to EAMS
- Align staff K-12
- Enable curricular opportunities to meet Life Ready Model while capitalizing on budgetary attritional savings
- Continue to enhance plans for both in-person and/or cyber learning K-12
- Utilize all 4 primary buildings (Bainbridge, East High, Mill Road and Rheems)



NEXT STEPS

JANUARY 12, 2021 - EASD TIMELINE FOR DISCUSSIONS

August 10, 2021 - Workshop

- Refresh options after July break
- Summary of community forum

September 14, 2021 - Workshop

- Continued Board discussion on future decisions regarding Mill Road and Rheems Elementary Schools

October 12, 2021 - Workshop

- Administration/Board present school alignment options including possible school closing(s) scenario
 - Board discussion to find consensus on best option to move forward. If consensus is to close a school(s), vote on closure would occur at the October 26, 2021, Action Meeting



CLOSING COMMENTS



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