

# NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of Business, Finance and Planning

## Memorandum

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TO: David Fleishman, Superintendent

FROM: Sandra Guryan, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 1, 2012

RE: Elementary and Middle School Space Status Update

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This is an update on the various space challenges in the elementary and middle schools. The update includes:

- Reallocation, redesign and reconfiguration of existing space that was necessary to accommodate enrollment increases in elementary schools and middle schools in 2012-13.
- Information regarding facility adjustments in prior years.
- Options for managing future growth in the next two years.

Note *preliminary* forecasts are used in this memo and will be subject to change pending the full analysis of enrollment to be published in the November Enrollment Analysis Report.

### **Elementary Schools Space Adjustments 2012-13 and Earlier**

In the current year 2012-13, a total of seven elementary classrooms in six schools were added to address enrollment growth and class size as follows:

- Angier (+1 classroom): A grade 2 classroom was added by relocating literacy to the library.
- Bowen (+1 classroom): A combined grades 1-2 classroom was added by relocating the sensory and enrichment programs from a classroom to a newly-constructed space (sensory) and into the library (enrichment.)
- Franklin (+1 classroom): A combined grades 1-2 classroom was added by relocating a district-wide special education program to Underwood.
- Memorial-Spaulding (+1 classroom): A grade 2 classroom was added by relocating the learning center/literacy/math coach programs into a smaller room used by physical education and the afterschool program.
- Underwood (+2 classroom): A combined grades K-1 classroom and a grade 2 classroom were added by relocating art to a lower level room and relocating the ELL and literacy programs to non-classroom spaces.
- Ward (+1 classroom): A combined K-1 classroom was added by relocating the speech and language/ELL programs to a refurbished storage room and OT/vision room, respectively.

In addition, modifications were made at four schools as follows to better accommodate other instructional programs and services:

- Countryside: A retractable wall was installed in the cafeteria to create additional instructional space when the room is not being used for lunch.

- Horace Mann: A small literacy center was created by combining a closet and additional space from a K classroom. A handicapped accessible bathroom and water fountain were also added.
- Lincoln-Eliot: An undersized instructional classroom was enlarged by adding space from a former psychologist office.
- Williams: A 0.6 FTE kindergarten section shares the afterschool room.

Elementary building projects completed in recent years include:

- Four modular classrooms were added, including one each at Horace Mann and Burr and two at Zervas.
- Cabot: A classroom previously used as a lunchroom reverted back to classroom space; the lunch program was relocated into another larger room to allow the cafeteria to have a larger space.
- Countryside: Literacy and ELL were combined into one room to provide additional storage for the school. The teachers' room was repurposed/renovated to provide book and curriculum material storage.

### Elementary School Space Shortages

Table 13 - updated and included at the end of the document - shows the current use of full size classrooms for regular classroom instruction as well as for art, music and specialized educational programs. Note the above-mentioned addition of 7 classrooms in 2012-13 means there was a net loss of 7 classrooms for other educational purposes. The following table is a *preliminary* look at classroom shortages in 2013-14 and 2014-15; note shortages are indicated by positive numbers and surpluses by negative numbers. Burr, Horace Mann, Angier and Bowen are projected to have a shortage of one classroom each next school year and Underwood will add an additional classroom for which there is space; there are shortages the following year (2014-15) at Lincoln-Eliot and Mason-Rice. The next section will offer a range of alternatives available to each school to ameliorate the shortage. Note Ward has neither surpluses nor shortages projected for the next two school years.

The table also depicts shortages in other instructional spaces, assuming each school needs a minimum of four additional classrooms – one for art, one for music, and two for special education or other educational programs. The four room minimum was used to calculate shortages for the long-range elementary school facilities plan, first presented last spring. The total shortage information will further guide evaluation of available alternatives for the future.

Schools	Shortages: Classrooms Only		Shortages: Other Instructional Spaces		Shortages: Total	
	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15
<b>North Feeding:</b>						
Burr	1		3	4	4	4
Cabot			1		1	0
Franklin			2	2	2	2
Horace Mann	1		3	4	4	4
Lincoln-Eliot		1	2	2	2	3
Peirce			3	3	3	3
Underwood*	-1		-2	-1	-3	-1
Ward**					0	0
<b>Total North Feeding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>South Feeding:</b>						
Angier	1		3		4	0
Bowen	1		4	4	5	4
Countryside			3	3	3	3
Mason-Rice		1	3	3	3	4
Memorial-Spaulding			2	2	2	2
Williams			3	3	3	3
Zervas			3	3	3	3
<b>Total South Feeding</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Total Elementary</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>

\*Underwood has a surplus of one regular classroom in 2013-14; however, this classroom will be needed for regular instruction in 2013-14 according to preliminary enrollment projections. Underwood also has surpluses in "other instructional spaces." Shortages are indicated by positive numbers and surpluses by negative numbers.

\*\*Ward has neither surpluses nor shortages projected for the next two school years.

### **Possible Solutions for 2013-14**

Currently there are four elementary schools with space concerns for the 2013-14 school year. Each school is presented below with options for reallocating existing internal space, creating new spaces within the existing building, adding new spaces or modular classrooms as well as using, expanding or creating new or existing buffer zones.

#### **Angier (+1 classroom shortage)**

- Reallocation of Space: One existing inclusion facilitator room may be reallocated for use as a regular education classroom, although there are no more spaces readily available.
- Modular Classrooms: No modular classrooms are recommended for Angier as the school is first on the list of elementary schools for major construction, and this project is underway.
- Current Buffer Zones: There are currently two Angier buffer zones, one with Williams and one with Countryside. The Williams buffer zone has an average of ten students per grade with approximately half the students going to each school. Use of this buffer zone could send an additional five students to Williams. This buffer zone could also be expanded to allow for more students. In the coming years, there may be space concerns at Williams due to the anticipated Riverside development. The construction of the new Angier School will add additional capacity for students in the Angier-Williams buffer zone. The Countryside buffer zone was newly created in 2011-12 to help with space issues at Countryside and has an average of 32 students per year, with approximately half going to each school. The buffer zone use has helped with space issues at Countryside. There may be space available for a limited number of future students at Countryside.
- New Buffer Zones: Zervas School would be an option for a new buffer zone with Angier depending upon enrollments. Although Zervas feeds to a different middle school than Angier, both schools attend South.

#### **Bowen (+1 classroom shortage)**

- Bowen is currently the second largest elementary school with 477 students.
- Reallocation of Space: One option would be to make use of a current art room as a regular classroom. Art classes would then need to be reallocated or move from room to room. There is also a small room next to the library that may be available for other uses. Internal renovations could create additional instructional space.
- Modular Classrooms: Bowen may benefit from additional modular classroom construction, although space for a new modular is limited and may take away the only hardtop play space as well as parking. In addition, access/egress to the modular may have to be through the gym. Plans for a new modular were underway in 2008 but funding was not successful. Bowen already has sprinklers installed; thus, the addition of sprinklers would not add to the cost of a modular construction project. Additional spaces within the building are limited and not ideal.
- Current Buffer Zones: There are currently two Bowen buffer zones, one with Mason-Rice and one with Countryside. The Mason-Rice buffer zone has an average of seven students per grade. With space concerns at Mason-Rice in 2014-15, it is not an ideal option to send more students to Mason-Rice. The Countryside buffer zone was expanded in 2011-12 to help with space issues at Countryside. Depending upon enrollments, there may be space available for a limited number of future students back at Countryside.
- New Buffer Zones: Memorial-Spaulding School would be an option for a new buffer zone with Bowen. The Avalon at Chestnut Hill project was districted to Memorial-Spaulding when it opened in 2006. Bowen and Memorial-Spaulding students all attend Oak Hill and Newton South, so current feeder patterns would not be disrupted. Another option for a new buffer zone with Bowen is Ward since Ward does not have any current classroom shortages. The Bowen-Ward buffer zone would involve moving students into a different middle and high school and could affect the North-South split.

#### **Burr (+1 classroom shortage)**

- Reallocation of Space: One option would be to make use of a current art room as a regular classroom. Art classes would then need to be reallocated or moved from room to room. Another option is to build a new classroom in part of the lower-level cafeteria.

- Modular Classrooms: Burr may benefit from additional modular classroom construction. Additional spaces within the building are limited and not ideal. Burr already has sprinklers installed; thus, the addition of sprinklers would not add to the cost of the modular construction project.
- Current Buffer Zones: There are currently two Burr buffer zones, one with Williams and one with Franklin. Both of these buffer zones were used and expanded in 2012-13 to help with space issues at Burr. For the current year, there were approximately 16 students in the Williams buffer zone and ten students were sent to Williams. There were only three students in the Franklin buffer zone for the current year. This buffer zone could be expanded to allow for more students to attend Franklin. One district-wide special education classroom was moved to Underwood for 2012-13. It is anticipated that another similar room will be moved to Underwood in 2013-14, freeing up an additional classroom.
- New Buffer Zones: Peirce school is an option for a new buffer zone with Burr. One concern would be crossing the Massachusetts Turnpike. A bus may be available to add a stop in this area, but timing could be a concern. Burr and Peirce attend Day and North so this would not disrupt current feeder patterns.

#### Horace Mann (+1 classroom shortage)

- Reallocation of Space: There are a couple options for reallocation of existing space within Horace Mann. One option would be to make use of a basement room currently being used by the afterschool program; this would require internal construction as the basement room is one large space. Another option is to make use of space located between two modular classrooms.
- Modular Classrooms: Horace Mann may benefit from additional modular classroom construction. Additional spaces within the building are limited and not ideal. Horace Mann already has sprinklers installed; thus, the addition of sprinklers would not add to the cost of the modular construction project.
- Current Buffer Zones: There are currently two Horace Mann buffer zones, one with Franklin and one with Lincoln-Eliot. The Franklin buffer zone has approximately six students per year, with most students attending Horace Mann. Future students could be moved to Franklin, but Franklin is currently being used to help with space issues at Burr School. The Lincoln-Eliot buffer zone has four students per year and could also be expanded. Lincoln-Eliot is projected to have space issues as well during 2014-15. There is a possibility for reallocation of four preschool rooms currently at Lincoln-Eliot. This would free up space for students from the buffer zone with Horace Mann and Lincoln-Eliot.
- New Buffer Zones: Cabot School is an option for a new buffer zone with Burr. One concern would be crossing Washington Street. A current bus could be re-routed to pick up these students and drop off at Peirce School, or a new bus route could be added. Horace Mann and half of Cabot attend Day and North, so this would not disrupt current feeder patterns.

#### Underwood (+1 classroom projected)

- Reallocation of Space: Underwood currently has rooms available for reallocation as regular classrooms; projected enrollments indicate Underwood will add a regular classroom in 2013-14. One district-wide special education classroom was moved from Franklin during 2012-13 and it is anticipated that two additional similar classrooms will be moved in 2013-14 and in 2014-15 to help with space concerns at Burr and Franklin.
- Modular Classrooms: Underwood is not currently being considered for modular classroom construction as there are a number of available rooms. Another issue is that Underwood does not currently have sprinklers, which would add additional cost in conjunction with modular construction.
- Current Buffer Zones: There is currently one buffer zone with Ward School with approximately one student per grade. This buffer zone could be expanded in the future to allocate more students to Ward School. Underwood and Ward students both attend Bigelow and Newton North, so this would not disrupt current feeder patterns.
- New Buffer Zones: Cabot School is an option for a new buffer zone with Underwood. Half of Cabot currently attends Bigelow and all Cabot students attend Newton North, so this would be consistent with current feeder patterns.

#### **Possible Solutions for 2014-15**

There are two elementary schools with space concerns for the 2014-15 school year. The following are space options for each school.

#### Lincoln-Eliot (+1 classroom shortage)

- Reallocation of Space: There are a number of options for use of existing space in Lincoln-Eliot. One option is reallocation of the four preschool classrooms. This would free up classroom space for Lincoln-Eliot as well as buffer zone students from Horace Mann. Another option is to relocate art or music rooms within Lincoln-Eliot.
- Modular Classrooms: Lincoln-Eliot is not being considered for modular classroom construction as there is no exterior space readily available. Modular classrooms were considered in 2008 and were suggested to be placed under the overhang in the rear of the building.
- Current Buffer Zones: There is currently one buffer zone with Horace Mann. With space issues at Horace Mann, this buffer zone is not recommended to help with space issues at Lincoln-Eliot.
- New Buffer Zones: Cabot School is an option for a new buffer zone with Horace Mann; however, students would have to cross Washington Street. Half of Cabot currently attends Bigelow and all Cabot students attend Newton North, so this would be consistent with current feeder patterns.

#### Mason-Rice (+1 classroom shortage)

- Mason-Rice is currently the fourth largest elementary school with 438 students.
- Reallocation of Space: There are not many options for use of current space at Mason-Rice. One basement classroom currently being used by the afterschool program is an option.
- Modular Classrooms: Mason-Rice may benefit from additional modular classroom construction; more than one modular at Mason-Rice could help with crowding at Bowen by using buffer zones. Mason-Rice does not currently have sprinklers installed, thus adding additional construction costs in conjunction with modular construction. Additional spaces within the building are limited and not ideal.
- Current Buffer Zones: Mason-Rice currently has buffer zones with Bowen, Ward and Zervas. With space issues at Bowen, this buffer zone is not recommended to help with space issues at Mason-Rice. The Ward buffer zone has approximately nine students per grade and most of these students attend Mason-Rice. Future students could be sent to Ward School. One concern is that Ward students attend Bigelow and Newton North, thus affecting the North-South split. There is a small buffer zone with Zervas School, with approximately one student per grade. This buffer zone could be expanded in the future depending on space at Zervas. Zervas and Mason-Rice students both attend Newton South. However, Zervas students do attend a different middle school (Oak Hill).
- New Buffer Zones: Cabot School is an option for a new buffer zone with Mason-Rice. These students would attend a different middle and high school, but many of these students already attend Newton North due to the Mason-Rice 1-mile zone, and thus would not affect the high school split.

#### **Middle School Space Needs/Solutions**

The Day construction project will be complete by next fall; the addition of six new classrooms will provide enough capacity for the next several years of increased enrollment. This year at Day, in conjunction with the current renovation, a science classroom was added by renovating the former PC lab and building a PC lab into the library. *Preliminary* enrollments at the middle schools for 2013-14 indicate the need for *at least* one additional half team at each middle school, which requires a careful examination of space use in 2013-14. Possible solutions for the next two school years are considered below:

#### Bigelow (+2 classrooms need)

- Move the specialized program, temporarily housed at Bigelow during Day construction, back to Day.
- Adjust the Cabot split by districting more students to Day in lieu of sending 48% to Bigelow, possibly according to choice.

#### Brown (+2 classrooms need)

- Two additional classrooms could be added by reconfiguring existing space during the summer.

#### Oak Hill (+2 classrooms need)

- Encourage Oak Hill students to enroll at Brown.
- Explore all possibilities for internal space modifications.