

## Preliminary Data Analysis of Focus Groups and Survey Responses

April 6, 2022

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### ***Purpose of Ad Hoc Committee***

The purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee is to accompany and support the Administration and School Committee members as they move toward a decision regarding consolidation. Therefore, the Ad Hoc Committee will consider and investigate school consolidation and ultimately make a recommendation to the School Committee of Option 1, 2, 3 or 4 from the MARS report.

### ***Ad Hoc Committee Members***

Judith Kuehn/Co-Chair/Superintendent of Schools  
Phil Lemnios/Co-Chair/Town Manager  
Jennifer Fleming/Committee Member/School Committee  
Jason Frady/Committee Member/Advisory Board  
Renee Kiley/ Committee Member/Parent Volunteer  
Ernest Minelli/Committee Member /School Committee  
John Reilly/Committee Member /Board of Selectmen  
David DeGennaro/Support Staff  
Debbe Bennett/Support Staff

### ***Methodology***

#### ***Data Collection Information***

***Envisioning Question:*** What are the trends and patterns that develop in and across the data that will guide the Ad Hoc Committee in making a recommendation to the School Committee that is reflective of the best overall consolidation option for all members of the Hull Community?

***Process:*** *The following steps were employed to analyze and synthesize all feedback data from focus groups and survey:*

The data analysis team consisted of the Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Elementary School Principal, and retired School Business Manager.

- Organized the data into a format that lends to effective analysis
- Analyzed the results of the **Forum** data set
  - Identified trends and patterns that emerged in the data set

- Crafted a descriptive statement or bulleted list for each category that reflects the meaning of a majority of responses in that category.
- Analyzed the results of the Survey data set
  - Identified trends and patterns that emerged in the data set
  - Crafted a descriptive statement or bulleted list for each category that reflects the meaning of a majority of responses in that category.

## **Description of Option One**

- Status Quo
- Current grade configuration remains the same
- Operate and maintain the current three school facilities

## Pros Option 1

Option 1: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)  | Common Theme  |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Status Quo</b>       | Participants identified different areas of influence in maintaining the status quo: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current grades spans (elementary, middle, high school)</li> <li>• Potential future growth for enrollment and programs</li> <li>• Space needs (less kids more space)</li> <li>• Social distancing</li> <li>• Ability to maintain South Shore Educational Collaborative</li> <li>• Stability and continuity</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Nothing Positive</b> | Participants indicated the following to continuing to maintain three school buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No positive aspects in maintaining three school buildings</li> <li>• Declining enrollment not addressed</li> <li>• Unnecessary financial burden continues</li> </ul>  |

Option 1: Focus Group

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)                               | Common Theme   |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Traditional grade spans culture/ experiences</b>  | Participants indicated it was important to take into consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The maturity level of students</li> <li>• Established cultures and traditions</li> <li>• No disruption or change</li> <li>• Maintain South Shore Educational Collaborative in the District</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Potential for improved culture and experience</b> | Participants indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for enhancement of activities because of available space within schools</li> <li>• Potential for future growth.</li> </ul>  |

## Cons Option 1

Option 1: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)      | Common Theme  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Financial burden</b>     | Participants Indicated the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That continuing to maintain three schools is fiscally unsustainable</li> <li>• Limitation of funds from being reallocated to offer new and diverse educational opportunities for all students</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Declining Enrollment</b> | Participants indicated that with declining enrollment, the space in the three schools is underutilized.   |
| <b>3. Status quo</b>           | Participants indicated the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The loss of a school building as a risk that prohibits space for future growth</li> <li>• Having only two buildings has the potential for overcrowded schools in the future</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>4. Nothing negative</b>     | Participants indicated there were no negative aspects or concerns to keeping the status quo   |
| <b>5. Town Projects</b>        | Participants indicated that this option limits opportunities for town projects.   |

Option 1: Focus Group

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)  | Common Theme  |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Fiscal budget considerations related to space and cost</b> | Participants responses indicated concerns with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underutilized space</li> <li>• The cost of running three buildings</li> <li>• The waste of energy and resources</li> <li>• Status quo option contrary to MARS report</li> <li>• The three buildings not at capacity</li> <li>• The cost to repurpose buildings</li> <li>• The cost to sustain quality programs across three schools</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Traditional grade span/culture experience</b>              | Participants noted the risk for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmatic splintering of educational programs</li> <li>• The loss of space</li> <li>• The potential adjustments of blending new age groups</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3. Town projects limited</b>                                  | Participants noted concerns for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town wide sustainability with status quo</li> <li>• Status quo delays the inevitable</li> </ul>   |

## **Description of Option Two**

Create a Prek-8 and 9-12 model

- Memorial Middle School no longer utilized as a school
  - School Committee gives up control of middle school
- Jacobs PreK – 8
- Hull High 9 – 12
- Collaborative spaces reduced or eliminated



## Pros Option 2

Option 2: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)          | Common Theme  |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1.Support for consolidation</b> | Participants identified that consolidation could provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased school experience for students</li> <li>• Efficient use of building space</li> <li>• Efficient use of school resources</li> <li>• Cost effective</li> <li>• Cost avoidance for town</li> <li>• Opens possibility for town projects/town control</li> </ul> |

Option 2: Focus Groups

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)           | Common Theme   |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Support for consolidation</b> | Participants indicated consolidation could provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer transitions and strengthened peer relationships with extended time PreK - 8 at the Jacobs Elementary School</li> <li>• Increased access to programming and extracurricular activities for students</li> <li>• Utilization of the Jacobs Elementary School as a school within a school model (upper and lower school)</li> </ul> |

## Cons Option 2

Option 2: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)  | Common Theme  |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Nothing negative</b>   | Participants indicated there were no negative aspects of this option  |
| <b>2. Lack of support for consolidation</b>                          | Participants indicated they do not support consolidation because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age differences were of concern</li> <li>• Challenge associated with appropriate space for students</li> <li>• Potential future overcrowding</li> <li>• Disruption to status quo</li> <li>• Loss of South Shore Educational Collaborative</li> <li>• Change/impact for students and staff</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. School Committee loss of control of Memorial Middle School</b> | Participants indicated the School Committee would lose control of Memorial Middle School and also lose the potential to use it as a school building if there is future enrollment growth.   |

Option 2: Focus Groups

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)   | Common Theme  |
|---|---|
| <b>1.School Committee loss of control of Memorial Middle School</b> | Participants indicated loss of control by the School Committee of Memorial Middle School is not in the best interest of students.   |
| <b>2. Disruption to South Shore Educational Collaborative</b>       | Participants indicated concern for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of revenue from South Shore Educational Collaborative</li> <li>• The need for South Shore Educational Collaborative to seek other rental space</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. Traditional grade spans</b>                                   | Participants indicated the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to maintain students in traditional age cohorts</li> <li>• The concern for potential early education changes</li> </ul>                             |

## **Description of Option Three**

- Memorial Middle School no longer used as a school
  - School Committee gives up control of middle school
- Create a PreK – 7 and 8 – 12 model
- Hull High School 8 – 12
- Collaborative spaces reduced or eliminated

## Pros Option 3

Option 3: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)                                   | Common Theme  |
|---|---|
| <b>1. Support for 8 - 12 grade span at Hull High School</b> | Participants indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded educational and enrichment experiences for students as positive</li> <li>An opportunity to balance enrollment between two buildings to achieve efficient use of space</li> <li>A sense that an 8 - 12 grade span makes sense at Hull High School</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Nothing positive</b>                                  | Participants under this category indicated there are no positive aspects of option 3 and included no reason.  |
| <b>3. Expansion of Town services</b>                        | Participants indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A positive opportunity for the community to improve town services by the School Committee turning over the Memorial Middle School building</li> <li>A belief there will be cost savings to the town as a result of consolidation</li> </ul>                          |

Option 3: Focus Groups

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)           | Common Theme  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Support for Consolidation</b> | Participants indicated consolidation could allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximizing utilization of Hull High School and Jacobs Elementary School space</li> <li>Enhanced eighth grade educational experience with option to participate in athletics and extracurricular clubs</li> </ul> |

## Cons Option 3

Option 3: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)  | Common Theme   |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Concerns about 8 - 12 grade span at Hull High School</b>       | Participants noted concerns regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The safety and socialization of grade 8 students at Hull High School</li> <li>The need to plan for separate space for grade 8 at Hull High School</li> <li>The preparation/transition plans for grade 8 students at Hull High School</li> <li>The impact of change for students and staff</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. School Committee loss of control of Memorial Middle School</b> | Participants indicated loss of School Committee control as a negative because it will constrain the district if there was future enrollment growth.  |
| <b>3. Nothing negative</b>   | Participants indicated there were no negative aspects to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PreK - 7 at the Jacobs School and grades 8 - 12 at Hull High School</li> <li>The School Committee no longer having control of Memorial Middle School</li> </ul>   |

Option 3: Focus Groups

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)  | Common Theme<br><i>A descriptive statement that can stand alone or a bulleted list, if preferred.</i>  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Concerns around 8 - 12 grade span at Hull High School</b>      | Participants indicated the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Splitting grades 7 and 8 as a negative</li> <li>Loss of middle school cohort experience</li> </ul>              |
| <b>2. School Committee loss of control of Memorial Middle School</b> | Participants indicated loss of control of Memorial Middle School by the School Committee is a negative because it will constrain the district if there is future enrollment growth           |
| <b>3. Disruption to South Shore Educational Collaborative</b>        | Participants indicated concern for loss of revenue from South Shore Educational Collaborative and lack of space will cause South Shore Educational Collaborative to seek other rental space. |

## **Description of Option Four**

### Mixed-Use Model

- Select grade span
  - PreK – 7 at Jacobs Elementary School and 8 – 12 at Hull High School  
OR
  - PreK – 8 at Jacobs Elementary School and 9 – 12 at Hull High School
- Memorial Middle School stays in use as a mixed-use facility
  - School Committee remains control of Memorial Middle School
- Collaborative spaces eliminated or reduced
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to guide future use of Memorial School building between the town and School Committee

## Pros Option 4

Option 4: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)  | Common Theme   |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Best option</b>      | Participants indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 4 as the best choice without stating a specific reason</li> <li>Expressed that both the efficiency of space, usage and opportunities for mixed use/town projects as favorable</li> <li>The opportunity for expanded learning experiences</li> <li>That option 4 addresses declining enrollment</li> <li>It is desirable that the School Committee maintain control of Memorial Middle School through the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the town which secures the ability to address potential future growth and mixed use</li> <li>Potential financial benefits</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Nothing positive</b> | Participants responded with “none” when asked, What are the positive aspects of option 4?  |

Option 4: Focus Groups

PreK - 8 and 9 - 12 or PreK - 7 and 8 - 12

School Committee remains in control of Memorial Middle School

| Noted Trend / Theme (Pro)                                | Common Theme   |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Enhancement of community/town programs</b>         | Participants indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi age opportunities</li> <li>Centralization of town administration</li> <li>Opening up community space</li> <li>Pooling of resources</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. School Committee maintains control of building</b> | Participants indicated control of Memorial Middle School should remain with the School Committee to allow for future potential enrollment growth and maintain control over maintenance of Memorial Middle School.  |
| <b>3. Opportunities for educational programs</b>         | Participants indicated possible space for educational programs such as South Shore Educational Collaborative, vocational programs and Hull Family Network.   |
| <b>4. Fiscal Considerations</b>                          | Participants indicated possible revenue opportunities and possible cost avoidance.   |

## Cons Option 4

Option 4: Survey

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con)                           | Common Theme<br><i>A descriptive statement that describes the theme</i>  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Nothing Negative</b>                          | Participants indicated there were not any negative aspects or concerns to maintaining a mixed use model at Memorial Middle School (town/school use) and utilizing the Jacobs School and High School to educate PreK - 12 students.   |
| <b>2. Traditional Grade Span/Culture/Experience</b> | Participants noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A loss of traditional grade spans under this model</li> <li>Some traditions of each grade span could be lost</li> <li>Concern about the possibility of overcrowded buildings</li> </ul>   |
| <b>3. Uncertainty</b>                               | Participants noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncertainty about future use of the Memorial Middle School</li> <li>Concern regarding the strength, process, and time required to establish a Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Hull and the Hull School Committee</li> <li>Uncertainty regarding future use of buildings by South Shore Educational Collaborative</li> </ul> |
| <b>4. Cost of Maintaining 3 buildings</b>           | Participants noted the cost of the school department continuing to maintain three buildings as a negative outcome of this option.  |

Option 4: Focus Groups

| Noted Trend / Theme (Con) |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Logistics</b>       | Participants noted considerations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor space</li> <li>Parking</li> <li>Traffic flow</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. None</b>            | No negatives noted.  |

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Frequently Asked Questions Town**

1. What are the cost savings town-wide versus cost avoidance for the town?
2. What are the next steps for town buildings if the schools consolidate?
3. Will taxes for residents of Hull decrease if the schools consolidate?

### **Frequently Asked Questions School Department**

4. If the School Committee no longer has control of Memorial Middle School, who will maintain the building?

The Town of Hull would be fully responsible for all costs associated with maintaining and operating the building.

5. Is the Memorandum of Understanding only available when the School Committee maintains control of the middle school?

Yes, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Hull School Committee and Town of Hull would be developed in collaboration with legal counsel and be written to codify conditions under which the building will operate only as part of option 4.

6. What is the capacity of each of the school buildings? Will the schools be overcrowded with consolidation?

| School                   | MSBA Projected Enrollment Capacity | Enrollment when renovation was completed | Proposed Consolidation |               |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|---------------|
|                          |                                    |  | PreK-7 / 8-12          | PreK-8 / 9-12 |
| Jacobs Elementary School | 785                                | 538 (2008)                               | 496                    | 557           |
| Hull High School         | Add Number                         | 399 (2005)                               | 309                    | 248           |

7. Is there a payback cost to the Massachusetts School Building Authority if the School Committee gives up control of the Memorial School?

*Since the Memorial Middle School renovation project was completed in June of 2002, the Memorial Middle School bond has been paid off. We are currently working with the MSBA to determine whether there will be any potential financial impact resulting from reconfiguring the other school buildings.*

8. Will the Hull Public Schools lose Federal funding if the School Committee gives up control of the Memorial Middle School?

No, Chapter 70 federal funding is based on student population. It is not based on the number of school facilities utilized in a district.

9. Will services for special education suffer if the schools are consolidated?

No, in fact special education services may improve because of increased collaboration and limited need for staff to travel between buildings. Additionally, the district remains obligated to implement services based on student's individualized educational programs.

10. What is the impact to the School Department budget with the loss of the revenue from renting to South Shore Educational Collaborative?

Currently, the School Department utilizes rent from South Shore Educational Collaborative for maintenance of facilities and for the bonding of the turf field. Under option 4, the Memorandum of Understanding will state that the Town of Hull will absorb costs created by any loss of revenue as a result of South Shore Educational Collaborative losing space in the schools. If there is a possibility that there is room for some South Shore Educational Collaborative classrooms, the remaining revenue will be defined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

11. What type of retrofitting will need to occur to the Jacobs Elementary School (science labs, lockers, restrooms, etc.)?

A feasibility study, which is the next step identified in the MARS report, will need to be conducted to determine necessary retrofitting and cost of retrofitting.

12. Will there be a parking shortage at the Jacobs Elementary School and at Hull High School if Memorial Middle School is closed?

At this time, twenty-five parking spaces at the Jacobs Elementary School are occupied by South Shore Educational Collaborative staff and there is room in the current parking lot to add approximately fifteen additional parking spaces.

At the Hull High School, there is room to add the necessary parking spaces.

13. Does the Memorial Middle School need a lot of repairs?

Currently, a repair project is ongoing at the Memorial Middle School which is funded through a town bond. In addition, all town buildings will need consistent maintenance whether they are used as a school facility or not.

14. If Hull High School houses grades eight to twelve, will the course offerings change for grades nine to twelve?

No, course offerings will not change for students in grades nine to twelve. In fact, course offerings most likely will expand for students in grade eight.

15. Will there be space of Hull Family Network if the schools consolidate?

Yes, there will be space for Hull Family Network. However, the location has not been determined at this time.

16. Will small class sizes continue if the schools consolidate?

As a district priority, we will do our best to maintain small class sizes based on funding and enrollment changes. The district's goal remains to do what is in the best interest of our students.

17. Will Grade eight traditions continue if the district consolidates?

Yes, we are mindful of the importance of traditions and we will work together to ensure students have a positive experience.

18. Will there be a traffic flow issue at the Jacobs Elementary School if additional grades are housed there?

The traffic flow was designed for a capacity of 785 students. Based on projected enrollment with grades PreK - 7 housed at the Jacobs Elementary School there would be 496 students and based on enrollment levels PreK - 8 housed at the Jacobs



Elementary School there would be 557 students. Previous enrollment of the Jacobs Elementary School in 2008 was 538 students.

19. Will there be a traffic flow issue at Hull High School if grade 8 is housed there?

The traffic flow at Hull High School was designed for a capacity of (**check #405**) students. Based on projected enrollment with grades 8 - 12 housed at Hull High School, there would be 309 students. Previous enrollment at Hull High School in 2005 was 399 students.