

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Facilities Utilization for the Implementation of the Educational Program Commencing 2019-20



Dr. Colleen A. Palmer
December 10, 2018

PREVIOUS REMAINING OPTIONS 12-5-18



Most Desired

- Create **Sixth Grade Academy** in rental space, **if feasible.**
- Reconfigure all **elementary schools to K-6**, shift BMS to 7-8 and restore SHS to 9-12.
 - If space permits, maintain Stepping Stones Preschool at CES.
 - If space does not permit, rent space for Stepping Stones Preschool.
- Reestablish **CMS in rental space.**
- **Reconfigure BMS to 6-8.**

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION 12-10-18

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BECOME PreK-6

The District moves to reconfigure its elementary schools to PreK-6, shift BMS to districtwide 7-8, and restore SHS to grades 9-12 commencing with the 2019-20 academic year.

(Note: Projected enrollment for Stepping Stones Preschool allows it to continue at CES.)

OVERVIEW OF ALL REMAINING OPTIONS

- The following information of this presentation is provided regarding the options which were still under consideration as of December 5, 2018, and helped to inform my recommendation to the Board of Education.
- A note of thanks is extended to our entire Westport community for the thoughtful email feedback and participation in so many public sessions, as well as the work of the members of the Community Advisory Committee, who toiled long hours with a quick deadline to provide valuable feedback and recommendations.
- Special acknowledgement to all of our public officials who moved mountains at every turn to allow me to explore and properly vet all options for the Board of Education's consideration.



Colleen A. Palmer

SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY



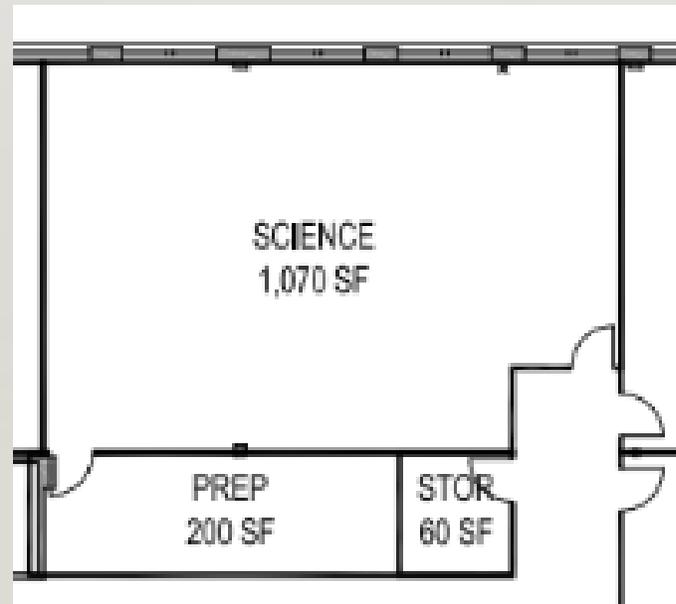
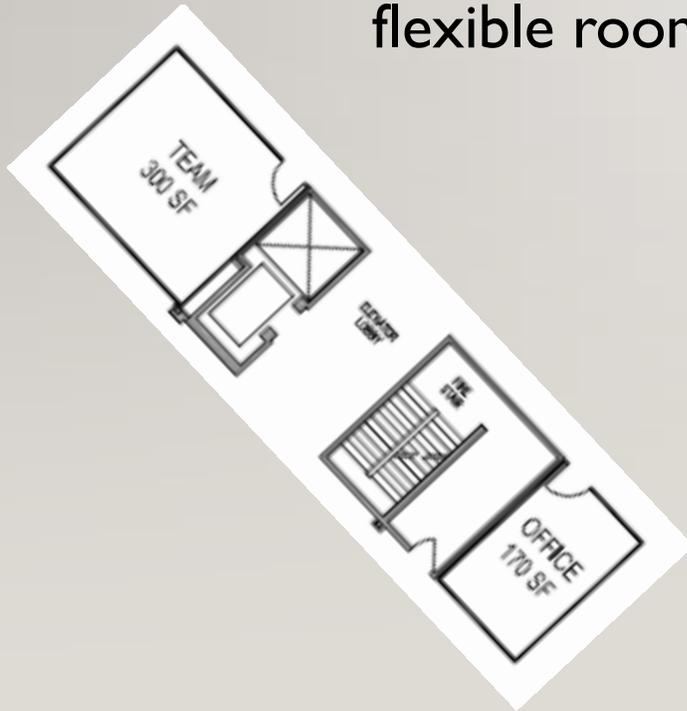
CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE FEATURES

- Can be ready for the start of the new school year and eliminates any disruption to the elementary or middle schools.
- Conversion of office space is easy for classrooms, small learning areas, collaboration space, and administrative offices. Designed to our specifications.
- Relieves facility pressures with students added to the elementary or middle school levels.
- Provides a developmentally-appropriate learning space for “tweeners” (10 and 11 yr. olds.) who are between childhood and adolescence.
- Provides incubation space for this pivotal grade in our continuum before a long-term decision is made.



CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Create science and STEAM areas in large flexible room designs.



CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Limited access to large common areas – cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, library
 - Create a fitness room, may need to reduce physical education time.
 - Access the grand meeting area of the Westport Library as needed. (Thank you Bill Harmer.)
 - Bring in lunch each day from Chartwells and allow entire school to eat at the same time utilizing common areas and classrooms.
 - Create a dispersed library on shelves within classrooms, utilize a digital library more extensively, and bring in specific books from other school libraries upon request of students.

CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE CHALLENGES

- It is costly to rent property and to have it built out for our needs.
- Terms would need to be negotiated, but typical leases run five years and build-out costs are often paid up front or amortized in the monthly rental payment.
- Depending on space, terms, etc. could cost in the range of \$2M, and costs of build-out need to be addressed in lease or other payment approach.
- Other issues with Planning and Zoning would need to be addressed.

CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE

- STEAM – Use this pivotal year to incorporate in a robust manner the integration of **SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY-ENGINEERING-ARTS-MATH** for optimal learning.
- Social Emotional Sanctuary – Allow the space and this year of time: to: coalesce the grade six as a united community, further nurture the develop self-confidence, and foster social emotional intelligence and positive interrelationships within this cohort of students that will be together until graduation.

CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE

- Schedule – the freedom to implement the optimal schedule from the foundation of the former BMS schedule and the features of longer instructional time in language arts and math in that proposed for the elementary model.
 - Includes all core subjects and three world language choices
 - Offers music and other encore choices
- After school activities – develop a set of activities based upon the needs and interests of this cohort of students, including its own Science Olympiad Team.
- Musical production - TBD

CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE CHALLENGES

Transportation – No solution

- Cannot manage a way to get large buses to site for drop-off and pick-up.
- Renting a fleet of 30 vans would cost \$1.6M per year, and DATTCO indicates they could not find enough drivers in this time of driver shortage.
- Reviewed nearby areas where students could be dropped off and picked up, but they would need to walk a few blocks – concern about days with poor weather, safety and security, and this would require crossing guards.
- Explored other ways to increase options to bring buses to site for loading/unloading, but no solutions identified.



CREATE SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY IN RENTAL SPACE

| Required Resource | Estimated Cost |
|--|--|
| Transportation (assuming large buses) Requires 4 extra buses @ \$90k each | \$360,000 |
| Yearly rent/utilities | \$2,000,000 |
| Staffing | (reduction in overall staffing with closing of CMS and declining enrollment)– est. \$400,000) |
| Technology/select furniture (one time) | \$400,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 | \$ 2,760,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 with Staff Savings | \$2,360,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 2 and Beyond | \$1,960,000 |

CMS IN A RENTAL SPACE



CREATE CMS IN A RENTAL SPACE

- **No suitable rental property has been located – No solution**
- Having three grades in one place is not as efficient with space, and each grade would not have enough students for two full teams, e.g. grade 6 would be six classrooms of students, on one large team.
- Size of grade-level cohorts and needs of each grade increase demands on rental space much more than having all one grade housed in one place.

CREATE CMS IN A RENTAL SPACE

| Required Resource | Estimated Cost |
|-------------------|----------------|
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No longer considered a viable option



ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BECOME PREK-6



RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

- Each elementary school can accommodate current K-6 population predicted for next year with the repurposing of some space and/or the use of portables.
- Stepping Stones Preschool can remain at CES with a minor adjustment of space.
- Developmentally, this allows a safe, secure environment for the “tweeners” without the social pressures of older students.
- Allows the core educational program to be delivered with fidelity, including purposeful enhancements to time allocated to mathematics and language arts.
- Places some stress on limited facilities for select areas of encore for K-6 grades. Some encore classes would be held in regular classroom space or repurposed space, e.g. art in classrooms or cafeteria.

RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

- Each elementary school would have team of teachers for grade 6 (mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies). Students would have teachers in certified content areas for all core instruction. STEAM could also be infused more extensively in our grade 6 housed at our elementary schools.
- While the grade 6 students would be located in five schools, there would be planned both virtual and face-to-face sessions that facilitated a sense of community among the grade 6 students.
- Elementary schools would conceptualize what upper elementary was compared to lower elementary and actualize in meaningful ways to promote the social and emotional development of these “tweeners.”

RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

- After-school activities would be developed based upon student needs and interests.
- Collaboration of grade 6 teachers would be facilitated by both virtual and face-to-face sessions, linking the core teachers together for unified work and coordination. This would not offer the same level of coordination with grade 6 teachers in five schools versus having the teachers together at BMS.
- Our students “know” their elementary schools and are familiar with the staff and navigating the facilities.

RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

- Grade 5 students may be disappointed or experience a sense of loss for not “moving up” to BMS. It will incumbent upon our team of professionals to acknowledge and address these feelings and reenergize the student excitement about next year.
- Special consideration would be given to provide more student independence and leadership development.

RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

Proposed Bus Schedule:

First Tier: SHS

Second Tier: BMS and two of the elementary schools

Third Tier: Three remaining elementary schools

RECONFIGURE ELEMENTARY K-6 BMS 7-8, SHS 9-12

| Required Resource | Estimated Cost |
|--|---|
| Transportation (assuming large buses) Requires 6 extra buses @ \$90k each | \$540,000 |
| Staffing – new for model | \$320,000 |
| Staffing - savings | (reduction in overall staffing with closing of CMS and declining enrollment) – est. \$700,000 |
| Portables (30-month rental) Estimated at \$120,000 per new portable | (anticipated need for 7 new portables = \$840,000 or \$420,000 for year 1) \$420,000 |
| Portables (refurbishment of 1 @CES & 2 @KHS) Estimated at \$50,000 per portable | \$150,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 | \$1,430,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 with Staff Savings | \$730,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 2 with no modular refurbishment costs | \$580,000 |

BEDFORD BECOMES 6-8



ELEMENTARY PREK-5, BMS 6-8, SHS 9-12

- BMS would house all students in grades 6, 7 and 8 with a total student population approaching 1,300.
- Facilities of BMS: cafeteria built to easily hold 1,200-1,300 with lunch waves, gymnasium built for 1,000, hallways large enough to safely accommodate 1,200-1,300 students, and classrooms would be utilized close to 100% of the time, as well as six additional portables. The fitness room would need to be utilized as an additional space for physical education. Pressure on classroom utilization and physical education space.
- Schedule would be built on a 9-period day, allowing the use of all classrooms 9 times. No classes would need to be scheduled in the library or other non-classroom spaces. Lunch would also be an entire period for staff and students with this approach.

ELEMENTARY PREK-5, BMS 6-8, SHS 9-12

- All grade 6-8 teachers would be housed in one facility, greatly enhancing the opportunities for collaboration All students would have all encore classes as in the past.
- Two teams would share a cluster of 5 classrooms together, generally those of a pod and one additional classroom very close by.
- Student and staff “travel” time and distance would be greatly reduced over current year.
- Additional teacher prep areas would be available beyond that available this year.
- All grade 6-8 students could access the after-school program and theater productions.

ELEMENTARY PREK-5, BMS 6-8, SHS 9-12

- Teachers would not travel between SHS and BMS as they do this year.
- Additional lockers would be added for the students without lockers. (This is estimated to be approximately 150.)
- Traffic would continue to be monitored at both drop-off and pick-up.
- Each instructional period would be reduced by one minute from 42 minutes to 41 minutes.
- Homeroom would be reduced from the previous time of 12 minutes to nine minutes.

ELEMENTARY PREK-5, BMS 6-8, SHS 9-12

- Concern about the social emotional well-being of students in a large school with facilities constraints.
- Concern about the impact to the instructional program and ability to deliver curriculum/educational services with fidelity with the challenges of sharing space so intensely.

ELEMENTARY PREK-5, BMS 6-8, SHS 9-12

| Required Resource | Estimated Cost |
|--|---|
| Transportation – no change | 0 |
| Portables (30-month rental) Estimated at \$120,000 per new portable | (anticipated need for 6 new portables = \$720,000 or \$360,000 for year 1) \$360,000 |
| Staffing | (reduction in overall staffing with closing of CMS and declining enrollment)– est. \$850,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 | \$360,000 |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 1 with Staff Savings | (\$490,000) |
| Total Estimated Cost Year 2 and Beyond | (\$490,000) |

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION 12-10-18

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BECOME PreK-6

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(Note: Projected enrollment for Stepping Stones Preschool allows it to continue at CES.)

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*Empowering
and Inspiring
Students to
Make the World
a Better Place*