

Building Utilization Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2026, 6pm-8pm, Cold Spring ELC

Dr. Brian Timm opened the third meeting of the Building Utilization Committee at 6:03pm.

This meeting took place at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. Dr. Timm introduced Kristen Fischetti, Cold Spring ELC Principal to the committee. Mrs. Fischetti then led the committee on a building tour.

Upon return from the building tour, Dr. Timm gave the group a moment to review the data sheets available for the meeting.

Dr. Timm apologized for not emailing the requested data in advance of the meeting. Some of the information gathered was not available until that day. In the future, we will do our best to distribute information in advance of the meeting, if it is readily available.

Julia Tomaine demonstrated to the group where [BUAC](#) members names and affiliation can be found on the district [website](#). The contact information is available by expanding the *February 3, 2026 – Committee Formed* dropdown bar (click +).

The minutes from the March 26th BUAC meeting were reviewed and accepted with no issues noted.

Dr. Timm reviewed the cost structure data information for the three buildings. This data sheet accounts for the redundancy of services between the two elementary buildings. All figures shown are estimates to demonstrate the potential cost savings for the district if one of the buildings were to close. The potential savings to the district for closing Cold Spring or Seymour Smith are both approximately 1.2 million dollars.

A committee member asked for more granular information related to the cost structure of each building. For example, an in depth review of maintenance and repair costs for each building now, and projected costs for the future. Dr. Timm clarified that the information being requested is in the Building Conditions Survey Report. This information is already available and he will share the report with the committee for the next meeting. Dr. Timm suggested that some of the requests for more granular information could be postponed until after the Seymour Smith ILC building tour.

He reiterated the need for a short-term solution and questioned how some of the requested information would be relevant to determining a short-term solution to the financial crisis facing the district. Dr. Timm stated he believes it is critical the district moves to a 2 building structure sooner rather than later.

A discussion among committee members ensued regarding the decision to delay closing Cold Spring ELC next school year, and how that decision will affect all students next year. The district will pierce the tax cap with the 2026-27 Budget, and as a result there will be cuts to programming.

A community member commented that there is more than enough space in Seymour Smith to accommodate the students and staff from Cold Spring.

Dr. Timm reviewed the data sheet containing follow up responses to questions posed at the March 26th BUAC meeting. Dr. Timm gave the group a few minutes to review the information and discuss questions and/or concerns.

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A committee member asked if additional bathrooms were planned to be built at Seymour Smith if Cold Spring were to shutter. Yes, locations have been identified where additional bathrooms can be built, if necessary.

Dr. Timm suggested again that the committee hold some of the questions until after the Seymour Smith building tour. He felt it would be beneficial for the group to see the building, as some of these questions may be answered once they have the opportunity to tour the building. Ms. Roberts will be able to demonstrate how and where they will all fit into the one building

A discussion among the committee ensued regarding the various potential grade band structures.

- Could PreK through 5 fit in Cold Spring? If not, what grade bands would fit?
- If Seymour Smith closed, what would the grade bands look like at Cold Spring and Stissing?

Dr. Timm felt it would be difficult to fit Prek-3 at Cold Spring. If it is possible, grades 4 and 5 would have to move up to Stissing, and create a 4-8 elementary/middle school. Significantly more work and planning would be required to create a 4-8 grade level band at Stissing than what is required for PreK-1 (Cold Spring) to move into Seymour Smith.

The results from the survey regarding rightsizing and school building consolidation that was sent to the community in the fall of 2025, indicated that the community very much wants to maintain the “Elementary experience” for the students. This is why it was Dr. Timm’s recommendation to close Cold Spring in the 2026-2027 school year.

A committee member commented that more students could fit into Cold Spring if we were creative with the space. Specials classes, may not have a dedicated classroom, but could operate on a cart and push into classrooms.

Dr. Timm will arrange for another tour of both Stissing and Cold Spring, and ask Mr. Boyd and Mrs. Fischetti to demonstrate what grades could potentially fit in each building and where.

A committee member commented that Cold Spring is a “gem” of the district and a special place. We need to consider what the educational impact would be to our youngest students if Cold Spring were to close. Another committee member commented, and many agreed, that it is the people that make Cold Spring so special, not the place. Those same people will make Seymour special for our students.

A committee member inquired about bus mileage and routing.

Dr. Timm explained that the entire fleet goes out for the Jr/Sr HS run. After drop-off at Stissing, the fleet returns to the bus facility to refuel. The fleet splits in half. All of the buses cover the entire footprint of the district. Half of the buses go to Seymour and the other half continue down to Cold Spring, and then return back to the bus facility next to Seymour.

Dr. Timm asked if there were any additional questions regarding the data presented this evening.

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A committee member commented that the parking situation at Seymour is a nightmare during arrival and dismissal and will only get worse with additional students.

An **audience** member asked what the difference in transportation savings would be if Seymour was to close instead of Cold Spring.

Dr. Timm asked the committee how they want to address questions from the audience. The committee is already a large group. Fielding questions from audience members may create a runaway train effect.

A committee member suggested that questions from the audience be filtered through the sitting committee members representing that town. It was the consensus of the committee that audience questions and/or requests should be handled in this manner.

Noting the time and that it was almost 8pm, Dr. Timm reviewed the information requested for the March 30th meeting:

- Building Conditions Study
- Enrollment by towns in the district (*Dr. Timm will bring a district map outlining this information to the April 30th meeting*)
- Non-instructional staff rightsizing data trends – admin., custodial/maintenance, food service, clerical
- Enrollment of students not attending, i.e. attending private school or homeschooled
- How many classrooms are occupied by grade level? (*Dr. Timm informed the committee member that this data was already provided and showed where it could be found*)
- The average bus run time (*Dr. Timm stated that we try to keep each bus run under 60 minutes. Some runs going all the way to Elizaville will average 60-70 minutes with current enrollment and assuming %100 ridership*)
- A list of classrooms in each building and how many students each room will accommodate (*Dr. Timm stated most classrooms accommodate up to 25 students. Due to safety concerns, we cannot disclose building maps*)
- A second tour of both Cold Spring and Stissing-focused on what each would look like with the different grade bands
- Student testing outcomes for the last 10 years. (*BOE President, Mrs. Fredericks asked how the information was relevant to the decision to close a building? The committee member stated that student testing performance at each building was relevant.*)

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A committee member commented they do not want the decision to close a building to be driven by enrollment. What is the district doing to attract families to the area? The goal should be to build the district back to what it once was.

Dr. Timm stated that this problem is not unique to our district. Smaller rural school districts in the region are experiencing similar issues. Neighboring districts in the area are making deep cuts to stay under the tax cap.

If time permits at the April 30th meeting, Dr. Timm would like to review data from the March 26th meeting that was not addressed related to unfunded State mandates affecting school district finances.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Minutes prepared by Trish Audenino, Secretary to the Superintendent.