

Newtown Board of Education  
February 13, 2017  
Questions and Answers

Pg 20 District Student Enrollment

Q1. Can you confirm that there was only 2 fewer students in the High School in 2016-2017 than 2015-2016?

A. Yes. These numbers represent the October 1 enrollment that is reported to the State. Throughout the year the numbers will increase and decrease, all the enrollment data and tables reflect this 10/1 point in time for consistency year to year.

Pg. 25 & 26 on the Milone & MacBroom Enrollment Study

Q2. It appears that the projected decline in enrollment for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade was higher in the medium projection than in the low enrollment projection for the 2015-16 estimates. Low shows a 6.0 percent decline and a medium shows a 616 percent decline. Was this a mistake/type? How does this make sense?

A. The difference between the high and medium growth models for Head O'Meadow is the result of the assumptions built into the mathematical models we used, which distribute our overall enrollment projections among individual schools. In all cases, we are most confident in our district-wide projections due to the larger cohort sizes, which is why we normalize individual school projections to our district-wide projected numbers.

For the high growth model, we incorporated trends from 2002-05 into the model, however, we did not have detailed birth data from the 1990s to help account for the birth-K trends that occurred in that time period. So, we had to make an additional assumption on birth-K trends, and decided to use the highest total birth-K trend average we could (most recent two years) and apply it evenly across all schools (we know variation amongst schools in their birth-K ratios is a more recent phenomenon, so we were trying to mimic 2002-05 trends). That, in essence, reduced Head O'Meadow's birth-K ratio, since its 3-year average birth-K is higher than the district-wide highest average that we used. Thus, the high projection model is actually lower than the medium model.

What does it mean? We stand by the high growth projection model for the district, however, the distribution among individual schools in the high growth model may be underestimating Head O'Meadow and overestimating Middle Gate

Response from M&M:

It's a result of the persistency ratios used in the different sets of projections. We choose different sets of persistency ratios for each model and dub them high, medium and low based on their impacts on the total K-12 enrollment projection. While a two-year average of persistency ratios may have the strongest numbers for elementary and middle schools, they may be slightly weaker in high school grades, than, say, a five-year average.

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Page 139 of Budget book

Q3. Are the 9/10 and 10/11 enrollment numbers by grade really identical or was one year inadvertently repeated?

A. The distribution for 2010-2011 should be: 9-432, 10-462, 11-399, 12-438. We have updated the histogram on page 139 of the budget book to reflect the correct distribution. The page is also attached to the end of this document.

Q4. Regional Initiatives to generate money?

A. SPED 18-21 program: The Director of Pupil Personnel has reached out to area Directors to offer the districts NCP (Newtown Community Partnership) program to surrounding districts to assist with providing appropriate programming.

TAP Program – limited conversations in regards to regionalizing the Alternative program, however, difficult to program for at this time given budget constraints and the need to hire staff to appropriately program for student's needs as well as ensuring space.

Q5. Out of District costs – Out of District costs have been stabilized due to:

A. Special Education Administration working together with staff/school Administration on understanding, in greater depth, the programming and resources in district that can be utilized to meet student's needs.

Administration working collaboratively with parents and Out of District Administrators, to discuss educating students in district.

Q6. New In-House programming

A. Two in-district specialized programs at the elementary level utilizing current staff as well as a refinement of a specialized program at the Middle School. All three programs have provided the district with the ability to appropriately meet the needs of our students. These programs have assisted staff and parents to work together to keep students in-district.

Q7. Return of 2 Social Workers:

A. With the return of the 2 School Social Workers (Reed and NMS), all support services currently provided in the 2016-2017 school year will remain the same. Additionally, one of

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the school psychologists at NMS will continue to split their day between the district's growing pre-school program and NMS.

- Q8. What is the potential for auditorium revenue when the project is complete?
- A. Revenues from auditorium rental and related fees paid by outside groups for the three year period beginning 2012-13 and ending 2014-15 cumulatively totaled \$14,273, an average of \$4758 per year. These revenues have come primarily from groups hosting dance recitals and dance practices. All of the other outside groups that utilized our auditorium during this same period are exempt from paying rental fees, per BOE Policy 3515. Our own schools' needs which are prioritized for use of the auditorium and the requests of these outside groups that are exempt from rental fees occur at the most popular times that the auditorium might otherwise be considered for rental by organizations or businesses that would result in revenue. Therefore, it is a reasonable assumption that the renovation of the auditorium is not likely to result in increased rental revenue.