

A Report to the
Hollis Brookline Cooperative
School Board

Regarding Implications of a Dissolution of
the Hollis Brookline Cooperative
School District

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District with data that will need to be considered if, and when, dissolution of the Cooperative were to become a reality. Dr. Kenneth DeBenedictis, and Dr. John Moody were commissioned by the HBCSB to conduct a study which includes those factors that may have significant impact on both the Hollis and Brookline School districts if the Cooperative were to dissolve.

As a starting point for the study, the following items were reviewed:

- Review of current and Projected Enrollments for the Cooperative as well as those of the Hollis and Brookline Elementary schools.
- Review of the current and projected Program of Studies for both the Hollis Brookline High School and Hollis Brookline Middle School both with and without Brookline Students.
- Review of current negotiated Agreements for all districts and the potential impact dissolution may have on the Cooperative, Hollis, and Brookline school districts.
- Review of current floor plans, and use for each building - Cooperative, Hollis and Brookline to determine the impact on instructional programs in each facility in the Cooperative as well as Hollis School and Brookline School Districts.
- Review current staffing levels for each building, including support staff (administrative, secretarial, custodial, food service, etc.) to determine impacts of dissolution on each district.
- Review of the 2008 Facilities Study Committee, including the recommendations of that committee.
- Review of current athletic teams at HBHS and HBMS with and without Brookline students and the potential impact on current and future athletic programs at both Hollis and Brookline.
- Status of HBHS as it relates to NEASC as well as copies of most recent NEASC reports as well as the implications for HBHS if dissolution becomes a reality.
- Review of the current Strategic Plan
- Review of various building options in the Cooperative, Hollis, and Brookline School Districts under a dissolution scenario.

There is a clearly defined process when considering dissolving an existing Cooperative School District, much of which is specifically determined by NH RSA 195:25 through 195:31 *Withdrawal from Cooperative School District*. The requirements for withdrawal will be further elaborated upon later in this report. In addition, it would be instructive for any study of withdrawal to consider the process used to create a Cooperative School District (NH RSA 195:18) in the first place in order to gain perspective about the procedures involved in creating the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District in the first place.

RSA 194-C: 2 outlines the process for addressing the issue of continuation of an existing SAU should either or both of the member districts vote to withdraw. The regulation is specific and should be considered very carefully as the potential warrant article on withdrawal becomes a reality. Essentially, if one district votes to withdraw from the Cooperative and the other district does not; the withdrawing district must follow the tenets of the regulations. Should both districts choose to withdraw, the process is somewhat more detailed.

Enrollment Projections for all three districts were made available for review, and for purposes of this report, the five-year projections were used to assess the impact of dissolution, with specific emphasis on educational programs and services, building use, and staffing requirements in all facilities. Withdrawal of Brookline students from the Cooperative will have dramatic impact on the programs and services currently offered at Hollis Brookline High School and Hollis Brookline Middle School. Using an 50-50 ratio of Hollis - Brookline students in both the high school and middle school was used inasmuch as the five-year projections vary only slightly during that time; fluctuations of 1-2% in either district makes only a minor difference in course offerings, facility use, and athletic programs.

Regardless of any effort to dissolve or continue the Hollis Brookline School District, it will be necessary for both districts to consider the potential pros and cons of such a dramatic departure from the current arrangement. This report will articulate those factors that will need to be considered as the dissolution issue continues to be debated.

We would like to thank the staff of the SAU, administrators and staff at all three district schools for their Cooperative in providing information for use in construction this report and it is our hope that the information provided to the Cooperative Board will enable them to have a healthy debate about the merits of continuing or dissolving the current relationship.

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NH RSA Title XV, Chapter 195
Withdrawal Petition Warrant Article

Should either Hollis or Brookline prepare a warrant article for withdrawal from the Cooperative School District, that warrant article must be first approved by the pre-existing school district by a majority vote on an article at a regular or special town meeting, directing the school board to conduct such a study. The procedure for withdrawal is specifically identified in New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, Title XV, Chapter 195, Cooperative School Districts, and Withdrawal from Cooperative School District. There are many steps involved in the process and we are happy to review them in this report. Our recommendation, however, would be that if an article is passed, contact with the school district attorney would provide the best guidance relative to the legal and procedural steps to follow.

Very briefly, however, Chapter 195 requires the creation of a committee to conduct the withdrawal study. The committee shall be comprised of one member of the school board from each pre-existing district, one member from the board of selectmen from each town and such other members as may be appointed by the committee. Within 180 days after the date of formation, the committee shall report its findings to the state board of education. The committee shall report that either the plan is not feasible or submit a plan that follows the requirements of Chapter 196:26. If the state board approves the withdrawal plan, the plan shall be submitted to the voters of the Cooperative school district in accordance with Chapter 195:29.

As explained, the withdrawal plan must follow the provisions of Chapter 195:26. Those requirements are outlined in items I through VI I in the chapter. Items V and VI involve considerable study and investigation: the liability of the withdrawing district for its share of any outstanding indebtedness as detailed in Chapter 195:27 and the plan for the education of all students in the withdrawing district and the continuation of the school system in the Cooperative district.

Chapter 195:27 addresses the liability of the withdrawing district....."Each withdrawing district shall remain liable for its share of the indebtedness of the capital costs of the Cooperative district which is outstanding when the withdrawal vote takes effect, and the withdrawing district shall pay to the Cooperative school district annually (a) that percentage of the payments of principal and interest of such debt thereafter due.....and (b) all amounts of state aid for the purchase or construction of school buildings....." The chapter continues: "Payments in discharge of liability shall be made in accordance with a schedule agreed upon by the board of the Cooperative school district and the withdrawing school district or in the event that they fail to agree, as fixed by the state board of education."

A significant challenge in the withdrawal process, beyond the ones addressing the development of educational plans for the withdrawing district and the Cooperative district and the issues of financial liability, is the question of disposition of property. Chapter 195:28 addresses this matter. "If a pre-existing school district withdraws from the Cooperative school district, the Cooperative school district shall transfer and convey title to any school building and land

located in the withdrawing district to the withdrawing district upon payment by the withdrawing district of the costs of capital improvements and additions to said buildings incurred by the Cooperative school district, less the share which the withdrawing school district has already paid toward such costs and the share which the withdrawing district is required to pay under the provisions of Chapter 195:27." The Chapter further explains that "The amount of said capital improvements and additions and the time of transfer shall be determined by agreement for withdrawal between the Cooperative school district and the withdrawing district." Our recommendation is that an outside, independent, assessor, agreed to by both districts, will be required at this juncture. There is so much involved here, that an outside source, working in conjunction with an attorney, might be the most helpful in resolving questions about investments, costs, payments, value and other concerns about disposition.

Assuming that all previously identified requirements and steps have been successfully completed, the districts are in agreement on the presented issues and that the state board has approved the detailed withdrawal plan as it applies to each of the pre-existing districts, what are the next step requirements in the process? Chapter 195:29 clearly detail all that is required. There are publication and posting requirements and the preparation of a warrant article for the next annual or special Cooperative district meeting. If a majority of the voters present vote in the affirmative, the district clerk shall send to the state board all required documents. If the board finds that a majority of the voters have voted in the affirmative, it shall issue a certificate to that effect and that: ... "such certificate shall be conclusive evidence....of the dissolution of the two district Cooperative if the Cooperative was formed by two pre-existing districts, provided however, that a withdrawal plan shall be prepared.....and it shall provide for the disposition of property held in the Cooperative and a statement of assumption of liabilities." If a majority of voters present reject the plan, the withdrawing district has the right to appeal to the state board. The board will investigate and based on its findings and recommendations" may require that there will be another special meeting for a vote of reconsideration."

Chapter 195:30 explains the time for withdrawal. Withdrawal will take effect on July 1 of the calendar year one year subsequent to the date the withdrawal vote is passed. A pre-existing school district shall remain a part of the school administrative unit unless it complies with the school administrative withdrawal process as set forth in RSA 194-C:2. After passage of the withdrawal vote and issuance by the state board of its certificate of withdrawal, a special meeting will be scheduled, with a warrant approved by the state board and signed by the commissioner, to provide for the election of officers.

Consider for a moment that the pre-existing school district chooses not only to withdraw from the Cooperative district, but also to withdraw from the school administrative unit. Chapter 194-C:4 identifies and specifies those superintendent of schools services requirements that must be provided by a single school district. There is an extensive listing of those requirements as they relate to governance, finances, payroll, curriculum, instruction (including special education), assessment, transportation, etc. It will be incumbent upon the withdrawing district to consider, plan and fund this requirement.

There are other alternatives for the single district to provide educational support in terms of superintendent services outside of the requirements of Chapter 194-C:4. Tuitioning all students or a portion of them (middle and/ or high school students, for example) to another school district

might be a possibility. The pre-existing school district will need to carefully examine the terms of any potential agreement, the costs including transportation and the larger question of governance. By tuitioning students to another district, does the district lose governance oversight in goals and direction, program opportunities, including provisioning for the needs of all students, activities, and community engagement? Just how much involvement in the new arrangement will the district enjoy? There are other New Hampshire districts that have pursued these questions and possibilities. If this were a direction that the pre-existing district chooses to investigate, it would be important to examine their histories of successes, difficulties, corrections, etc.

Since there are many required actions and decisions involved in the withdrawal process, the following steps should help to identify those that are necessary:

- A pre-existing school district approves a warrant article for withdrawal or a majority of the voters in the Cooperative School District approves a warrant article for withdrawal.
- A study committee is established (each district: one selectman, one school board member, others).
- Establish a withdrawal plan per RSA 195:26 (180 days to complete).
- It is recommended that during that 180 day time frame, the liability of the withdrawing district to the Cooperative is determined (RSA 195:27), there is agreement on the disposition of property in the withdrawing district in accordance with RSA 195:28 and the educational plan for both pre-existing districts is organized and prepared. It is recommended that an outside, independent, assessor and an attorney might be necessary to assist the committee studying the liability/ disposition issues.
- At the conclusion of the 180 days, the proposed plan is submitted to the State Board of Education and the plan is approved or rejected.
- If the plan is approved by the State Board, a warrant article for withdrawal shall be submitted to the voters of the Cooperative District at the annual or special district meeting called for that purpose.
- If a majority of the voters vote in favor of the withdrawal plan, including provisions for the disposition of property and a statement about the assumption of liabilities, the State Board will issue a certificate of approval.
- Withdrawal occurs on July 1 of the calendar year one year subsequent to the date withdrawal is passed.
- With withdrawal, there are several options available for the single district. Some of these include: operate as a single district by following the superintendent service guidelines of RSA 194-C4, consider paying tuition to another school district or seeking Cooperative School or Regional School District arrangements with other districts

Examination of Central Office Administrative Personnel of a Cooperative School District: Before and After Withdrawal

Pelham Windham Schools as a Cooperative School District

Central Office Administrators:
Superintendent of Schools

(1) Assistant Superintendent serving both districts
(1) Business Administrator

(1.3) Special Education Administrators

(1) Technology Coordinator

(1) Building and Grounds Coordinator

Pelham as a Single School District

Superintendent of Schools

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Business Administrator

Director of Special Education

Technology Coordinator

Building and Grounds Coordinator

Human Resources Coordinator

Windham as a Single School District

Superintendent of Schools

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Business Administrator

Director of Special Education

Technology Coordinator

Building and Grounds Coordinator

Current Cost Per Pupil of Area and/ or Similarly Sized School Districts: Some Examples of Potential Tuition Costs (NH DOE. 2014-15)

SAU#	District	MS Enrollment	MSCPP	HS Enrollment	HSCPP
17	Sanborn Regional	378	14928.89	685	15041.45
18	Franklin	354	11170.02	392	12099.90
27	Litchfield	453	12261.30	493	13558.15
28	Pelham	NA	0.00	664	12056.82
33	Raymond	417	14624.25	448	14497.94
34	Hillsboro-Deering	282	15522.41	411	16336.64
39	Amherst (Souhegan Cooperative)	640	17484.94	842	18085.89
41	Hollis Brookline Cooperative	404	14576.00	830	13205.45
47	Jaffrey Rindge	301	16264.43	428	14818.04
59	Winnisquam Regional	351	13811.46	461	14613.38
62	Mascoma Valley Regional	NA	0.00	361	17656.71
65	Kearsarge Regional	435	18816.35	567	17911.25
67	Bow	515	14288.80	516	17571.33
73	Gilford	321	18291.28	532	17757.89
80	Shaker Regional	369	14619.60	415	14372.98
87	Mascenic Regional	353	11264.35	328	15463.05

<http://www.education.nh.gov/data/attendance.htm#school>
 Cost per Pupil by District, 2014-2015
 School Administrative Unit Enrollments As of October 1, 2014

Intangible Benefits of Cooperative District Participation

There are many reasons why students and residents benefit from participation in the Hollis Brookline Cooperative District. The following is a partial listing:

- Students become involved with more students than with one single community.

- There are opportunities for expanded learning through a variety of program offerings.
- Advanced Placement courses are available.
- Technology connections are more efficiently organized, managed and funded.
- There are purchasing power opportunities that reduce overall costs for fuel, materials, supplies, etc. There is an economy of scale.
- Facilities costs can be more efficiently managed.
- The SAU costs are shared between the communities
- There are more opportunities for student leadership through activities, clubs, athletics, etc.
- The size of the schools promotes participation at more competitive NHIAA athletic levels.
- There are many opportunities for expanded enrichment in art, music, and theatre.
- Cap stone courses are provided. How can a small, single district support and sustain upper level courses enrolling small numbers?
- Community outreach and involvement provides opportunities in both towns.
- Special education costs are better managed in a two town Cooperative. Would out of district costs increase in a single district with fewer children and limited spaces and staff?
- The Cooperative middle school and high schools provide comprehensive learning with costs shared by the two towns. Single districts would need to duplicate the staffing with all costs absorbed by the town.
- The current athletic program would be dismantled. The sizes of the high schools might not generate interest and participation in current programs. The JV program might disappear.
- Transportation costs could become very costly, particularly if the decision by a district is to tuition students to another district.
- Governance of the Cooperative is now shared between the two towns. Tuitioning student would eliminate that oversight and control.
- With two separate high schools NEASC demands would need to be met as would State requirements for minimal standards.
- The Cooperative district has worked hard to receive commendations from NEASC. What would happen with withdrawal?
- The Cooperative schools attract residents and the towns grow and develop as a result. Will that interest be impacted by withdrawal?

Dissolution of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District

The Withdrawal Process from an existing Cooperative School District is discussed in the first section of this report and should be read carefully by the Cooperative School Board and the two

member districts (Hollis School District and Brookline School District) inasmuch as both districts will be considerably impacted by dissolution of the Cooperative School District.

Implications of Withdrawal -The Cooperative School District

There are many complex issues that result from dissolution of a Cooperative District, some of which are covered by statute, the Public Employees Labor Relations Board (PELRB), existing Collective Bargaining Agreements, and agreements between districts on how current employees are to be treated. Because these issues are not always clearly defined in either law or practice, it is likely that the following may occur following dissolution of the Cooperative.

- All current employees in the Cooperative are effectively terminated if/when the dissolution process has been concluded.
- All current Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Cooperative School District employees become null and void at the end of the current CBA.
 - o Grades 7-12 employees wishing to become employed by the Hollis School District will necessitate the Hollis School Board to renegotiate (with the consent of the Hollis Education Association) the existing collective bargaining agreement to encompass grades 7-12.
 - o Grades 7-12 employees wishing to become employed by the Brookline School District will necessitate the Brookline School Board to renegotiate (with the consent of the Brookline Education Association) the existing collective bargaining agreement to encompass grades 7-12.
 - o Employees not covered by existing collective bargaining units would have to work with the Hollis and/or Brookline School Districts in securing employment in either district.

In any of the above instances, employees of the Cooperative effectively become "Free Agents" and are thus able to seek employment in other school districts. Historically, dissolution, or downsizing of schools or school districts, results in the most talented employees seeking employment outside of their current district. This is especially true when the "threat" of either scenario is widely publicized. As a consequence, many districts lose some of their veteran staff (including administrators and support staff) simply because of the possibility of dissolution or downsizing even if the proposed action does not materialize.

Under dissolution, both the Hollis and Brookline School Districts remain intact, while the Cooperative no longer exists. In the case of Hollis, existing facilities are sufficient to accommodate the current and projected student populations. Depending on the actual grade configurations determined to house students Hollis may very well be required to address how current facilities will be used. For Example:

- Hollis Brookline High School will lose approximately 50% of their current student population; as a result the high school can be reconfigured to accommodate grades 7-12

with relative ease. A grade 7-12 structure will very likely require significant diversion from the current 7-8 instructional programs from the "middle school teaming model" to a more junior high school model. Such a dramatic change will require thoughtful analysis of the Mission of the Hollis School District including the adoption of the middle school model.

- Moving students out of the Cooperative Middle School would provide space and opportunity for the Hollis School District to reconfigure the current elementary school models. For example: The Hollis Elementary School and the Hollis Upper Elementary School grade structures may be modified in a way that would result in either one or two schools to be repurposed. The district will need to give careful consideration to the impact of any reconfiguration of current school/grade assignment.
- In any case, at least one of the two elementary schools would be available for other purposes, given that the middle school is sufficiently large enough to accommodate both of the two elementary school populations in that building.
- The Hollis School Board would be in a position to negotiate with the SAU41 Board to relocate the current SAU Office to either of the two elementary schools. Depending of the results of a withdrawal vote by both districts either or both districts would be guided by RSA 194-C 2 which governs the distribution of SAU resources, staff, etc.

As is the case with any such major change, a long-range view is advised in an effort to ensure that the best possible result can be realized.

In the event of a positive withdrawal vote by both the Hollis and Brookline School Districts the State Board of Education would require a detailed plan for distributions of SAU assets. These services are articulated earlier in report. In any instance, both districts will be required to provide those Central Office services as defined previously in this report.

Impact of Withdrawal by District

Brookline School District Projected Enrollments 2015-16 through 2025-26 (NESDEC*)

YEAR	PK-6	DIFF.	%
2015-16	532	0	0
2016-17	497	-35	-6.6
2017- 18	477	-20	-4
2018-19	476	-1	-0.2
2019-20	476	0	0
2020-21	479	3	0.6
2021-22	472	-7	-1.5
2022-23	460	-12	-2.5
2023-24	465	5	1.1
2024-25	460	-5	-1.1
2025-26	469	9	2

***NESDEC Enrollment Projection Methodology**

Enrollment projections are driven by many factors. However, the most powerful are: a. the progression of groups of students through the district (I.e. the progression of each class from K to Gr. 1 to Gr. 2 to... etc. through graduation); and b. the number of births per town, combined with the ratio of birth-to-Kindergarten entry. Both of these factors are, in turn, affected by families moving into/out of the district (or, in some towns, remaining in the community but choosing to send their children elsewhere to school). Building permits, although important, have a much longer term and more subtle effect.

Brookline Pre-K through Grade 6 Projections

Enrollment projections Pre-K through Grade 6 in the Brookline School District indicate a moderate decline in total enrollment during the period 2020-21 and a smaller rate of decline from 2012-2022. Overall, without any major change in the current population it is likely that the existing facilities will be sufficient to accommodate the predicted number of students for the near future.

Future population projections for Brookline

Generally speaking, five-year projections are more reliable than ten-year projections because of unanticipated factors such as a significant increase in building permits, zoning changes, modifications to existing commercial or industrial projects, etc. Such changes usually require several years from concept, approval, and final completion and have limited in school enrollment in the short term.

Should the Cooperative dissolve, the impact on Brookline elementary, middle and high students is significant. RMMS and CSDA would need to accommodate grades Pre-K through grades 7 and 8. While this configuration is doable, it comes with some adjustments in current room usage as well as programmatic adjustments as articulated by the principals of both schools.

Accommodations for housing grades 9-12 students will require discussion of several options, which will be discussed further in this section.

Proposed Room usage for CSDA with a grades 5-8 population:

Computer classes will occur in classrooms (headed that way anyway), and other Specials would not be impacted

OT would need to come back in from the modular, but the program has shared space in the past. Speech

would also have to share space, as in the past.

Our cafeteria could accommodate this, we would just need to add two lunch blocks - one early and one late.

This move is definitely within our school facility capability, but would have adverse effects on the quality of our program. We would do all that we could to assure optimal learning and living conditions at CSDA with this new model, for certain, but there would be negative effects (as you would anticipate) -- crowding, hustle and bustle, student anxiety and accountability, we would need to extend kitchen hours and Specialist hours, more strain on core staffing (admin, nurse, counseling, etc.).

Clearly, adjustments in scheduling, staffing assignments, room usage, and anticipation of impact on students will require extensive discussion. However, should the Cooperative dissolve, without any expansion of existing facilities, Brookline will need to consider the potential impact on school programming, staffing, etc. The anticipated stabilization and projected downward adjustments in the projected number of students over the next 5-year period would mitigate any immediate negative impact of housing grades 6-8 at CSDA.

The community will need to give careful consideration regarding the new proposed configurations, as well as the potential future impact on Brookline schools should any major housing projects that may result in additional students after the 5-year period discussed as part of this report. A report by the NH Housing and Finance Authority (2012) indicates that the number of students per NH household is closer to 0.64 (and students per home and 0.17 students in multifamily units. (As opposed to the traditional 2.0 per household most commonly used to project student enrollments). * These finding should be carefully considered when predicting student enrollments.

Between 2000 and 2010 enrollment in New Hampshire's schools declined by 21,600 despite the growth of 44,300 occupied housing units.

*Demographic forces are a more powerful determinant
Of school enrollment than housing construction;*

All but 31 of the state's 161 school districts experienced declining enrollment from 2001 to 2010. Of those districts experiencing enrollment growth, only 8 districts added 100 or more students;

Fewer than one third of New Hampshire's housing units have someone under age 18 living in them;

Family households are on the decline in New Hampshire while a growing number of housing units are occupied by only one person, or several unrelated people living together;

Based on a case study analysis of new housing in four New Hampshire communities, the typical new single family home generates 0.64 public school students and new multifamily units generate 0.17 public school students per unit.

*Source: Housing and School Enrollment in New Hampshire: A Decade of Dramatic Change June 2012. Prepared For: New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. Prepared by: Applies Economic Research Laconia, New Hampshire.

CSDA is able to accommodate its current population, however, the addition of students in grades 7 and 8, will require significant modifications related to for scheduling, room use, student interaction, teacher assignments will need serious adjustments; given the change from a primarily elementary school environment to a more junior high/middle school curriculum. Teacher assignment and reassignment within schools may very well be required in order to provide students with appropriately credentialed teachers. Regardless of the anticipated ability to handle the predicted number of students in grades 6-8, there is concern that practically every space will need to be utilized and any variation in enrollments may result in overcrowding. Additionally, costs associated with hiring new teachers for grades 7&8 will need to be planned determined.

Brookline Grades 9-12

In the event of dissolution of the Cooperative, Brookline will need to give thoughtful consideration to be what can be done with its grades 9-12 students. Given that there is currently no existing space that could accommodate these students in Brookline, alternative actions at least in the short term will need to be considered. Some of the options may include:

- Build a stand alone high school on property already owned by Brookline
 - o Consider construction of a "technology-rich" high school that may prove to be attractive to other districts in an effort to tuition-in students from other districts to Brookline.
 - Estimated cost, depends on size, and design but \$25-\$40M is a reasonable range to use in for initial planning purposes. Brookline will need to research options for construction of a high school and to arrive at a more accurate estimate in the event that they choose building their own high school as the best option.

- o Establish a Cooperative School District whereby Brookline maintains its current level of decision-making authority while engaging other districts in a Cooperative.
- Expand CSDA to accommodate grades 9-12 students.
- If land is available, expand RMMS to accommodate grades Pre-K through grade eight and converting CSDA to a high school, with appropriate modifications as necessary.
- Explore options for tuitioning to other districts in New Hampshire
- Explore option of inter-state agreements with other states (Ex. Hanover, NH-Dresden, Vt. District.)
- Explore options for long or short-term agreement with the Hollis School District to house Brookline 9-12 grade students until such time as Brookline has finalized plans for housing their high school students.

There are many complicated decisions with implementation of any of the above options. A significant capital outlay will be required for any form of construction either as a stand-alone facility, or adding to existing facilities. As noted in the table below, Brookline is unlikely to experience substantial population growth over the next 10 years; unless there is an unanticipated expansion of current housing units that would add to the projected school population. Consequently, careful consideration must be given to the size of any new construction and/or addition to existing facilities.

Dissolution of the Cooperative presents unique challenges to Brookline inasmuch as the current facilities will be maximized with the addition of grades 7 and 8; requiring both programmatic modifications, staff reassignments, and scheduling adjustments. While these challenges are very probable, they are not insurmountable in the short-term, but may present to be more difficult as Brookline makes decisions relative to the quality of education they wish to provide in their schools. If additional instructional programs are added to the existing ones, stress on building use will increase accordingly.

Special Education Service Delivery Implications for Hollis and Brookline

Special Education programs and services currently provided in the Cooperative will required Brookline to consider how to handle their legal responsibilities in providing appropriate services to identified students; including those in out-of-district programs, and in specialized programs at the Cooperative. Should the Cooperative dissolve, the current programs provide to support identified students will have to be maintained without interruption. It can be anticipated that an increase in transportation costs will result in Brookline, specifically the costs associated with special education programs currently offered at HBHS and HBMS.

Existing Cooperative busing contracts will need to be renegotiated by both Hollis and Brookline to determine how students will be transported with any new configuration of districts.

PROJECTED NEED COMPARISON FOR
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES HOLLIS
AND BROOKLINE

HIGH SCHOOL

TITLE	COOP	HOLLIS	BROOKLINE
LEA	0.8	needed	needed
504 COORD	0.75	needed	needed
SLP	I	0.75	0.75
READING	1.0 plus contracted	0.75	0.75
PT	contracted	contracted	contracted
OT	0.25	contracted	contracted
BCBA	Contracted approx. .4	Contracted .I	Contracted .3
PSYCH	I	I	I
COUNSELING	0.5	contracted	contracted
EBD Program	2	2	2
LIFE Skills/Intellectual Disabilities	I	I	I
Life SkillsNocational	I	1	1
Math Interventionist	0.5	0.25	0.25
youth Mentoring	contracted	contracted	contracted
Special Education Case Manager	5	3	3
Para Support	11	7	7
Secretarial Support	0.87	needed	needed

Middle School

TITLE	COOP	HOLLIS	BROOKLINE
LEA	0.5	needed	needed
504 COORD	Through guidance	needed	needed
SLP/SLA	1.0 through contracted	0.5	0.5
READING	.4 through contract and 1.0 through general ed	1	1
PT	contracted	contracted	contracted
OT	0.25	contracted	contracted
BCBA	Contracted approx. .4	contracted	contracted
PSYCH	.5 (through guidance and contracted)	0.5	0.5
COUNSELING	guidance	contracted	contracted
EBD Program	1	1	1
LIFE Skills/Intellectual Disabilities	1	I	I
Life SkillsNocational	0	0	0

Math Interventionist	0.5	0.25	0.25
youth Mentoring	contracted	contracted	contracted
Special Education Case Manager	5	5	5
Para Support	13	8	8
Secretarial Support	0.5	needed	needed

Brookline and Hollis Population Projections

The New Hampshire Office of Safety and Planning provides the latest population projections for the Towns of Brookline and Hollis:

Brookline	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	
	4991	5348	5773	5895	5988	6036	6038	+1047
		+357	+425	+122	+93	+48	+2	
Hollis	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	
	7684	7927	8259	8433	8566	8635	8638	
		+204	+332	+174	+133	+69	+3	+731

New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (2013 population projections.)

As can be seen in the above table, the projected population for Brookline is predicted to be +425 over the current estimated population of 5348 over the next five-year period. Future projections indicate a gradual leveling off of the increase over the next 25 years. Naturally, unforeseeable factors will impact these projections. However, given the 2013 projections, it is unlikely that the number of students eligible for school enrollment will increase to the extent that major adjustments in school configurations will be required.

Careful monitoring of increases in population, housing permits, and other community projects that may lead to an increase in school enrollments will be necessary in order to keep pace with any changes that may occur both in the short and long term. Historically, the number of students enrolled in schools has been 2 per household for traditional homes, however current data suggests that that number is much lower (as low as .58 per household and lower for condominiums).

Brookline will need to give serious thought to a plan that anticipates the impact of dissolution of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District. Timing will be critical in the planning process going forward. The most important consideration in the dissolution process will be how Brookline accommodates its grades 9-12 students; inasmuch as the current facilities can house grades Pre-K through grade 8. While the current Brookline schools (RMMS and CSDA) can be adapted to house these grades, those adaptations may result in changes that may cause some difficult adjustments in programming and staff.

Hollis School District

Population projections for Hollis indicate an increase from 7,684 to 8,638 (+731 over the period 2010-2040). After 2020 there is a leveling off of population growth. As with any population projections, caution must be exercised in using such statistics as an absolute indicator of population growth because many factors will more than likely alter the projections over time due to unforeseen community zoning, housing permits, commercial/industrial growth etc. which are certain to impact community growth over time. Careful monitoring of in/out migration will provide indicators of growth over time.

The consequences of dissolution of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District will have major implications for Hollis Brookline High School. Much data has been reviewed and will be attached to this report for use by the Cooperative School Board as it continues discussion of the withdrawal process. The following is a summary of major implications at HBHS without Brookline students.

HBHS and HBMS Student Population Distribution Under Dissolution

With dissolution of the existing Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District both Hollis and Brookline are likely to experience some of the following changes:

Overall, the student population of HBHS and HBMS will diminish by approximately 600 students, while Brookline will increase their current district population by approximately 600 students in grades 7-12.

Projected Ten-Year Cooperative Enrollments 2015-15 through 2026-26 (NESDEC)

Year	7-8	9-12	Total 7-12 HBHS HBMS	50 % Hollis 50% Brookline	*HBHS w/o Brookline	*HBMS w/o Brookline
2015-16	405	812	1217	608	406	203
2016-17	414	817	1231	616	409	207
2017-18	417	781	1198	599	391	209
2018-19	387	814	1201	601	407	194
2019-20	373	813	1186	593	407	187
2020-21	386	793	1179	590	397	193
2021-22	383	782	1165	583	391	192
2022-23	375	767	1142	571	384	188
2023-24	342	749	1091	546	375	171
2024-25	333	754	1087	544	377	167
2025-26	335	718	1053	527	359	168

*For purposes of this report the historical split of Hollis-to-Brookline students enrolled in HBHS and HBMS is approximately 50% for each. This split varies year-to-year with either district gaining or losing students. On the whole, however, it is likely that, without some significant change in either community, these numbers are the most reliable to use for planning purposes at both the middle and high school if and when the Cooperative dissolves.

For both school districts these projections indicate a fairly stable student population in grades 7-12 over the next five-year period. Projected Percentage Changes (NESDEC) does not indicate any significant change in student population in either district that would dramatically impact programming. The projected grades 9-12 population for Brookline would be useful in planning any construction project.

Hollis Brookline High School Impact of Dissolution of the Cooperative:

Impact on Course Offerings and Curriculum

The most immediate impact on HBHS under dissolution is an approximately 50% reduction of the student population. The administration and staff of HBHS were asked to calculate the impact of current policies regarding class size and provided the following:

Using Cooperative School District Policy JIB, which dictates that most classes do not run with less than 15 students. Using that metric a factor of 15 was used to calculate the impact of a reduction of 50% of students. Exceptions were made for those courses that would likely run with 10 students such as AP courses and singleton courses whose elimination would result in the loss of a program. Individual sections were added together and then divided by a factor of 5, which equates to a 1.0 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) for a teacher. The total FTE was derived using this formula and then was subtracted from the current number of FTE"s at HBHS.

Potential Staff Reductions HBHS if Cooperative Dissolves

- *A reduction of teaching staff by 32.0 FTEs*
- *A reduction of Guidance staff by 2.75 FTEs*
- *A reduction of Nursing staff of 0.5 FTEs*
- *A reduction of a combined 1.0 therapist position from FIEMUS (A special education position) and the existing 0.5 therapist position that services IEPs and 504s.*

A loss of the 27 programs listed includes a 40% reduction in AP programs.

- *A reduction of Support Staff as follows:*
 - *7.0 Para Educator FTE"s*
 - *Administrative Assistants*
 - *Combined 2.0 FTEs from the Guidance and Main Office*
- *A reduction of Administrative staff as follows*
- *1.0 FTE Assistant Principal*
- *1.0 FTE Assistant Athletic Director*

Potential Course Losses HBHS

3-D Design and Sculpture
AP Chemistry
AP French

AP Physics II
AP Spanish
AP Studio Art
AP US Government and Politics
College Composition (Writing- Running Start)
Concert Choir
Dance, Movement & Music
Digital Electronic
Drawing 2
Fashion & Retail Merchandising
General Algebra 2
General Science with Earth Science
Honors French IV
Human Relations
Intro to Modern Languages
Legal Studies
Life Science
Living By Chemist
Painting
Photo 1
Photo 2
Psychology
Spanish IV
Web Page Design

Should the Cooperative no longer exist, the newly created Hollis High School curriculum and staffing would become the responsibility of the Hollis School District. Consequently, many decisions will be required relative to how extensive a curriculum would be offered, how different student populations would be served, how the school would meet all Federal and State Special Education requirements, transportation contracts, collective bargaining agreements among others; some of which are addressed in more detail in this report.

NEASC Accreditation

Hollis Brookline High School has received many accolades over the years for its outstanding student performance, including being one of the top performing high schools not only in New Hampshire but Nationally. The recently completed Visiting Committee Report of the New England Association of School and Colleges (March 2016) concludes that HBHS continues to be a positive place for learning for the students at HBHS. The administration of HBHS will respond to the Visiting Committee Report and will receive word of their accreditation status later this

year. Given the contents of the report, which are available of the HBHS and SAU41 websites, there is little reason to believe that the school will not receive a 5-10 year accreditation. The positive atmosphere and performance of students at HBHS cannot be attributed to students from either community as outperforming the other. Evidence indicates students from both communities continue to perform at high levels at their high school and that their interaction in all levels of participation is both positive and productive.

If HBHS were to reduce its current student population by approximately 50%, it would need to reapply for NEASC accreditation. It is unlikely that accreditation would be awarded until such time a new Self-Study and Report of the Visiting Committee were completed; understandably, this process will likely take several years, or until such time as the Hollis School District has determined that such accreditation is going to continue.

Impact on Athletic Programs

The impact on high school athletic programs for an approximately 400-pupil high school would be dramatic. A school with a student population between 301 and 600 would be a Division III school. HBHS is currently a Division II school. There are currently 27 schools in Division III schools. These schools are allowed, on a need basis, to petition the NHIAA to allow 8th grade students to participate in the following high school sports only: Cross-Country, Golf, gymnastics, indoor Track, outdoor track, skiing and tennis.

At the current time, HBHS athletes participate in 29 Varsity Sports, 12 JV sports, and one Freshman-level sport for a total of 42 teams. Projections for the number of sports if HBHS were to become Hollis High School the projected number of sports that would be offered with only Hollis athletes would be 20 Varsity sports, 1 JV sport and no Freshman level sports.

Those sports that would be eliminated would be Football, Unified Soccer, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Softball, Boys and Girls Tennis and Unified Track. Wrestling and Girls Basketball would be questionable and the only sport that could support a JV team would be girls' volleyball.

The following chart illustrates the current participation in HBHS Athletics by Sport and Town and makes evident the impact of dissolution on athletic programs, under a reconfigured HBHS.

Distribution of Athletic Programs HBHS disaggregated by town

	PARTICIPANTS		HOLLIS PROGRAMS			BROOKLINE PROGRAMS		
	HOLLIS	BROOKLINE	V	JV	FR	V	JV	FR
Boys Soccer	24	22	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Girls Soccer	27	12	YES	???	NO	???	NO	NO
Football	15	24	NO	NO	NO	???	NO	NO
Field Hockey	21	26	YES	NO	NO	YES	???	NO
Cross Country	27	25	YES			YES		
Golf	10	1	YES			NO		
Unified Soccer	5	14	NO			YES		
Fall Spirit	5	9	YES			YES		
Girls Volleyball	16	21	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Boys Basketball	12	16	YES	NO	NO	YES	???	NO
Girls Basketball	6	16	???	NO	NO	YES	???	NO
Unified Basketball	7	3	YES			NO		
Bowling	16	11	YES			YES		
Gymnastics	1	5	NO			YES		
Ice Hockey	6	2	NO			NO		
Skiing	24	2	YES			NO		
Winter Spirit	7	6	YES			YES		
Swim Team	18	11	YES			YES		
Indoor Track	24	16	YES			YES		
Wrestling	9	16	???			YES		
Baseball	16	11	YES	NO	NO	???	NO	NO
Boys Lacrosse	18	16	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Girls Lacrosse	20	11	YES	NO	NO	???	NO	NO
Softball	6	14	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Boys Tennis	4	4	NO			NO		
Girls Tennis	6	4	YES			NO		
Outdoor Track	18	20	YES			YES		
Unified Track	4	6	NO			NO		
Boys Volleyball	11	9	YES	NO		YES	NO	
TOTAL	383	353						

Shaded areas represent teams that will no longer be offered if the high school becomes a Division III school. (?) indicates teams that are still questionable with the move to Division III.

Hollis Brookline Middle School Impact of Dissolution of the Cooperative:

Dissolution of the Cooperative will have some parallel impacts to those anticipated at Hollis Brookline High School. The administration of Hollis Brookline Middle School was asked to review the potential impact on staffing, program, and facilities under dissolution of the Cooperative. Based on that input, the following consequences to current programs, staffing, services, and facility use are likely to occur:

- An immediate reduction in the number of students from approximately 50%
- A reduction in the number of professional staff from 39.3 to 20

- A reduction in the number of support staff from 23 to 15
- Reduce number of teams per grade to one team per grade.
- Shared case manager and counselor by grades 7&8
- Elimination of one full-time guidance counselor in favor of a .5 counselor and .5 psychologist
- Elimination of Assistant Principal position
- Maintain full-time special education coordinator who would also manage PL504 plans
- Eliminate reading option
- Offer Spanish and French as "survey" courses
- Reduce case managers from 6 to 3
- Reduce office staff from 3-1
- Sports and club offering significantly impacted

It should be noted that, neither the HBHS nor HBMS assessment of the impact of dissolution, addresses the potential move of grades 7-8 to the HBHS facility. As a result, the anticipated reductions, staffing, and other issues will need to be address should the middle school move to the high school.

If grades 7-12 (Hollis only) were to be housed at the high school, there will need to be significant coordination between both schools as well as the Hollis School Board in determining how to assimilate middle school students as part of the high school. It can be reasonably anticipated that both the current implications identified by the high school and middle school staff may very well be impacted by incorporation of the middle school into the high school. Moving the middle school students to the high school may also negatively impact Hollis in any effort to "tuition-in" high school students from other districts, inasmuch as the building capacity for grades 7-12 will limit the space available for other possible uses of the building.

Hollis School District Possible Implications of Dissolution

As is the case with Brookline, Hollis will incur major implications if the Cooperative dissolves. Some of those implications are as follows:

- Determine the configuration of the current HBHS and HBMS with 50% fewer students.
 - o Curriculum
 - o Staffing
 - o Use of facility
 - o Grade configuration (9-12 vs. 7-12)
 - Move grades 7-8 to high school creating an opportunity to move all, or some, of the two elementary school grades into the middle school creating one or two vacant facilities
 - Potential of working with the SAU to move the current office to one of the two elementary schools
 - o Rent or lease one or two of the potentially vacant buildings to other parties. (HBMS, HUES, HPS)

- o Renegotiate existing Collective Bargaining Agreements to incorporate former employees of the Cooperative (when the Cooperative dissolves current employees are effectively terminated).
 - Former employees can be incorporated into the existing HEA Collective Bargaining Agreements

Technology Considerations if the COOP Dissolves

All locations are connected with 100MB fiber circuits forming a Wide Area Network (WAN) that is managed by Charter. Internet traffic exits through a high speed Internet fiber circuit located at HBHS. The current enterprise fiber circuit is \$1,800.00 per month and shared across all sites. Internet filtering and firewall expenses are also shared. This expense is about \$8,000.00 per year.

The wide area network (WAN) gives the buildings in Hollis the ability to take advantage of competitive phone rates for hosted voice over IP phone services contracted with DSCI. This is possible because HBHS, HPS, and the SAU Central Offices trunk their voice traffic to CSDA using the WAN thus avoiding higher T1 circuit costs from TDS in Hollis. HBHS and HUES can also take advantage of this option in the future as the current systems reach their end of life.

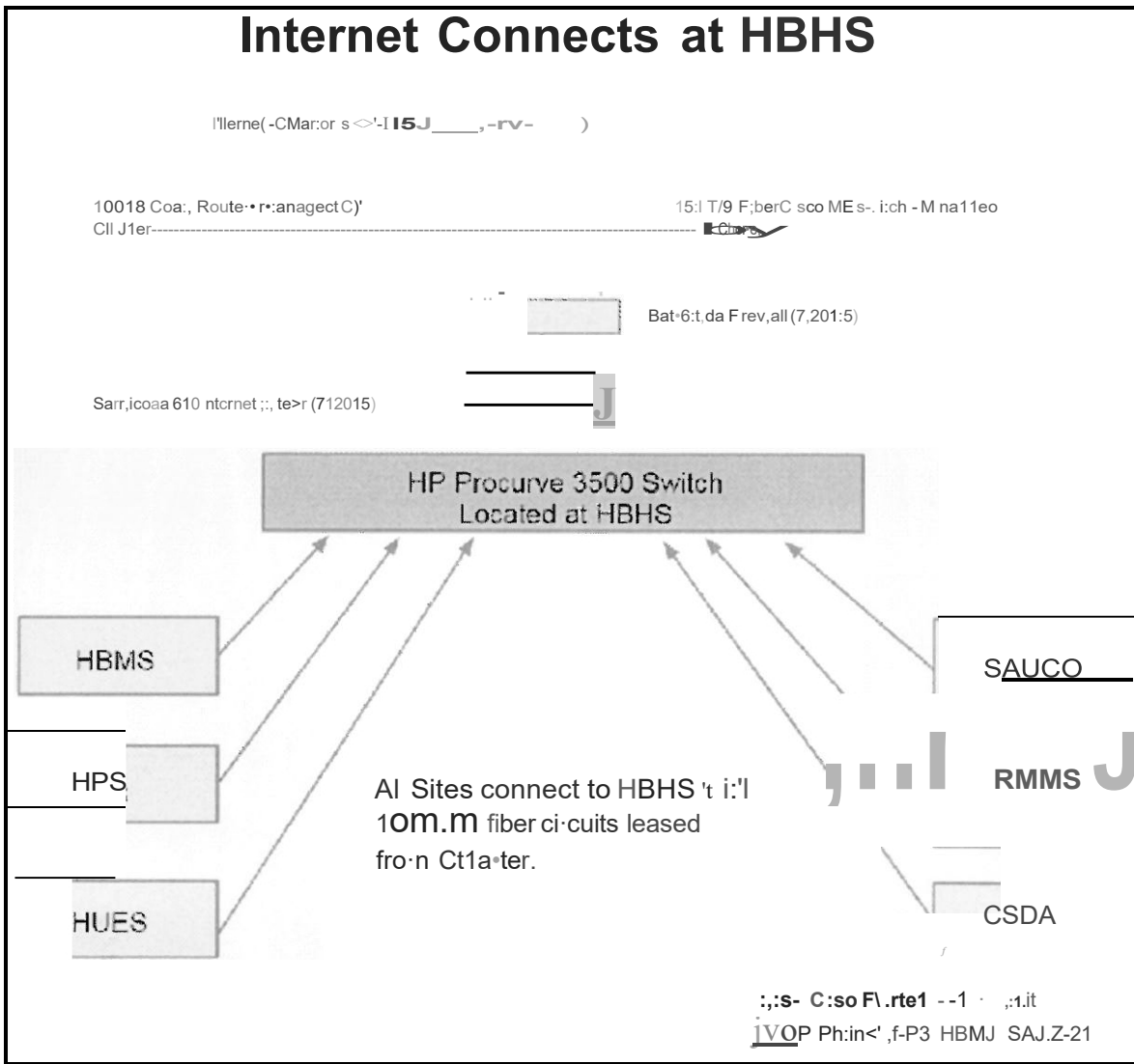
If the COOP were to dissolve the following issues are likely to occur, therefore both districts should be aware that adjustments in the current technology infrastructure should be considered.

Brookline would need to design a network to consolidate Internet and wide area network services. This would include Internet/WAN circuits, Internet filtering, and firewall expenses.

Hollis will have a higher monthly Internet cost for the current level of service.

Hollis locations would not have as many competitive options for hosted voice over IP (VOIP) phone service.

Existing Technology Structure Hollis Brookline Cooperative and Hollis and Brookline School Districts.



Conclusions:

Based on our preliminary review of the implications of dissolution of the Cooperative, it is clear that much additional work will need to be completed should a Withdrawal Article be forwarded to the Cooperative School District to dissolve the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District. For both communities there are significant issues that need to be considered, both positive and negative, prior to approval of such a dramatic departure from what has been an apparent positive experience for the grades 7-12 students of Hollis and Brookline. The anecdotal and hard data on student success at HBHS and HBMS points to a longstanding and harmonious blending of students from both communities.

Both Hollis and Brookline will need to have an up-to-date analysis (financial as well as structural) for the purposes of assessing the ability of both school facilities to accommodate any modifications to existing facilities. For Hollis, this means determining how each of the four facilities that will remain in their community will be used:

- Determine if the current high school facility will remain a 9-12 high school vs. grades 7-12 high/middle school
 - Requires relocating existing middle school to high school
- converting the existing middle school to an elementary school
- Determine value and use of potential of two vacant buildings (HUES/HPS)
- Possible use of one vacant building to house SAU 41 Offices
- Develop a strategy for alternative use of any vacant building
 - Rent/lease to other schools (Charter School)
 - Rent/Lease to business venture and other options
- Mothball one of two vacant parcels until a fully-developed plan can be determined
- Hollis will need to develop a plan to accommodate the anticipated reduction in school enrollments in the high and middle schools.
- Brookline will need to develop a plan to assimilate grades 7-8 in their current facilities as well as to develop a plan to provide education to their grades 9-12 students either in-district (high school construction) or out-of-district.
- Brookline will need to explore options for joining adjacent or nearby districts, establish their own Cooperative District or to develop a tuition agreement with another district.
- Both Hollis and Brookline will need to consider possible capital outlay under any scenario. For Brookline the most costly capital cost would be construction on a high school. Alterations or additions to either of the current Brookline Elementary schools will also require consideration of capital outlay.

This report does not address the financial issues associated with a withdrawal of either or both districts from the Cooperative. Attention to these details will need to be clearly articulated and researched if and when the withdrawal process moves forward. A thorough financial analysis of the value of existing facilities will be a very important task moving forward in an effort to provide accurate data relative to the potential distribution of assets should either or both parties withdraw from the Cooperative. An estimate of the cost of conducting an appraisal of Cooperative School District is in the range of \$100-\$200 per hour taking anywhere from 50-100 hours to complete. The establishment of a Withdrawal Committee as required defined by

NH RSA Title XV, Chapter 195 Withdrawal Petition Warrant Article delineates those aspects of distribution of assets that must be considered under withdrawal.

Regardless of the outcome of the withdrawal initiative, it is essential to have a discussion of the value of the Cooperative and what it brings to both communities. Such discussions bring focus to the, sometimes difficult, issues of governance, politics, policy, curriculum, staffing, instruction, financing etc. and provides opportunities for healthy dialogue within and outside of the Cooperative. In the final analysis, however, the primary focus of such discussion should be maintaining the high quality of education currently being provided to the grades 7-12 students of Hollis and Brookline wherever the ultimately attend school.

What Have We Learned As A Result of this Study?

Dissolution of the Cooperative School District is a very complex, demanding and challenging undertaking. We began our study by agreeing that we would attempt to remain neutral in all that we did. Our focus was to discern the major components of the cooperative arrangement between Hollis and Brookline and avoid making judgments about possible next steps, if withdrawal by one of the districts became a possibility. It should be obvious that we have gathered a "mountain of data" that should prove to be useful as the possibility of dissolution is explored. In spite of our promise to each other to remain neutral, the nagging question that surfaces is "why?" Outside of providing an opportunity for a single district to "be in charge of its own destiny", we have not uncovered any gains in costs, academic opportunity, athletic engagement, enrichment, community growth and enhancement or, most importantly, student development. We recognize that an initiative to withdraw is the responsibility of one or both of the pre-existing school districts, but in our humble opinion, it might not be the best of choices for all involved.