Oyster River Cooperative School Board

Enrollment Discussion
August 21, 2013
7:00 PM
ORHS C-124

Office of the Superintendent
Oyster River School District
36 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: ORCSD Board
FROM: Superintendent Dr. James C. Morse, Sr.
DATE: August 21, 2013
RE: August Enrollment Report and Possible Solutions

The Context:

Since the close of school in June 2013, the elementary and middle schools have had eighty seven (87) new student's register. Mast Way Elementary is up twenty-two (22) students, Moharimet Elementary is up sixteen (16) students, and Oyster River Middle School is up forty-nine (49) students.

Mast Way has been able to absorb the 22 new students because it is under enrolled based upon the capacity study concluded by NHSAA in October 2012 (Table 4, page 3) indicating a capacity of 369 students. As of August 19, 2013, total anticipated fall enrollment is expected to be 306. The current overall student-teacher ratio now stands at 21.1 children per staff member. Neither individual classrooms nor the school as a whole need Board action as both are within Board policy and the capacity study. Worth noting, there are two unused classrooms at Mast Way as we open for the 2013-14 school year. We do not know how many students may have left the District over the summer.

Moharimet has added 19 new students since the close of school in June 2013 and based upon the capacity study noted earlier (Table 7, page 8), its capacity is 388 students. Currently, it is anticipated that as of August 19, 2013, Moharimet will open with 410 students or 22 students beyond capacity. The overall class size average student-teacher ratio is 21.6 children per staff member. Class size is not an issue as the Board approved an additional staff member, as a 1 year position, at its August 14, 2013 meeting. Again, we do not know how many students may have left the District over the summer.

The issue, as noted earlier, is Moharimet has now grown beyond its capacity. Over enrollment places stresses on the building that include equitable distribution of educational services like art, music and physical education as well as special education resources. Also worth noting, the District is leasing a doublewide portable classroom in order to accommodate the added student load which is not as safe as those classrooms in the main building. Adding to the problem at Moharimet is the fact it has no separate lunchroom and as a result, physical education is curtailed daily to accommodate lunch. Such is not the case at Mast Way as it has a separate lunchroom from its physical education space.

Elementary Schools	Expected Enrollment/ LRPC Summer 2013 Estimate	Capacity per NHSSA Study	Overall Average Class Size
Mast Way	306/284	369	21.1
Moharimet	410/394	388	21.6
ORMS	672/652	673	N/A

Oyster River Middle School is now expected to open with 672 students, and as noted, forty-nine (49) are new since the close of school in June. The breakdown by grade is as follows:

- sixteen (16) new students in Grade 5,
- eight (8) new students in Grade 6,
- sixteen (16) new students in Grade 7 and
- nine (9) new students in Grade 8.

ORMS has seven (7) teachers in Grade 5 and eight (8) teachers in Grades 6 – 8. Grades 6 – 8 are able to absorb these new students and stay within the Board policy of 18-22 students. Due to the fact that Grade 5 has one less teacher, Principal Richard currently expects the student teacher ratio to be 24 to 25:1 which will exceed Board policy.

Oyster River High School is expected to open with 682 students. The Board addressed the high school's needs last spring by adding .4 Math and .4 Science positions.

In conclusion, we are one week before school starts and although we have experienced nearly 90 students enrolling over the summer, I strongly recommend that the Board deliberate carefully and thoughtfully before they make a decision that would impact the opening day of school.

Recommendations:

Mast Way – None.

Oyster River High School – None.

Oyster River Middle School – add a certified 1 year long-term sub to Grade 5 for the 2013-14 school year lowering class size to within Board Policy.

Moharimet Option One

If the Board's desire is to balance overall student loads between Mast Way and Moharimet, one option is to move all Kindergarten students to Mast Way. This moves 59 students out of Moharimet leaving it with an overall enrollment of 352, well within the overall capacity of 388 established in the NHSAA report.

Concurrently, moving the 57 Kindergarten students to Mast Way increases the overall enrollment to 365, within the 369 student capacity established in the NHSAA report. However, since Kindergarten is currently an AM/PM program, the actual enrollment would be no more than 30 additional students in the morning and 30 students in the afternoon.

Although this recommendation instantly balances both schools overall enrollment it leaves little time for parents to adjust to the change and will predictably cause child care as well as other issues for families. It also means that staff will have to pack up and move already established classrooms. Elementary staff typically comes in the beginning of August to set up classrooms and this is the case at Moharimet.

Moharimet Option Two

Another option is to redirect bus routes. As mentioned in option one this would allow little time to engage parents, would cause child care and other associated issues, little time for staff to welcome new students (such activities are already beginning), little time for custodial staff to assist in moving and setting up classrooms, and little time for transportation to make associated busing changes. Although the Transportation Director, Lisa Huppe feels she can accommodate the needed changes in the bus routes.

Research on grade sponsor grade configurations is inconclusive. There have been few empirical studies on grade spans and the few that do exist speak mostly to middle level.

Table of Contents

SUMMER ENROLLMENT UPDATE 2013 (LRPC)

ENROLLMENT (ACTUAL and PROJECTED)

			Mast Way						Moharimet				
Year	**K**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	**K**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	**K-4 Total**
Actual													
2008	67	65	65	67	80	344	57	78	78	89	82	384	728
2009	54	81	66	66	67	334	61	66	84	73	88	372	706
2010	67	66	86	67	69	355	61	83	71	94	72	381	736
2011	40	72	59	85	66	322	65	72	83	72	96	388	710
2012	51	45	75	57	81	309	65	84	69	87	77	382	691
Estimate	**K**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	**K**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	K-4 Total
2013	***40***	***60***	***51***	***78***	***55***	***284***	***55***	***85***	***89***	***78***	***87***	***394***	***678***
July 2013 LRPC Projection													
2014	49	62	62	52	78	303	59	74	88	92	78	391	694
2015	48	57	64	64	53	286	58	69	77	90	92	386	672

			Middle School						High School					
														Districtwide
Year	5	6	7	8	Total		Year	9	10	11	12	Total	Total
Actual							Actual						
2008	140	157	160	167	624		2008	154	174	183	180	691	2043
2009	162	144	157	165	628		2009	176	161	172	187	696	2030
2010	156	163	149	160	628		2010	172	173	155	175	675	2039
2011	141	158	168	144	611		2011	169	173	176	155	673	1994
2012	166	146	168	171	651		2012	150	179	166	176	671	2013
Estimate	5	6	7	8	Total		Year	9	10	11	12	Total	Dist. Total
2013	***164***	***171***	***148***	***169***	***652***		2013	***190***	***150***	***184***	***160***	***684***	***2014***
July 2013 LRPC Projection							July 2013 LRPC Projection						
2014	144	168	176	149	637		2014	182	194	149	184	709	2040
2015	158	147	172	177	654		2015	161	185	192	149	687	2013
							HS Tuition Students						
							2013	**30**	**21**	**20**	**12**	**83**	
							2014	27	32	21	20	100	
				July 2013 LRPC Projection			2015	24	29	32	22	107	Dist. Total
							HS Without Tuition						w/o H.S. Tu
							2013						1931
							2014	155	162	128	164	609	1940
				July 2013 LRPC Projection			2015	137	156	160	127	580	1906

Mast Way 2013-14 Registration

	Possible Placement	Aug 14 Reg	Total
K	2	44	
1st	5	63	
2nd	0	50	
3rd	1	78	
4th	2	61	
Total 2013-14	**10**	**296**	**306**

Kindergarten	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**
Parsons AM	14	7	7
Parsons PM	15	6	9
Korjolbsen AM	13	5	8
Needs placement	2	1	1
	44	19	25
1st Grade			
Burke	19	10	9
Desroches	19	10	9
Handwork	20	9	11
Needs placement	5	1	4
	63	30	33
2nd Grade			
Jones	17	7	10
Moulton	16	7	9
Yerkes	17	9	8
Needs placement	0		
	50	23	27
3rd Grade			
Drew	20	12	8
George	21	11	10
Paquette	19	11	8
McCormick 3rd	8	4	4
Webb 3rd	9	6	3
Needs placment	1	0	1
	78	44	34
4th Grade			
Buswell	19	7	12
Bowden-Gerard	18	8	10
McCormick 4th	10	6	4
Webb 4th	12	5	7
Needs placment	2		2
	61	26	35

Moharimet 2013-14 Registration

	12-Jun	26-Jun	10-Jul	6-Aug	20-Aug
K	59	59	55	56	57
1st	86	84	86	87	90
2nd	89	88	89	90	92
3rd	74	76	78	77	78
4th	87	88	87	90	93
Total 2013-14	**395**	**395**	**395**	**400**	**410**

Kindergarten	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**
Chartrand AM	15	8	7
Chartand PM	13	6	7
Raspa AM	16	9	7
Lapierre PM	13	6	7
	57	**29**	**28**
1st Grade			
Hall	21	10	11
Bradley	20	10	10
Dolcino	20	11	9
New Teacher	19	9	10
	90	**45**	**45**
1st/2nd Grade			
Torr 1st	10	5	5
2nd	11	6	5
2nd Grade			
Hoff	20	12	8
Nadeau	20	6	14
Reilly	21	13	8
Winsor	20	11	9
	92	**48**	**44**
3rd Grade			
McManus	19	8	11
O'Byrne	20	8	12
Schmitt	19	9	10
	78	**36**	**42**
3rd/4th Grade			
Lee 3rd	11	7	4
4th	12	5	7
Swift 3rd	9	4	5
4th	12	7	5
4th Grade			
Curtin	22	9	13
Larson-Dennen	23	9	14
Van Ledtje	23	10	13
	93	**40**	**53**

Moharimet Enrollment History

Year	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY
K	57	56	61	68	61	62	65	67	66	70	57	
1	78	79	66	70	83	82	71	70	84	85	90	
2	78	75	84	84	71	75	83	82	70	72	92	
3	89	89	73	75	94	95	72	74	87	87	78	
4	82	79	88	88	72	74	96	97	78	78	93	
Total	**384**	**378**	**372**	**385**	**381**	**388**	**387**	**390**	**385**	**392**	**410**	

1st Grade Data	2007-08 - 2008-09	2008-09 - 2009-10	2009-10 - 2010-11	2010-11 - 2011-12	2011-12 - 2012-13	2012-13 2013-14
Kindergarten Enrollment EOY - Spring	73	56	68	62	67	70
First Grade Enrollment BOY - Fall	78	66	83	71	84	90
Total Additional Enrollments	**5**	**10**	**15**	**9**	**17**	**23**

2013-14 Student Transfers In - Grades 1 - 4				
Transfer From:	**1st Gr**	**2nd Gr**	**3rd Gr**	**4th Gr**
Full Day K:				
Acorn School	1			
Children In Motion	1			
Cornerstone		1		1
CSDC - UNH	8			
Live & Learn, Lee	1			
PCA	1	1		2
Moved into district:				
Barrington	1		1	
Berlin	1			1
Boston	1			
Dover	1		2	
Exeter	1			
Farmington		1		
Hampton Falls	2			
Lee	1		1	
Newmarket				1
Portsmouth		1	1	
Raymond		1		
Somersworth	1			
Out of State:				
California	1		2	
Florida		1		2
Illinois	1			
Indiana		1		
Kansas				1
Maine		1		
Massachusetts			1	
Pennsylvania			1	
Out of Country:				
Korea		1		
Japan			1	
Totals	**23**	**9**	**10**	**8**

Report For The

Oyster River Cooperative School District

Subject:

Assessment of Enrollment and an

Educational Facility Capacity

PreK-12

(Excerpt from full report specifically related to Mast Way & Moharimet)

8/19/2013

Prepared by:
New Hampshire School Administrators Association
Dr. Mark V. Joyce
Mr. Keith R. Burke

October, 2012

VII. Description of Schools in the Oyster River Cooperative School District

A. Mast Way School (K-4)

Introduction

Mast Way School houses students in grades K-4 for a total school enrollment on September 17, 2012 of 313 students. There are fifteen class divisions for grades 1-4 and three half-day Kindergarten classes in this school. These include: three divisions of grade 1 with avg. class size of 15.6; five divisions of grade 2 with an avg. class size of 15; two third grades and two three-four combination grades with an avg. 19.5; and three grade 4 divisions with an avg. of 20 per class.

Program Description

The school day for the students at the Mast Way School extends from 8:45 am to 3:10 pm. Students are grouped heterogeneously and generally receive instruction in all core subjects in their self-contained classrooms. The curriculum includes a major focus on reading/literacy, mathematics, social studies and science. Students are also exposed to an integrated arts program including weekly instruction (45 minutes) in art, music, physical education, computers and library.

The continuum of supplemental services available to students also include: a reading specialist, 504 plans, English Language Learners (ELL), Title One staff, school nurse, guidance and counseling services, a school psychologist, occupational therapy and speech services. Through the leadership team and input from school teams, the school has established school initiatives on improving student achievement, and utilizing school-wide assessment.

The Facility and Site

The Mast Way School is an older facility originally built in 1960 and has benefited from multiple additions and renovations in 1995. The district's maintenance department estimates the total square footage of the structure to be 43,700 square feet and the structure is located on 3.85 acres. Clearly, among the facility's greatest strengths is its prominent location within the community.

The facility's limitations are largely caused by the size of the site, the age of the facility, and its many additions. The building essentially has seventeen classrooms, a multi-purpose cafeteria space, a number of specialized classes and small office areas. The storage areas for employees (e.g. classroom, general and custodial) are insufficient.

While the site of the school offers many advantages that are gained by its proximity to the center of the community, the site size is very small and the fields, roadways and parking lot are under current heavy use.

Facility and Site Strengths

- School is located near the center of the community
- General condition of the building is clean and bright
- Facility offers a community resource
- Size of educational spaces are adequate and appropriate for instruction
- Building design offers great lighting
- Open "common areas" add great flexibility

Facility and Site Limitations

- Lack of storage spaces
- Certain office areas are undersized (e.g. guidance, main office)
- Small site size

Determining Functional Capacity of Mast Way School

Class size guidelines, the scope of the educational program, and the size and type of the existing spaces are key factors in determining functional capacity at an existing school. It should be emphasized that capacity is not necessarily fixed and will likely change over a period of time due to a variety of program or policy changes. For example, a policy change affecting class size or the number of teams will either increase or lower capacity. Similarly, adding or reducing the number of regular classrooms through reallocation of space will have an upward or downward impact on capacity.

Beyond regular classrooms, in order to meet the learning needs for a K-4 population the school needs spaces for programs such as art, music, physical education, special education, reading, library/media, and food preparation, as well as, areas for a variety of support services. Included under support services are spaces for guidance, health services, administration, food services, and custodial support.

Mast Way currently has seventeen (17) regular or core classrooms. These are the rooms that form the basis of analysis of the functional educational capacity for core subjects. Specialized rooms such as art or music "receive" groups of students daily, under the Related Arts program, from the regular core-subject classrooms. At the present time, all classrooms are utilized on a daily basis.

TABLE 4

Mast Way School Capacity Using ORCSD Guideline

Grade Level	# of Rms	Maximum Number of Students/Rooms	Mathematical Capacity
Kindergarten	2	20	80 in half day
Grades 1 - 4	15	22	330
Total	17		370

Functional Capacity = 90% of 410; .90 X 410 = 369

The 90 percent factor takes into account variables such as assigning fewer pupils to some classes, accommodating combination classes (e.g. 1-2), and to make allowances for assigning fewer students to undersized classrooms as may be the case. The school's overall capacity is 410 but using the 90 percent factor it is 369 students using ORCSD guidelines and a half-day Kindergarten.

TABLE 5

Mast Way School Capacity Using State of NH Guideline

Grade Level	# of Rms	Maximum Number of Students/Rooms	Mathematical Capacity
Kindergarten - 1	2	25	100
Grade 1	3	25	75
Grades 2-4	12	30	360
Total	17		535

Functional Capacity = 90% of 535; .90 X 535 = 481

The 90 percent factor takes into account variables such as assigning fewer pupils to some classes, accommodating combination classes (e.g. 1-2), and to make allowances for assigning fewer students to undersized classrooms as may be the case here. The school's overall capacity is 535 but using the 90 percent factor it is 485 students using NH guideline and a half-day Kindergarten.

TABLE 6
Inventory of Current Program Spaces at Mast Way School

Function	Quantity	Comments
Kindergarten classrooms	2	About 920 sf - slightly undersized
Classrooms	15	Classrooms are about 900 +SF
Multi-purpose room/ Area	1	Large area used as gym, assembly and more (3300sf)
Special Education	1	Room about 900sf
Cafeteria	1	Area of about 1400 sf used for music as well
Kitchen	2	Kitchen and receiving about 1000 sf
Common Areas	2	Large open areas one in each wing 1800 SF
Title One	1	Small Group Instr about 680sf
Special Education Specialist areas	5	Shared spaces for OT, Spec Ed dir., ESOL, PT, Reading, Speech
Library-Media Center	1	Room center section (1480sf)
Art Room	1	Large area located off main hallway
Computer	1	Small area bout 430 sf
Music	1	Stage area about 850 sf
Health/ Nurse	1	Room near main office about 358sf
Guidance	1	
Admin Office-Gen Office, Reception and Conference	3	Next to main entrance divided into several spaces principal, secretary and general reception
Staff bathrooms	1	Single station area also used for ADA accessibility
Student bathrooms	In hall and certain instructional rooms	Restroom areas have 2 stations
Staff work room	2	About 600sf near main office
Kitchen	1	Currently serves as a complete kitchen for meals
Storage	Limited	All extra spaces are utilized. There is a perception that space is limited
Boiler Room	1	Clean and safe

Note: The inventory of current program space represents usage during the 2012-13 school year.

B. Moharimet School (Grades K-4)

Introduction

Moharimet School houses students in grades K-4 and the total school enrollment on September 17, 2012, was 385 students. There are twenty class divisions housed in this school. This includes: four half-day kindergartens, four grade ones, four grade twos, three grade three and fours, and two combination three-fours.

Program Description

The school day for the students at the Moharimet School extends from 8:45 am to 3:10 pm. Students are grouped heterogeneously and generally receive instruction in all core subjects in their self-contained classrooms. Curriculum includes a major focus on reading/literacy, mathematics, social studies and science. Students are also exposed to an integrated arts program including weekly instruction (45 minutes) in art, music, physical education, and open learning.

The continuum of supplemental services available to students also include: a reading specialist, 504 plans, English Language Learners (ELL), Title One staff, school nurse, guidance and counseling services, a school psychologist, occupational therapy and speech services. Through the leadership team and input from school teams, the school has established school initiatives on improving student achievement, and utilizing school-wide assessment.

The Facility and Site

The Moharimet School is a relatively new facility built in 1988 with an addition in 1994-95. The district's maintenance department estimates the total square footage of the structure to be 43,780 square feet and the structure is located on 33 acres. Clearly, among the facility's greatest strengths is its new design and large site.

The facility's limitations are largely caused by a lack of storage, a dedicated cafeteria and a need for more bathroom facilities. The building essentially has twenty classrooms, a café/multi-purpose space, a number of specialized classes and small office areas. The storage areas for employees (e.g. classroom, general and custodial) are clearly insufficient.

The site of the school offers many advantages that are gained by its large size, good playing fields and ample parking areas.

Facility and Site Strengths

- School is relatively new
- General condition of the building is clean and bright
- Facility offers a community resource
- Teaching spaces are of adequate size
- Specialized areas of ample size

Facility and Site Limitations

- Lack of small storage spaces
- Lack of a dedicated cafeteria

Determining Functional Capacity of Moharimet School

Class size guidelines, the scope of the educational program, and the size and type of the existing spaces are key factors in determining functional capacity at an existing school. It should be emphasized that capacity is not necessarily fixed and will likely change over a period of time due to a variety of program or policy changes. For example, a policy change affecting class size or the number of teams will either increase or lower capacity. Similarly, adding or reducing the number of regular classrooms through reallocation of space will have an upward or downward impact on capacity.

Beyond regular classrooms, in order to meet the learning needs for a 3-5 population, the school needs spaces for programs such as art, music, physical education, special education, reading, library/media, and food preparation, as well as, areas for a variety of support services. Included under support services are spaces for guidance, health services, administration, food services, and custodial support.

Moharimet School currently has twenty (20/18) regular or core classrooms. For the purposes of the educational capacity we will exclude the two temporary classrooms. These are the rooms that form the basis of analysis of the functional educational capacity for core subjects. Several specialized rooms, art or music "receive" groups of students daily, under the Related Arts program, from the regular core-subject classrooms. At the present time, all classrooms are utilized on a daily basis.

TABLE 7
Moharimet School Capacity Using ORCSD Guideline

Grade Level	# of Rms	Maximum Number of Students/Rooms	Mathematical Capacity
Kindergarten	2	20	80 in half day
Grades 1 - 4	16	22	352
Total	18		432

Functional Capacity = 90% of 432; .90 X 432 = 388

The 90 percent factor takes into account variables such as assigning fewer pupils to some classes, accommodating combination classes (e.g. 3-4), and to make allowances for assigning fewer students to undersized classrooms as may be the case. The school's overall capacity is 432 but using the 90 percent factor it is 388 students using the ORCSD guidelines. It is important to note that we excluded the temporary classrooms (2).

TABLE 8
Moharimet School Capacity Using State of NH Guideline

Grade Level	# of Rms	Maximum Number of Students/Rooms	Mathematical Capacity
Kindergarten	2	25	100
Grade 1	4	25	100
Grades 2 - 4	12	30	360
Total	18		560

Functional Capacity = 90% of 560; .90 X 560 = 504

The 90 percent factor takes into account variables such as assigning fewer pupils to some classes, accommodating combination classes (e.g. 3-4), and to make allowances for assigning fewer students to undersized classrooms as may be the case. The school's overall capacity is 560 but using the 90 percent factor it is 504 students using the higher state guidelines. Again it is important to note that we excluded the two existing temporary classrooms from this calculation and used a half-day kindergarten.

TABLE 9

Inventory of Current Program Spaces at Moharimet School

Function	Quantity	Comments
Kindergarten classrooms	2	Room size about 1120 sf
Classrooms	16	Classrooms are about 900 +SF
Temporary Classrooms	2	Located on Campus but disconnected from main building
Multi-purpose room/ gym and cafeteria area	1	Large area used as gym, cafeteria, assembly and more (3600sf)
Special Education	1	Room about 900sf
Music	1	Room about 880 sf
Common Areas	2	Large open areas one in each wing 2000 SF
Art	1	Room about 960 sf plus kiln room
Title One	1	Small Group Instr about 150 sf
Special Education Specialist areas	7	Shared spaces for OT, Spec Ed dir., ESOL, PT, Reading, Speech
Library-Media Center	1	Room center section (1480sf)
Art Room	1	Large area located off main hallway
Health/ Nurse	1	Room near main office about 120 sf
Guidance	1	
Admin Office-Gen Office, Reception and Conference	3	Next to main entrance divided into several spaces principal, secretary and general reception
Staff bathrooms	1	Single station area also used for ADA accessibility
Student bathrooms	In hall and certain instructional rooms	Restroom areas have 2 stations
Staff work room	2	About 600sf near main office
Kitchen	1	Currently serves as a complete kitchen for meals
Storage	Limited	All extra spaces are utilized. There is a perception that space is limited
Boiler Room	1	Clean and safe

Note: The inventory of current program space represents usage during the 2012-13 school year.

Susan Caswell <scaswell@orcsd.org>
To: James Morse <jmorse@orcsd.org>
FW: Looking for research on k-2, 3-5 model

August 20, 2013 9:21 AM

Susan Caswell
Business Administrator
Oyster River Cooperative School District
603-868-5100 x2003
Working Together to Engage Every Learner
The Right-To-Know Law provides that most e-mail communications, to or from School District employees regarding the business of the School District, are government records available to the public upon request. Therefore, this e-mail communication may be subject to public disclosure. However, confidential information about students, staff, and parents may not be subject to disclosure. The confidentiality of information about students and personnel matters must be maintained by the individual or entity to which this e-mail is addressed. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution of confidential information is prohibited.

-----Original Message-----
From: Schlichter, Phyllis [mailto:pschlichter@sau81.org]
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2013 9:20 AM
To: Susan Caswell; James Morse
Subject: FW: Looking for research on k-2, 3-5 model

Hi Sue,
It was so nice to hear your voice!
We did look at other early intervention research, etc. - but I think what I wrote below is the most efficient source for a research base.

Thanks,
Phyllis

-----Original Message-----
From: Schlichter, Phyllis
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2013 1:51 PM
To: 'Carolyn Eastman'
Subject: RE: Looking for research on k-2, 3-5 model

Hi Carolyn,
Yes, we are moving to an early learning campus (pre-k, k, and 1) and then two schools for grades 2-5.
Our decision is research-based AND financially based; we wanted to consolidate our resources so that we could provide the most timely response to individual student profiles across the continuum of performance. Already, we are doing professional development that is now district-based for the grade level and the K teachers are dividing the work and learning from each other. We are also better able to pool our regular and special education staffing. It's very exciting.

Some of the best resources to quote would be from the NHDOE - RTI- section of the website (after the SWIFT paragraph). We also did a district bookstudy " Annual Growth for all students Catch-Up growth for those who are behind- by Fielding, Kerr, and Rosier, so that's also a good reference. The restructuring model supported all the action research documented in this book.

In ORCSD, this model allows you to get a district-view of the k students, consolidate personnel and material resources, and to plan programming (both advanced and intervention).

Check out the RTI site and you will find some quick references.
Good luck and let me know if I can be of further help, Carolyn.
Phyllis

-----Original Message-----
From: Carolyn Eastman [mailto:ceastman@orcsd.org]
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2013 11:08 AM
To: Schlichter, Phyllis
Subject: Looking for research on k-2, 3-5 model

Good Morning Phylis-

I am in search of research that supports the k-2, 3-5 model. - Do you happen to have any at your fingertips? I heard that you just moved to this model. If you have it, could you send to me ASAP- we are moving Kindergarten to Mast Way in 2 days ! We need to go before the board with some info and tools to help support this potential move.

Thanks so much!!
Carolyn

Carolyn Eastman
Assistant Superintendent
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Research on School Configuration

Student learning is the focus of Cache County School District. Regardless of the grade configuration, it is our responsibility to provide quality education and address the needs of individual students. Schools must create cultures that develop partnerships with parents and establish community relationships that contribute to overall student success.

Current Configurations

- 2 (K-2) Schools: North Park, Sunrise
- 2 (3-5) Schools: Greenville, Summit
- 10 (K-5) Schools
- All South end is K-5 as well as Park and Lewiston on the North end

Factors to Consider

- Student Travel (cost and length)
- Increase/decrease of parent involvement
- Number of students at each grade level (class groupings and courses offered)
- Effect of school setting on achievement
- Number of school transitions for students
- Opportunities for interaction between age groups

Research on Configuration

- Research has provided no definitive answer on the most effective grade configuration.
- Each community and school district considers different factors when making grade span decisions and no one grade configuration is right for all.
- Researchers agree that ***generally*** the ***quality*** of the school and the instruction was more important than the grade configuration in viewing academic progress of students.
- Simply changing the school configuration is not enough to increase achievement.
- There is no clear indication that any grade configuration is more successful than any other.
- No particular sequence of grade spans is perfect or guarantees student achievement.
- What has greater implications of student success is influenced by leadership, classroom teacher, and daily instructional strategies.
- Most studies focus on the impact of transition on learning when students move from one school to another. These studies suggest that transitions may have a negative impact on students and should be minimized.
- The longer students stay in one school, the more relationships they form with teachers and other adults.
    - The more such relationships, the stronger a student's support system and likelihood of success.

Characteristics of a Quality School

- A clear and shared focus
- High standards and expectations for all students
- Effective school leadership
- High levels of collaboration and communication
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessments aligned with state standards
- Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching
- Focused professional development
- A supportive learning environment
- High levels of parents and community involvement
- **There is no clear indication that any grade configuration is more successful than any other.**

Advantages of K-2 and 3-5

- Narrows the focus of curriculum
- Larger numbers of teachers to collaborate with on grade level
- More classrooms per grade level may provide more opportunities to match students to teachers according to teaching and learning styles

- More teacher resources available in media center geared towards individual grade levels.
- Students feel safe being with other students their own age
- Support staff such as resource teachers, specialists, and media teachers may benefit from a narrower grade span
- Students may be able to participate on an equal level in more activities and be less influenced by older students

Advantages of K-5

- More convenient for families for parental involvement, PTA participation, and parent volunteers
- Grade level communication of curriculum, alignment, and coordination is easier to facilitate
- Consistent communication with families since all children are at one campus
- Less transition between schools
- Staff/student/parent relationships have more longevity
- More opportunities for interaction between grade groups including tutoring
- Avoid scheduling overlaps in family involvement from campus to campus, such as Parent Teacher Conferences

Related Files

School Configuration Research (PPT - 70 KB)
Research and facts concerning school configurations presented at community information meetings.

PPT file: You need Microsoft PowerPoint to view this file. Download a free PowerPoint viewer for PC or Macintosh.

Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for PowerPoint 2007 File Formats

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines grade spans (grade configurations) and their importance in community school systems. Research has shown that geographic location often dictates the kind of grade configuration districts use. Furthermore, every grade configuration has strengths and weaknesses, and school officials must focus on developing the positive potential within any given grade span. However, knowing which aspects to enhance can be difficult. The sheer number of variables that come into play when measuring grade-span effectiveness complicates efforts to understand this important component of education. For example, in one of the few empirical studies on grade span, researchers found that 8th-graders in elementary settings (K-8, K-9, 3-8) outperformed 8th-graders in other grade configurations. But the question as to why they learned better remains unanswered. Many current grade configurations can be traced to historical developments, such as passage of child-labor laws, meaning that such configurations had little to do with educational efficacy. Research shows that grade span can work in subtle and not-so-subtle ways to affect student learning. One study found that students suffer achievement loss during transition years and that students who transitioned to high school in grade 7 were less likely to drop out than students who began high school in grades 9 or 10. (RJM)

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Trends and Issues

School Organization: Grade Span

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Trends and Issues

School Organization: Grade Span

This section is adapted from a previously published Research Roundup on grade span.

by Ron Renchler

Despite the very great likelihood that grade span, or grade configuration, has a powerful influence on the success of community school systems and the students they serve, empirical research on the topic in the last decade has been very sparse. A few studies have attempted to gauge the influence of various grade configurations on academic achievement of students at the state level, but other reports are anecdotal or descriptive in nature and describe the perceived benefits and drawbacks of various grade configurations. Studies on the relationship of grade span to other measures of school success, such as students' socialization skills or the existence of a positive school culture, are also scarce.

Perhaps the dearth of empirical research stems from the fact that grade configuration is to some degree out of the hands of administrators who run the schools. The exigencies of geographic location, student populations, limited financial resources, and community preferences, among other factors, may well dictate the grade configuration within a school system, hence the wide range of different grade configurations across the nation.

Statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics reflect the current predominance of traditional elementary and middle school configurations in U.S. public schools. As shown in Table 1, of the 61,805 public schools for students through the eighth grade, about two-thirds are configured to transition students into either middle schools or junior high schools after the sixth grade. Only about 4,500 (7.4%) schools carry students from the earliest grades through the eighth grade. Slightly more than 10,000 schools (17%) are configured as traditional middle schools (grades 4, 5, or 6 to grades 7 or 8), with about 5,700 schools (9.2%) having other, less common grade configurations.

Table 1. U.S.Public School Grade Configurations—Number of Schools and Percentages of Configurations, 1996—1997

	Pre-K, K, or grade 1 to grades 3 or 4	Pre-K, K, or grade 1 to grade 5	Pre-K, K, or grade 1 to grade 6	Pre-K, K, or grade 1 to grade 8	Grades 4, 5, or 6 to grades 7 or 8	Other grade configurations	Total
Number of schools	4,910	20,570	15,578	4,543	10,499	5,705	61,805
% of total schools	7.9	33.2	25.2	7.4	17.0	9.2	99.9

Source: *Digest of Education Statistics, 1998. Chapter 2. Elementary and Secondary Education.* Available online at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/digest98/d98t099.html

Every grade configuration has its own strengths and weaknesses relative to the context in which the grade span occurs. In profiles of eight Northwest schools with seven different grade spans, Paglin and Fager (1997) demonstrate that school size and, by extension, grade configuration are often dictated by geographic location of the student population. By building on the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses found within every grade configuration, school administrators can provide effective educational services regardless of the particular grade span being used.

Paglin and Fager discuss three central issues related to grade span: (1) the appropriateness of grouping certain grades together, (2) the number of grades included in a school and the number of classrooms within each grade, and (3) the number of school transitions students will be required to make in their K-12 educational experience. Critical factors that typically come into play for schools with broad grade spans include the nature of the role modeling younger students receive from older students, the staff's training and experience, and building size. Schools with very narrow grade spans experience frequent student turnover, which can influence the school's identity and sense of community. Narrow grade spans also impose on students the stress of frequent school transitions.

In a section entitled "Historical Trends in Grade Configuration," Paglin and Fager note that since the 1970s the number of junior high schools has been in decline, signaling a conceptual change away from the junior high school as a "preparation for high school" toward the middle school as a "child-centered institution" that affords opportunity for "team teaching, advisory programs, and flexible scheduling."

The authors conclude that "no particular sequence of grade spans is perfect or in itself guarantees student achievement and social adjustment." The key, they say, is to focus on developing the positive potential within any given grade configuration.

In one of the very few empirical studies on grade span in the past decade, Wihry and his colleagues (1992) used data from an annually administered standardized test, the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA), to measure the influence of grade span on the academic achievement of eighth-graders. After analyzing the scores of eighth-graders in schools with different grade configurations, the researchers concluded that eighth-graders learning in elementary settings (K-8, K-9, and 3-8) outperformed eighth-graders in schools with other grade configurations. Eighth graders attending school in junior/senior school environments (grades 6-12, 7-12, and 8-12) performed less well than eighth-graders in all other grade configurations. "Full-scale" achievement and reading achievement were more related to the grade span variable than was mathematics achievement.

The question of why Maine eighth-graders in schools with elementary grade spans outperformed eighth-graders attending schools with different spans remains unanswered, prompting the authors to call for more research in this critical area. They suggest that "such considerations as instructional specialization (e.g., departmentalization), tracking, and within-class ability grouping, as well as staff recruitment and training practices, expectations of student performance, and sensitivity to individual differences among students" should be considered as potential explanations for this group's superior academic performance.

The complex relationship among these difficult-to-quantify variables presents an especially challenging research problem. But the authors note study in this area is of critical importance because their findings "call into question any simplistic assertion regarding the superiority of (nominally) middle-level schools."

Hough (1995) proposes the label "elemiddle" for schools following "the current trend toward aligning middle schools more closely with elementary programs." He characterizes these schools as including a focus on serving students between the ages of 10 and 14, typically in grades 5 through 8. This grade sequence is predominantly contained in K—8 schools, but also appears in schools having configurations of grades 4—8, 5—8, and Pre-K—8.

Hough credits recent research on "school programs, practices, and policies" with engendering a change in the educational perspective on this group of students. While noting that empirical research has not identified an optimal grade configuration, Hough nevertheless believes that the philosophies of elementary school education contained within the elemiddle school may well serve the needs of young adolescents better than the newer middle school structure (grades 6-9) or the traditional junior high structure (grades 7 and 8 or grades 7-9).

The impetus for establishing the primary-secondary school structure predominant in the 19th century was economic; it helped "facilitate the movement of children into the labor force," Hough explains. The development of the three-tiered elementary, junior high, high school structure has a similar history: Child labor laws in the early 20th century required that adolescents be better prepared for high school since they couldn't immediately become part of the workforce. Although middle school grade spans began to

emerge during the 1960s and 1970s, it was not until the 1980s, Hough says, that true educational reform at the middle school level took place.

Despite the changes in educational programs and philosophies at the middle school level, Hough still believes that "elemiddle schools, which include both primary and middle grades, may more easily facilitate the child-oriented programs conducive to young adolescent learning." He cites several studies showing that critical differences in educational programs and practices do exist among elemiddle, middle, and junior high schools.

Since 1985, Connecticut has used the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) to measure student achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics at the fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-grade levels. The CMT has also been used as a defacto accountability measure for schools whose students are taking the test. Three basic grade configurations are used at this level in Connecticut: K—5 and 6—8 (Type I), K—6 and 7—8 (Type II), or K—8. The K—5 schools were not accountable for the achievement levels of students who had attended Type I schools but had moved on to the sixth grade at a new school, while the K—6 schools were accountable for the achievement levels of their sixth-grade students (Tucker and Andrada 1997).

In 1994, a change in testing and reporting procedures required sixth-grade students attending new schools after graduating from a Type I, K—5 school to identify their former school. This allowed Tucker and Andrada to compare CMT data from this group of sixth-graders with CMT data from sixth-graders who were still at their original K—6 school. The researchers hoped to learn whether students attending schools with a K-5 grade span performed as well as their K—6 cohorts.

The results indicated that in all subject areas the performance of sixth-grade students at the Type II schools was better than the performance of sixth-grade students from Type I schools. Tucker and Andrada pose three possible explanations for this outcome:

1. There was less incentive for the school administering the sixth-grade portion of the test to prepare Type I students (who had just arrived at the school after completing fifth-grade elsewhere) for the CMT because the administering school would not receive credit for Type I students' performance.
2. Type I schools had no incentive to their prepare fifth-grade students for the sixth-grade portion of the CMT because those Type I schools were not being held accountable for their "graduates" performance at the administering school.
3. Information about the nature and importance of the sixth-grade portion of the CMT was not being made available to students and teachers in Type I schools; therefore, the teachers were not familiar with the best methods for preparing their fifth-grade students adequately for the CMT.

This study by Tucker and Andrada demonstrates the subtle ways in which grade span can work for or against students learning within a particular school system. The authors conclude by noting that school-level policies and practices can vary dramatically depending on the grade span used within a school.

Alspaugh (1999) has conducted several previous research studies investigating the effects of grade span on student achievement and other educational outcomes. In general,

he has found that students suffer achievement loss during each transition year they experience—that is, the transition year between elementary school and middle or junior high school, and the transition year between middle or junior high school and high school. Alspaugh also found that students typically gain back the achievement loss in the year following the transition year.

In this most recent study, Alspaugh looked at the effect of transition year, student gender, and grade span on high school dropout rates. Using a sample of 45 high schools—15 with students in grades 10-12, 15 with students in grades 9-12, and 15 with students in grades 7-12—he analyzed the relationship of the transitional year and other factors to the dropout rate within the groups of schools.

Alspaugh's analysis revealed that students who made the transition to high school at grade 7 (that is, those who attended high schools with the 7-12 grade configuration) dropped out significantly less often than did students making the transition at either the ninth- or tenth-grade level. Dropout rates were highest for students who made the transition at the tenth-grade level.

Overall, boys dropped out more frequently than girls, but the transition grade was still a significant factor among female students—girls who transitioned at grade 7 dropped out less frequently than girls who transitioned at either grade 9 or 10. Students in this study dropped out most frequently at the eleventh grade, regardless of the year in which they transitioned to high school.

Alspaugh suggests that the high dropout rate attributed to students transitioning to high school at grade 10 may occur because of the achievement loss experienced by many students during a transitional year.

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RESEARCH CENTER

Grade-Span Configurations

Essentials on education data and analysis from research authority AEL

By: District Administration
District Administration, Mar 2005

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If you've read many research reports, you're familiar with the statement Further research on this topic is needed. You may have thought it a self-serving statement, coming from a researcher who no doubt dreams of additional funding. But when it comes to answering questions about what grade-span configurations are best, nearly everyone agrees: Further research is needed. Existing research does, however, offer some direction--and food for thought.

Defining the Term Grade-span configuration:the number and range of grade levels that a school comprises

Much of this research involves grades 6-9, where the merits of middle schools vs. other configurations are debated. When Ted Coladarci and Julie Hancock examined the research on the effects of grade span on academic achievement, they found few studies that used statistical procedures in an effort to yield a clearer picture of the cause-and-effect between grade-span configuration and student achievement. Researchers say the results of these studies should be "treated with considerable caution" because they are few in number, but they call the consistency of results "noteworthy."

The studies suggest "achievement in the middle grades is higher in schools with an elementary-wide configuration than a middle-grades configuration."

Specifically, a study of 700 rural Louisiana schools showed that sixth and seventh graders in K-6, K-7 and K-12 schools "performed significantly higher on the state achievement test than students in 6-8 and 7-9 schools." A study with 163 Maine schools found 8th-grade achievement on the state test was higher in K-8, K-9 and 3-8 schools than it was in middle school and junior high configurations.

A study of sixth-grade achievement in 330 Pennsylvania schools found an advantage to "locating sixth graders in an elementary versus a middle school." This advantage was "most evident" among students low in socioeconomic status.

One possible explanation for these results is that a K-8 configuration reduces the number of school-to-school transitions. A study by John Alspaugh also found that as the number of transitions increased, "there was an associated increase in the high school dropout rates." Citing the potentially negative effects of multiple transitions, researchers Catherine Paglin and Jennifer Fager recommend that districts with multiple grade spans establish "articulation and transition activities" that involve teachers and students.

Nine Factors to Consider

Student achievement is, of course, only one factor districts must consider in making decisions about school configurations. Fiscal constraints, projected enrollments, political tensions, school size, school and community goals, and geographic realities also come into play. When Paglin and Fager examined eight schools with seven

different grade-span configurations, they identified nine factors that district leaders should consider in determining the grade-span configurations of individual schools:

Cost and length of student travel

Possible increase or decrease in parent involvement, which can be affected by the distance between home and school as well as the number of schools a family's children attend

Number of students at each grade level, which may affect class groupings and courses offered

Effect of school setting on achievement, particularly for grades 6-9

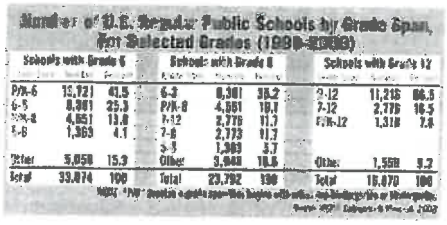
Effect on whether the neighborhood schools close or remain open

Number of school transitions for students

Opportunities for interaction between age groups

Influence of older students on younger students

Building design and how well it suits current or desired grade levels



Coladarci and Hancock predict additional research will support the position of the National Middle School Association: "Effective programs and practices, not grade configurations, determine the quality of schools." Wayne Seller's recent review of the literature suggests that making wise decisions about grade configuration means "finding a balance between the needs of the students, the needs of the school system, and the expectations of the community."

View citation of the references used in this article.

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