EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS | BOARD OF EDUCATION

School Reorganization Committee Update

July 13, 2026

PRESENTED BY

School Reorganization Committee

What We'll Cover Tonight

01

Set the Stage

Norms + how we'll use our 30 minutes

02

The Charge

Why this committee was formed

03

The Journey

How our scope evolved as we dug into the data

04

What We Found

Enrollment trends + a menu of options (high level)

05

Your Turn

2–3 guiding questions for board discussion

06

What's Next

Timeline, community engagement, decision milestones

Norms for Tonight

A

Stay at 30,000 Feet

Tonight is a high-level overview, not a deep dive. Full data will be shared after this meeting.

B

This Is Exploratory

The committee has not made recommendations. We're presenting a menu of options for board consideration.

C

Hold the Details

Scenario-specific questions are welcome — but let’s please try to hold those for office hours.

Tonight: big picture only.

D

Engage on the Questions

We'll close with 2–3 guiding questions. That's our space for discussion tonight.

Why This Committee Was Formed

The Context

• It has been 8 years since the district last redistricted our elementary schools.

• Enrollment across our three elementary schools has grown significantly uneven.

• The grade 4→5 transition has been a persistent pain point for student outcomes.

• Two consecutive challenging budget cycles — referendum initially failed, then passed narrowly.

• Structural fiscal pressures are putting valued programs and services at risk. The window to act is now. Without exploring structural options, the district faces continued pressure — and the risk of deeper cuts to programs and services that matter to our community.

The Committee's Charge

Ensure that class sizes and teaching staff are appropriately aligned across grade levels in order to maximize use of existing building space, streamline fiscal obligations, strengthen student transitions, and continue to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of students and families.

Our Journey: How the Scope Evolved

1

Fall 2025

We Had a Broad Charge

Our charge: ensure class sizes and staffing are aligned, buildings are used well, fiscal obligations are streamlined, and student transitions are strong. We set out to find out what, if anything, needed to change.

2

Winter 2025–26

We Hired an Expert

Engaged MP Planning Group (Mike Zuba) — the same firm from our 2017 redistricting — for rigorous demographic analysis.

3

Spring 2026

The Data Expanded Our Lens + Budget Crisis

Enrollment projections revealed a district-wide decline since 2010 and a structural surplus of ~200 elementary seats.

A failed referendum and razor-thin budget passage made clear that doing nothing was no longer an option.

4

June–July 2026

A Menu of Options Emerged

The data surfaced multiple pathways — from redistrict-only to school consolidation scenarios — each with distinct tradeoffs.

What the Data Shows

Source: MP Planning Group enrollment projections & utilization study, June 2026

2,447
PK–12 students enrolled today

↓ 637
fewer students than in 2010–11

~200
surplus elementary seats district-wide

Stable
enrollment projected over next 10 years

Elementary Enrollment Imbalance (2025–26)

School	Enrollment	Utilization	5-Year Change
Flanders	236	87%	–13% since 2020-21
Haynes	365	81%	+29% since 2020-21
Niantic Center	178	66%	–19% since 2020-21

Key Takeaway

Our district has the right number of students — but they're in the wrong buildings. Redistricting alone addresses balance. The deeper question is whether our building footprint still fits.

A Menu of Options

The committee presents four pathways for board and community consideration. No decision has been made.

Status Quo+

Redistrict Only

Rebalance attendance boundaries across all three elementary schools.

No building changes.

Lowest disruption; addresses imbalance but not fiscal pressure.

Scenario A

One K–3 (Flanders), One PK–3 (Haynes)

Flanders: K–3

Haynes: PK–3 — all PK programs centralized here.

Niantic Center repurposed.

MS campus repurposed to house two distinct academies: Intermediate Academy (Gr. 4–5) + Upper Academy (Gr. 6–8)

~85% utilization

Scenario B

Two PK–3 Schools

Flanders + Haynes both PK–3

Niantic Center repurposed.

MS campus repurposed to house two distinct academies: Intermediate Academy (Gr. 4–5) + Upper Academy (Gr. 6–8)

~81% utilization

Scenario C

Two K–4 Schools PK Hub at Niantic Center

Maintains current K–4 grade alignment at Flanders & Haynes

Niantic Center becomes PK hub + possible central office.

~90% utilization

Full scenario data (including boundary maps, FTE impacts, and transportation notes) will be shared with the full board after this meeting. Office hours available.

Guiding Questions for Board Discussion

Tonight we ask the board to reflect — not decide. These questions will guide our 10-minute discussion.

1

Does the case for change land for you?

Is the "why" clear — the enrollment trends, the fiscal pressure, the grade structure questions?

2

What's your initial read?

What resonates, what surprises you, what feels uncertain or concerning?

3

What do you want to understand better before we go deeper in August?

We'll share the full data packet — this is about flagging what to focus on together.

What Comes Next (Proposed Timeline)

Decisions for the 2027–28 school year require a deliberate, community-centered process starting now.

1

July 2026

Full board introduced to committee's work (tonight)

Full data packet + office hours to follow

2

August 2026

Full board digs deeper — all scenarios reviewed

Open discussion regardless of direction: redistricting or substantial change

3

Sept / Oct 2026

Continued board discussions

Public forums to gather community feedback on all options

4

November 2026

Board decision

In time to plan and implement changes for the 2027–28 school year

Thank You

Full data packet to be shared after this meeting.

East Lyme Public Schools
School Reorganization Committee

AFTER TONIGHT

- Full data packet shared with board
- Office hours scheduled
- Community forums begin Sept/Oct 2026
- Board decision by November 2026