

**NORWALK BOARD OF EDUCATION
FACILITIES COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 29, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Mike Barbis, Chair; Dr. Yvel Crevecoeur, Art Kassimis,
Bryan Meek
STAFF: Thomas Hamilton, Chief Financial Officer;
Dr. Steven Adamowski, Superintendent
OTHER: Bruce Kimmel, Common Council; Michael Zuba, Milone & MacBroom.

Call to Order

Mr. Barbis called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m., introduced members in attendance as listed above and guests.

Old Business — South Norwalk Follow Up:

a. Review of district-wide enrollment/demographic data mile walk zone

Mr. Zuba of Milone & MacBroom Consulting delivered a power point presentation of district concepts and the neighborhood analysis. He explained that the original ½ mile radius was too large of an area and the radius was changed to ¼ mile analysis of student enrollment projections for the Ely and Columbus areas. He reviewed the chart of enrollment by school site with projected demographic analysis of the minority composition of students. There was a review of the neighborhood component to attendance and assumptions of student attending from balance of district ethnically representative of the district as a whole. There was discussion of the minority percentage goal and target for achievement by school and the options for balancing of attendance for the magnet school design.

b. Update on South Norwalk survey results

Ms. Brenda Williams delivered the power point presentation of the survey (survey and results posted on the Norwalk Public Schools website)

Comments and questions from the Committee members were fielded on the design of the survey and definitions of “unassigned” and South Norwalk residency. There was discussion on the outcome of feedback relative to responses on type of theme programming of a magnet theme, STEM, STEAM or other options. A summary of responses on themes from open answers is summarized as follows:

Themes from Open Answers

- Impact on other schools- All our school buildings need investment and upgrades
- South Norwalk students deserve options closer to home
- Critical that a new school reflect the diversity of Norwalk
- Ensuring a safe environment needs to be part of the plan
- Strong programming and support will be essential to success, including after-school options
- Interest in more magnet programs overall, but that should not take away funding from neighborhood schools
- Concern about continued (and expanded)

Status update on proposed Ponus Ridge project:

- a. Review/discussion of proposed magnet school theme curriculum issues and resource requirements
- b. Review/discussion of planned K-8 structure
- c. Review of demographic data
- d. Review/discussion of site layout and circulation

Dr. Adamowski discussed the ‘unassigned’ students and clarified how this has been a historical practice for district balancing of enrollment and the resulting transportation costs and absence of a neighborhood school in many parts of the city of Norwalk.

There was discussion of the STEM vs. STEAM themes, and Dr. Adamowski summarized that the primary concern is that of the funding that would be necessary for the Arts element of STEAM.

Ponus Ridge K-8 Elementary Stem Campus

Dr. Adamowski provided the following outline

450 — Student K-S Lower School

- STEM focus/theme replacing antiquated “Science” magnet at Jefferson (field trips)
- Lottery preference to current Jefferson students
- Jefferson is returned to its former K-5 neighborhood school status (400,/ students) and “renovated as new” in Phase II of the Building Program

- STEM program components at the lower elementary level include: daily instruction in experiential science; science infused” ELA and Math instruction in grades 4-5; elementary engineering program (EIF); Legos lab (Pre-K-2); Engineering lab (3-6); integrated technology and technology lab (K-6); “creatures” lab

600— Student 6-8 Upper School

450 — Student K-S Lower School – continued

- STEM focus/theme
- Lottery preference to Lower School, Kendall and Jefferson students at grade 6
- Ponus is reduced from its current 9 sections per grade to 8 sections per grade. Three classrooms are converted to specialized STEM laboratories/spaces.
- STEM program components at the upper elementary level include:
Integrated Math and Science lessons (EYE); interdisciplinary units of instruction; project based learning; engineering (Project Lead the Way):
 - innovative technology and connectivity to other STEM schools Internationally; robotics; horticulture facilities in each building would be shared gardens, labs, etc.
 - supported by a \$1,000 per student intra-district.

Dr. Adamowski explained that a key major conclusion is both schools would have a themed program providing robust choice and state racial balance compliance. He added that there are several options to explore and examples of what is being developed for review and analysis will be provided at the next meeting.

There was discussion on how other cities such as Stamford give school choice preference based on residential housing.

Mr. Hamilton outlined the attributes of the Ponus Ridge site:

- Largest site in the District at 41 acres
- Building sited on highest elevation on the property
- Plenty of room for building expansion
- Site can accommodate needed safety improvements
- Separate and distinct bus drop off & parent drop offs
- Separate lower grade/upper grade parent drop offs
- Emergency vehicular ingress/egress
- Age-Appropriate classrooms, educational spaces –outdoor play areas can be accommodated
- Additional parking & storm water management can be accommodated.

Following the discussion on Ponus expansion, Mr. Zuba returned to the presentation and covered recommendations for Jefferson re-designation and renovation. He explained the realignment zone with natural boundary to return Jefferson to a neighborhood school with North and South borders.

He outlined the minority breakdown and components of Ponus PK-8 which provided planned K-5 seats at three sections/grade.

He outlined the minority enrollment attributed to the rising share of student body by count and ethnicity birth percentages, as follows:

Enrollment Projections by Grade Level

School Year	PK-12 Total	K-12 Total	K-5 Total	6-8 Total	9-12 Total
2017-18	11,431	11,151	5,206	2,528	3,417
2018-19	11,470	11,190	5,119	2,556	3,515
2019-20	11,541	11,261	5,078	2,591	3,592
2020-21	11,586	11,306	5,056	2,577	3,673
2021-22	11,581	11,301	5,042	2,539	3,720

Detailed race/ethnicity statistics

Smaller (~290) Ely attendance zone:

Row Labels	Count of ObjectID
Asian	1.03%
Black or African American	37.33%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	55.14%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.34%
Two or More Races	0.68%
White	5.48%
Grand Total	100.00%

Larger (~405) Ely attendance zone:

Row Labels	Count of ObjectID
Asian	1.47%
Black or African American	28.75%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	62.41%
N/A	1.72%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.25%
Two or More Races	0.98%
White	4.42%
Grand Total	100.00%

These charts wer referred to during questions addressed from members of the public.

Mr. Barbis asked if there were questions from members of the public in attendance. There was discussion on the next steps and building layout for the renovation of Ponus. Mr. Hamilton explained that specific details are not available at this time.

There were questions and comments on the survey and racial balance targets, and financial constraints for funding in schools where there is a high percentage of students that are considered poor – that are receiving benefits for free/reduced lunch.

There was mention of the new arrivals and immigration entrants into Brien McMahon. Mr. Barbis noted that it has become somewhat of an international school with it being the landing school of choice for students into the City from another country into Norwalk.

It was noted that this Committee would have the next regular monthly meeting on the Tuesday, December 13 with information to bring to the Workshop Meeting on December 20.

Mr. Barbis noted that the item on the agenda was missed and asked for a review of the minutes from the last meeting.

Approval of Minutes — November 10, 2016 meeting

Dr. Crevecoeur noted that Jay Saed should be Jaelin and the spelling of Ralph's last name is Valenzisi..

- ** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 10 AS AMENDED WITH CORRECTIONS AS NOTED.
- ** DR. CREVECOEUR SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adjournment

- ** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO ADJOURN
- ** DR. CREVECOEUR SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox,
Telesco Secretarial Services