

## June 2023 Consolidation Proposal Information Requests:

Note – in no particular order, numbered for ease of reference.

### 1. Educational Plan to include:

- a. Proposed schedule
  - i. See attached
- b. The 10 positions reduced are by position not by any named person.
- c. Reduction of Admin staff
  - i. With the closure of a building, we would decrease one admin position through attrition.
- d. Reduction of Office staff
  - i. With the closure of a building, we would decrease two office staff through attrition.
- e. Additional class opportunities
  - i. See attached
- f. Proposed class size
  - i. Less than 25 students per class (See attached)
- g. Ability to level classes
  - i. Yes, there would be an ability to level classes for grades 6-8.
- h. Review grade 5 test scores – movement to elementary buildings to improve.

If 5<sup>th</sup> grade is added to the elementary, we will create a schedule that is similar to our 4<sup>th</sup> grade schedule. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade one teacher is responsible for all math instruction, the second teaches all ELA, and the third has science, social studies and health. We believe this allows a teacher to really focus on their expertise in content and pedagogy for their assigned subject. We also have more flexibility with our schedule at the elementary and can make adjustments to our schedule to meet the academic needs of the students.

Having 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the elementary will improve communication and collaboration between grade levels. This communication will focus on sharing knowledge of the students to maximize engagement and reviewing data to ensure that we are thoroughly covering the tested content.

One more year without a school transition will help students return to a familiar environment and established connections with faculty. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students would have one more year to be leaders in our buildings and we would use them as a resource to help younger students as mentors.

We are going to begin using iReady k to 4. This is an assessment that will help us with continuity across grade level spans and it also has a personalized learning component. We could take a look at continuing this assessment and instruction tool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

- i. Review possible scenario of longer day at MS and/or Elementary if needed for transportation planning – change bell times?

Any additional time added to the day would be welcomed at the elementary. The additional time would likely be used to build in a period that would allow for intervention. We could reorganize our students during this time frame for remedial instruction and it would also allow for students to have cross grade level opportunities to mentor and learn from peers. This time could also be used periodically to reorganize students by learning interests or allow time for activities like band and lessons that now take students away from core instruction. We would want to be careful to not extend the day beyond our

contractual day for the teaching staff or overextend for some of our K - 2 students that already struggle with social/emotional needs.

- j. Any special education considerations?
  - i. All special education classes that are stand alone classes are already housed at CLMS.
2. Review timeline of when Bond and PlanCon were finalized on CVMS building and CASH.
  - a. M&T bank and PNC bank were attached to CVMS and CASH - the M&T was paid off in 2014 and PNC paid off in 2016.
3. Facilities questions: - Information from Facilities and Budget
  - a. Review monetary savings of a building closure. The cost savings of closing a building vs selling a building were estimated based on the average facility expenditures over the last 2 full school years (2020-2021 & 2021-2022). Savings were defined as costs that would be eliminated in either or both scenarios. All one-time expenditures (example: vehicle purchase) were eliminated from these calculations. 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Costs Saved Conneaut Lake Middle School: 2021-2022
  - b. Fiscal Year Costs Saved Conneaut Valley Middle School: Estimates for each school for 2020-2021 & 2021-2022 expenditures averaged out to: Conneaut Lake Middle School – Closed = \$103,000 & Sold = \$418,400 Conneaut Valley Middle School – Closed = \$117,500 & Sold = \$465,200 note: averaged estimates were rounded to the hundredth. (See graphs below)
  - c. Ongoing costs of a closed building (See graphs below)
  - d. Future plans to sell – timeframe hopeful to accomplish? This would be a Board Decision and that process would not start until the School Board has voted to close a school building. Relative to the question, the District has sold a closed school building before (Greenwood). The District followed the process laid out by our Solicitor and the sale was completed in a timeframe of about one year.
4. Marketing plan for positives
  - a. We need to get the most out of what we can control. Here's an example that really highlights this: Out of 7 area High School (CASH, MASH, Cochranon, Cambridge, Maplewood, Saegertown, Greenville) Cash ranks #7 out of 7 on US News and World Report annual rankings of US and PA High Schools.
  - b. You probably wonder how that can be based on what you know about our area schools. You might not think we're the top, but I would think you would be surprised to know that we are the bottom. And we are actually at the bottom by a wide margin. Here's their rankings:
    1. Maplewood (65/100)
    2. Saegertown (60/100)
    3. Cochranon (57/100)
    4. MASH (56/100)
    5. Cambridge (38/100)
    6. Greenville (37/100)
    7. CASH (29/100)
  - When I saw these rankings, I was surprised, especially considering that 3 of these schools are from Penncrest. Why was Cambridge so much lower scoring than their other 2 schools?
  - The answer is in the data used to calculate these rankings (right or wrong)
  - There are a variety of subfactors used to make these ranking, which include performance by traditionally underperforming groups of students, but these are the factors that have the highest value, which appear on every school's score card:
    1. Took at Least One AP® Exam
    2. Passed at Least One AP® Exam

3. Mathematics Proficiency
4. Reading Proficiency
5. Science Proficiency
6. Graduation Rate

- Many of these schools across our area have very similar numbers in several of these areas, some have somewhat higher state assessment scores than others, graduation rates are all very similar, etc. There is one major correlation between our rankings and our score out of 100. If we look at the first factor listed (The percentage of student who took at least 1 AP exam) this is the ranking of these 7 schools:
  1. Saegertown (44% of kids took 1 AP)
  2. Maplewood (42%)
  3. MASH (34%)
  4. Cochrannton (32%)
  5. CASH (10%)
  6. Cambridge (no AP scores reported)
  7. Greenville (No AP scores reported)
- We can certainly work to improve our state assessment scores, but those scores are already in the ballpark of some of these other schools. We're also at 95% grad rate. We're way behind on offering AP opportunities (something we've only recently offered here is my understanding and which are still quite limited) . In order to ensure that students take them, we also need to ensure that we pay for them as a district, which is costly. Greenville is a really good example of this as their state assessment scores are actually as high or higher than basically everyone on this list, but they do not offer AP at Greenville. But just getting kids to take them really, really boosts your scores on the US News ranking and passing them counts for even more. The US News ranking is also what informs a lot of the somewhat subjective rankings you find on various other online places. AP enrollment, testing, as well as Dual enrollment numbers used to be worth bonus points on your school's school performance profile before the ESSA report card/Future ready changes went into effect. I'm not sure how much impact that has now. But continuing to pump up these numbers, combined with a modest bump in scores can really boost us up in this region. If you get high enough, you can also use their banner on all our social media, website, etc. Behold:



5. Vision for future – begin conversation of possibilities based on continued declining enrollment.
  - a. Review enrollment in current grades – if possible, list based on “prior 3 areas”
    - i. Current enrollment: K-118, First-130, Second-129, Third-133, Fourth-109, Fifth-141, Sixth-135, Seventh-132, Eighth-142, Ninth-148, Tenth-149, Eleventh-121, Twelfth-149, Total 1736
  - b. Is a one campus location a possibility – and what enrollment numbers to consider?
    - i. One campus may be a possibility (if trends continue) by the 2037/2038 School year. However, at that time, it may make more sense to have a K-8 at one location with the high school still at Linesville. Those decisions will need to be made by the board at that time in consideration as what is best for the students and taxpayers just like the board today and past boards have had to make tough decisions.
6. Prior consolidation and renovation questions?
  - a. Review our understanding of decision from 2003? To renovate as opposed to one new high school in a central location.
    - i. The board at that time had documentation from the state that anticipated increasing enrollment in the district, and made the decision at that time to renovate as opposed to new construction.
  - b. Some challenges have existed, but have education opportunities improved?
    - i. After consolidating the high schools in 2012, we expanded our offerings - AP Bio, Micro Biology, Medical Terminology, Forensic Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Calculus, Pre-Calculus, Statistics, Aeronautics, Expanded Vo-Ag and Animal Sciences, and added many electives like: Guitar, History of Rock and Roll, Citizenship, Cyber Program from 7th -12th, Environmental Sciences, AP courses in science and math, College Prep English 9-12, Welding and small engine, Technical Math, Astro Physics, (see course listing below) These and many other courses were not offered at three small high schools. (See Attached)
  - c. Review enrollment numbers
    - i. Current enrollment: K-118, First-130, Second-129, Third-133, Fourth-109, Fifth-141, Sixth-135, Seventh-132, Eighth-142, Ninth-148, Tenth-149, Eleventh-121, Twelfth-149, Total 1736
  - d. Review Staff/Administration numbers
    - i. Teaching Staff 154/Administration 13
  - e. Review Budget data (Attached)
  - f. Have opportunities increased since then – classes – including advanced classes, extra-curricular, etc.
    - i. Yes, see above
  - g. Review idea of a phased approach based on enrollment and budget restraints.

- i. The district has facilities to use as we decrease in size and building new or adding additions would be an outlay of money that is unnecessary at this time. As our enrollment decreases, we have buildings to use to house our students while we close/sell others. Yes, bussing will be a challenge as some have longer rides, but at 319 square miles, some (who live on the outskirts of our district) have long rides now. Because we have options (that some districts do not have) we can continue to look at options to: A. provide a great education for all our students, while B. lowering costs as we grow smaller. We've accomplished both of these things since the consolidation of 2012. We kept costs low (only raising taxes twice in the last eleven years) and added programs to our high school to better prepare our students for their journey once they graduate.
7. Budget – how does the district save close to \$3 million dollars moving forward?
  - a. Committees reviewed options that were detrimental to students including cutting programs, eliminating kindergarten, athletic programs, etc.
  - b. Committees reviewed costs and educational impact of ASA at this time.
  - c. This article is a reference, this is not good news for our communities that is out of our control: [https://www.dailyitem.com/cnhi\\_network/rural-pa-saw-more-people-move-in-than-move-out/article\\_48cd73f2-07c5-596f-95c8-6f1714f64ac1.amp.html](https://www.dailyitem.com/cnhi_network/rural-pa-saw-more-people-move-in-than-move-out/article_48cd73f2-07c5-596f-95c8-6f1714f64ac1.amp.html) . Key quote: ““The bottom line is that the trend of more deaths than births will not change in the near future, and will have implications on school enrollments, workforce participation rates and volunteerism,” according to the report”.
  - d. Staff is the driving force behind school districts’ budgets and the reduction of staff is the simplest way to reduce the expenditures of a district budget. Through consolidation and attrition, the district can save over one million dollars in staffing per year. With additional savings in building maintenance, heating, cooling, electricity, and gas, the savings could approach \$1.4 million dollars a year. These savings coupled with increases from the state will allow the district to achieve a balanced budget in 2-3 years.