School Facility Utilization Task Force
7:00PM on Wednesday, April 8, 2026
Ann Antolini School – Library

All appointed members of the School Faculty Utilization Task Force were in attendance:

Mary Beth Greenwood (Board of Selectman), **Kerry Guilfoyle** (Board of Finance), **Alesia Kennerson** (Board of Selectman), **Eleanor "Penny" Miller** (Board of Education)-*VIRTUALLY*, **Carmen Neale** (Community Member), **Jon Puz** (Board of Education), **Samantha Wald** (Community Member), **Bernard "Ben" Witte** (Board of Finance), **Kristin Young** (SFU-TF Chair / Board of Education) and **Michelle Miller** (Project Manager SP+A).

Kristin Young, the School Facility Utilization Task Force Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

A. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Mary Beth Greenwood to approve the agenda. Second by Samantha Wald.

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B. Communications to the School Facility Utilization Task Force
No communications.

C. School Facility Utilization Task Force Chair's Report

Ms. Young reminded attendees of the two additional "Public Meetings" which will be held at Town Hall scheduled for:

- **Saturday May 2, 2026 at 1:00PM**
- **Tuesday May 19, 2026 at 5:30PM**

The purpose of these two meetings is to allow for dialogue between the community and the School Facility Utilization Task Force.

D. Routine Business

a. Approval of Minutes - March 25, 2026

MOTION by Jon Puz to approve the March 25, 2026 meeting minutes. Second by Samantha Wald.

AMENDED-MOTION by Mary Beth Greenwood to approve the March 25, 2026 meting minutes with an amendment to page 4, item b, (*see fourth line down*) to state: "**Ms. Kennerson** emphasized travel…". Second by Samantha Wald.

(6-0-2)

Aye: Mary Beth Greenwood, Alesia Kennerson, Jon Puz, Samantha Wald, Bernard "Ben" Witte, Kristin Young
Naye:
Abstain: Kerry Guilfoyle and Carmen Neale

b. Timeline Check In

Ms. Young and Michelle Miller (SP+A) feel the process is moving right along and is where they expect progress to be.

E. New Business

a. Silver Petrucelli & Associates delivers Programming & Capacity

Michelle Miller (SP+A) did a presentation on Programming & Capacity for all three NHPS (Bakerville School, New Hartford Elementary and Antolini School). This presentation covers not only Programming and Capacity but benchmarking data, proposed standards and State grants. Programming is referred to as the "blueprint" of a school, detailing size and functions of the spaces within the schools, including: classrooms, common areas, specialized facilities and building infrastructure. Some educational needs today are: i*ncreased spaces for Special Education, increase in small places for breakout, group work, security, HVAC air quality and teacher's space*. The State of Connecticut has a grant program which incorporates programming and requires local education agencies to identify the current and future educational needs. The State of Connecticut does dictate the importance of flexibility, for example: grade configuration, class size, and programs that are available. Both Bakerville and New Hartford will have an adjusted square footage based on the Office of Grants Administration's formula. The square footage is reduced there, but the allowable standards are much less, so the reimbursement rate is affected. The State does allow credits for any school buildings predated from 1959.

Capacity is the maximum number of students a school can support based on available instructional spaces and program requirements. This reflects how many students a school can serve, while delivering the full educational program effectively, not just how many students a building can physically hold.

There are three types of capacity:
- **Maximum (Physical) Capacity**, *not realistic-theoretical maximum, used as a reference point*
- **Functional Capacity**, *somewhat realistic-more considerations, used for planning baseline*
- **Program Capacity**, *realistic-determine building size and delivery of education, used for decision-making*

Utilization and Capacity Methodology show the effects the school are under based on the current configuration and under new possible configurations. School Capacity determines how many seats a school has (*quantities/targets/projections*). School utilization is a measure of how full capacity is to educational programmatic needs, this is enrollment divided by capacity. NH Class Sizes Guidelines are: PreK=18, K-2=20 and 3-6=25. Programming Capacity is used in PreK-6 because there is an upsurge of support services at younger ages. Special Education is more space-intensive at younger grades and scheduling inefficiencies are built in.

Bakerville School:
- Constructed in 1941, renovations in 2002, is 18,483 gross square feet, serves K-2

Inefficiencies at Bakerville are: Kindergarten classrooms have lack of storage and no bathroom, Special Education has shared spaces, space and sound issues, problematic locations, material storage in hallways. The gymnasium is undersized and not conductive for PE use, equipment at the perimeter and slippery flooring. The kitchen is undersized. The administration is remote from the main office, shared spaces cause scheduling issues.

Bakerville School: Physical Capacity is projected 64% utilized as 6+3 full sized classrooms (this concept eliminates other full-sized classrooms-No Media, No Art, No Music, No full sized SPED), Ms. Miller emphasized this capacity is not recommended at all as a planning practice. Bakerville School: Program Capacity is projected 96% utilized as 6 full sized classrooms. The current enrollment is 95 students with a projected

enrollment of 110 students. If you take 6 full-size classrooms, Special Education, full-size Art and Music and the Media Center, add that into the formula, then multiply by the 95% factor; if there are 9 classrooms (20 in each) this gives 171. 171 students would be the **absolute maximum**. There are 110 students in the projected enrollment, that divided by 171 gives it's a 64%. Low, but based on the programs actual use, 6 classrooms with a 95% factor tells you that 114 students will fit in Bakerville. So, a 96% utilization rate with the 110 students. The 3 classrooms were removed from the analysis that got a 96%, because they are a Media Center, an Art/Music room, and a Special Education room, meaning they are needed for other purposes. It would be inappropriate to load a classroom into a Media Center or an Art room, because

those remain for their purpose. The district would be losing educational programs if you included those three rooms as “classrooms”. You have 6 classrooms that are used for General Education. There is 1 that is full-sized used for Special Education. If those 3 classrooms were used, in addition to the 6, Bakerville could hold 171 students, but that is not recommended.

New Hartford Elementary:

- Constructed in 1954, renovations in 2004, is 23,405 gross square feet, serves PreK-2

Inefficiencies at New Hartford Elementary are: Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten are undersized with a lack of storage, and Kindergarten has no bathroom. SPED has full time use often multiple groups are working at a time, problematic the School Psych. Locations are small, not ideal, typically used for storage, no dedicated space for OT, materials stored in hallways. Art and Music are combine which is not ideal, they are specialized. The equipment is at the perimeter of the Gymnasium. There are three waves of lunches served, the area is too small, kids in the hallway. The principal is remote from the main office, the nurse’s area is too small, the staff room has no sink, the main office is small and the Conference Room is shared with the School Psych (these should be separation). The Specialized Program storage is too small for an office or conference room.

New Hartford Elementary: Physical Capacity is projected 53% utilized as 7+3 full sized classrooms (this concept eliminates other full-sized classrooms-No Media, No Art, No Music, No full sized SPED), Ms. Miller emphasized this capacity is not recommended as a planning practice. New Hartford Elementary: Program Capacity is projected 77% utilized as 7 full sized classrooms. The current enrollment is 98 students with a projected enrollment of 98 students. The maximum physical capacity (taking away 1 Special Education, Music and the Media Center) could be up to 10 classrooms, with 184 students in the building. Therefore with 98 students in the building that's a 53% utilization. This is not recommended. By adding those 3 classrooms (not recommended), you can see the difference when calculating based on 7 full-size classrooms (recommended). Realistically at a maximum of 127 students with 98 in the building, there is a 77% utilization rate.

Antolini School:

- Constructed in 1968, renovations in 1990 & 1992, is 58,177 gross square feet, serves 3-6

There are some inefficiencies in Special Education, shared spaces, Intervention too small, glass is a security concern, a lot of specialty OT, SPED, Counselor (Outplacement) are small. Health is sometimes used for intervention and Art is used for conferences and youth support lunches. Gymnasium interferes with wall padding and tables in the walls. Auditorium is used for band and assemblies, but does not fit the entire school. Book storage is shared with intervention.

Antolini School: Physical Capacity is projected 48% utilized as 13+9 full sized classrooms (this concept eliminates other full-sized classrooms-No Art, No Music, No full sized SPED, No Oak Hill or similar). Michelle Miller emphasized this capacity is not recommended as a planning practice. New Hartford Elementary: Program Capacity is projected 81% utilized as 13 full sized classrooms. The current enrollment is 250 students with a projected enrollment of 249 students. The projected utilization for 13+2 full sized classrooms is 70%. The maximum physical capacity for Antolini is 13 classrooms (9 full-size classrooms, 1 from Special Education, 1 from Specials and 2 full-size from Oak Hill classrooms). Therefore, a total of 22 classrooms, the maximum Antolini could fit is 523 students in the building. That's a 48% utilization rate (and not a recommended practice). If just using the 13 full-size classrooms, the capacity is 309 students. The current enrollment is 250. So, that's an 81% utilization rate. If you pull in the 2 full-sized Oak Hill classrooms at 356 students that would be a 70% utilization rate.

Currently New Hartford doesn’t have any “life skills” rooms. These types of classrooms actually bring students back in district that are outplaced. Ideally there would be 1 at Antolini, there is a maximum of eight students. There are students from the district who could be brought back in district which would provide cost savings. By having a life skills component, the district could reduce the need to outplace students.

District deficiencies consist of:

- Room size/ shared use for Special Education, there is less efficiency in Bakerville & NH Elementary
- Space is needed for intervention, which is highly used
- Shared usage for Art, Music and Health is not conducive to delivery
- The need to separate the Cafeteria/Gym
- Nurses' area, too small and no privacy
- Main Offices needs dedicated conference rooms and have admin office's less remote
- Staff traveling from 2 to 3 schools reducing teaching/service time
- Central Office staff is broken up throughout the district
- HVAC ventilation does not meet mechanical code ventilation requirements

The process of comparing a school district's education programs and space needs against accepted standards, peer districts and best-practice guidelines to determine whether existing school facilities appropriately support the instructional program. Most projects rely on a layer approach: programming, code compliance, benchmarking, and state grant requirements. Program benchmarking space compare overall size and population with State Standards to determine potential eligibility for construction project. The State of Connecticut has a school construction program that gives towns reimbursement.

New Hartford 2026 reimbursement rate=45.17% and new construction would be reduced to 40%. The allowable space standards reduce it your reimbursement by 87%. you're going to get 87.73% of that. So, if you would get 40.10% instead of the 45.71% and in new construction, you would get 35.09%. The numbers will changes based on different configurations.

There are two projected paths for projects (*priority and non-priority*). Priority paths, are major renovations-new constructions yearly applications by June 30. Then by December 15 the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) submits list to the Governor and Education Committee for review. Non-priority paths are items such as HVAC, code violations, school security, roofs, which is open for applications monthly from the 1st to the 10th.
There are new incentives, 15% bonuses for more Special Education programs. The "life skills" room discussed could receive additional reimbursement. Before applying for a school construction grant, a municipality's legislative body must authorize tits local board of education, through the Superintendent to apply to the DAS commissioner for a grant. The municipality must either secure a funding authorization for the local star of the project costs schedule and prepare a referendum, with results available by November 15 that year. State law allows a municipality to issue bonds to finance a school building project through a vote by its legislative body. The municipality must establish a school build committee with at least one member who has experience in the construction industry.

Some members of the SFU-TF seem hesitant based upon the information being provided. Some items don't match the best interest for the town. There was discussion that this process seems to be building up rather than down. Start with the best of the best options, and cut down to the ideal reality. Typically, things start large, and are chiseled away to get to where the town wants to be. It is good to know what each school should have in an ideal world – not that the town necessarily needs to have all of it. If a school is closed, where is there room for expansion at one of the other schools? What challenges do the schools face? Ms. Kennerson suggested investigating ENERGIA, there have been towns and school districts who have used these companies, they're using energy performance contracts to finance HVAC equipment. They guarantee you a certain amount of savings, which is used for future guaranteed savings to pay for the capital outflow with no money upfront. You don't have to have the town approved funding on because you're just going to be paying it with your future savings. She suggested this be something beneficial for New Hartford to consider, as lot of costs revolve around HVAC. Discussion was had regarding if the portables at Bakerville fail? If a town receives grant funding the school must be used as a school for 20 years or the grant must be paid back.

F. Public Comment - (For Task Force Business Only)

Shelley Lloyd – 29 Pioneer Drive
Ms. Lloyd discussed the modular classrooms, cafeteria size, number of Speech rooms per school, reimbursement rates and balance for the community.

Katherine Wilder – 415 Stub Hollow Road
Ms. Wilder inquired who is responsible for letting the schools getting to the current status? Maintenance concerns should be addressed to Superintendent Jeffrey Sousa.

Daniel Jerram - 535 Town Hill Road
Mr. Jerram discussed schools' square foot (school size) and reimbursement rates, Special Education rates, clarified Michelle Millers is using the medium model, and the highest of 8-year enrollment. Dan asked which one is Michelle use. Exact square footage based on needs, either items get cut or have a really large school.

Rebecca Binney – 184 East Cotton Hill Road
Ms. Binney discussed square footage, for clarity and correction.

Kirby Morante – 3 Sloan Street
Ms. Morante inquired about separate survey results to the general staff, possibly and a faculty survey and a taxpayer survey. There is intent to has a designation for parents, but a designation for teachers and staff might be good too.

G. Old Business

a. Update from Stakeholder Engagement Subcommittee

The "Stakeholder Engagement Subcommittee" members are: Mary Beth Greenwood, Penny Miller and Samantha Wald. They met on March 31, 2026 (Tuesday). The subcommittee attempted to address logistical questions about the survey, the goals and the timing. The survey will be used to solicit feedback on options formed by the SFU-TF for any proposed changes to the infrastructure and organization of NHPS. The survey will be made available to all residents of New Hartford. There will be an online version and a hardcopy available for distribution. There will be designated locations for pickup and drop off of the survey. The survey will be publicized and made available though many different electronic avenues as well. The subcommittee has proposed surveys be available to the public for May 12th or as soon as options are formulated, this schedule will correspond with the SFU-TF timeline. The survey will have a 10-day collection period. The content of the survey questions will be formulated as the work of the SFU-TF progresses. Ms. Young asked when the subcommittee would have costs for the survey. There are factors, for example how long the survey is. The Digital version of the survey will have no cost.

b. Review and possibly take action regarding the revised decision-matrix framework

Since the last review main revisions to the matrix was to include resource sharing efficiency between schools, alternative repurpose building use and traffic patterns into the scoring framework.

MOTION by Samantha Wald to adopt the Options Evaluation Matrix. Second Jon Puz.

SFU-TF members had lengthy discussion on the matrix and made changes based on their discussion.

The original matrix came from Michelle Miller (SP+A). The idea was to adopt an existing framework versus starting from scratch. Michelle stated this is a format that has been used successfully. The matrix is like a scorecard.

MOTION by Samantha Wald to adopt the Options Evaluation Matrix as amended at this meeting. Second by Jon Puz.

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H. Action steps for next meeting w/ date, location and time

a. April 22, 2026 (Wednesday) at 7:00 PM at Ann Antolini Library - Site Analysis and Preliminary Options

Michelle Miller will present a high-level overview of all of the options for consideration.

I. Adjournment

MOTION by Samantha Wald to adjourn the meeting at 9:44PM. Second by Carmen Neale.

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Respectfully submitted by,
Elizabeth Domas, Recording Secretary

Attachments:
SFU Study - Programming & Capacity
Options Evaluation Matrix

Dedicated email for the task for is NHTaskForce@newhtfd.org
Dedicated webpage is https://www.newhtfd.org/board-of-education/school-facility-utilization-task-force

Sign up for e-mail alerts from the School Facility Utilization Task Force on the town website:
https://www.newhartfordct.gov/subscribe

Recording will be made available on the YouTube channel. You can subscribe here:
https://www.youtube.com/@schoolfacilityutilization