

Clinton
Township Board
of Education

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Clinton Township School District

Potential District Reorganization

Q&A

At the May 31st special meeting, the CTSD Board of Education will either accept or reject the Superintendent of School's recommendation for reorganizing the district, as follows:

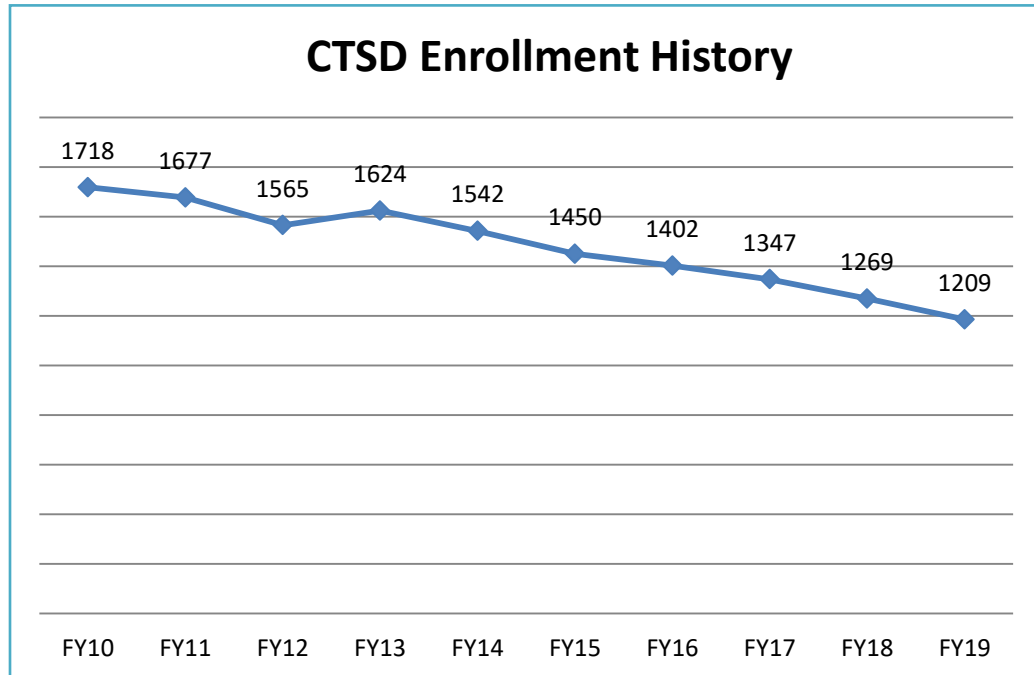
BE IT RESOLVED that the Clinton Township Board of Education accepts the recommendation of the Ad-Hoc Feasibility Committee and the Superintendent of Schools to reorganize, for the 2018-2019 school year, the four District schools as follows:

- SRS – (Preschool – Prekindergarten)
- PMG – (K-1-2)
- RVS – (3-4-5)
- CTMS – (6-7-8)

1. Why would the Board of Education vote to reorganize grades in the District?

- The Board of Education would consider reorganizing the District to provide enhanced educational experiences for its students, to remain fiscally responsible to the community through efficient deployment of resources, and to proactively address operational challenges resulting from:
 - 1. a continuous decline in student enrollment;
 - 2. insurmountable increases in healthcare benefits;
 - 3. the rising cost of staff salaries;
 - 4. the continued growth in the expense of unfunded state mandates;
 - 5. increases in maintaining aging buildings; and
 - 6. the rising cost in delivering special education services.

ENROLLMENT



TOTAL BUILDING CAPACITY K-8 @ 57% - AS IS

	SRS	PMG	RVS	CTMS		TOTAL
Capacity	444	541	506	640		2131
						1207
						57%
						Avg of 4 Buildings
FY19	238 53%	245 45%	402 79%	322 50%		

PERSONNEL REASSIGNMENT

- With resignations and retirements of school personnel at the end of 2017-2018, and the grade reorganization, personnel could be reassigned and still save the District over \$800,000 annually in salaries and benefits, without affecting the quality of the instructional program. In addition, the non-tenured staff members could be considered for position in the in the district for 2018-2019.

2. What happens to the District if the reorganization is implemented? What would the District look like? What grade levels would be in each school?

- If the District is reorganized, when it opens its doors in September to begin the 2018 – 2019 school year, students in kindergarten through eighth grade would be educated in three buildings. Students in grades K-1-2 would attend Patrick McGaheran School, grades 3-4-5 would attend Round Valley School, and grades 6-7-8 would go to Clinton Township Middle School. Spruce Run School would serve preschool, prekindergarten, and special education programs.

A District reorganization plan calls for students to attend school as follows:

School Building	Current District Grade Level Organization For 2017-2018 School Year	Reorganized District Grade Levels Beginning 2018-2019 School Year
Spruce Run School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-Kindergarten• Kindergarten• First Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Childhood Center
Patrick McGaheran School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Second Grade• Third Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kindergarten*• First Grade*• Second Grade
Round Valley School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fourth Grade• Fifth Grade• Sixth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Third Grade*• Fourth Grade• Fifth Grade
Clinton Township Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seventh Grade• Eighth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sixth Grade*• Seventh Grade• Eighth Grade

**Grades highlighted in green would be educated in a different building beginning in the fall of 2018.*

3. What is the process that the Board went through to arrive at a decision to consider reorganize grades?

Since 2014, the Clinton Township School District Board of Education actively studied the feasibility of how to optimally organize the district to address fiscal and operational challenges - while continuing to deliver an outstanding educational experience to the children.

The district formed a Feasibility Study Committee in 2014, and in 2017 contracted with Dr. William Librera, former Commissioner of Education for the State of New Jersey, to perform a study of the issues and provide a detailed report. This report was presented and discussed extensively during a meeting of the Board of Education last March.

The challenges included a continuous decline in student enrollment, increases in healthcare benefits, rising costs of staff salaries, the continued growth of unfunded state mandates, increased costs in maintaining aging buildings, and the rising cost of special education programs and services.

Working collaboratively with the Feasibility Committee, the Superintendent of Schools reviewed all of the information from past studies, along with generating a current analysis that required completing the following tasks:

- a. Personnel Deployment Study
- b. Scheduling Analysis
- c. Seniority Study
- d. Demographic Study
- e. Transportation Study
- f. Potential One-Time Costs of Reorganizing
- g. Overall Cost Analysis of Final Plan
- h. Communications Plan

The final analysis revealed that the district can continue to offer an outstanding educational program for all its students, at a significant savings, by reorganizing grades.

4. Why would the District reorganize now?

- Enrollment numbers are lower than were initially projected in the demographic study in 2014.
- Dr. Fiander has a different set of expertise when it comes to scheduling and therefore can maximize the use of existing space with current and projected student enrollment.
- Science classes are now taught with technology-based applications, reducing the daily need for actual science laboratories to teach students.
- Dr. Fiander identified educationally-related revenue-generating opportunities to place in Spruce Run School.

5. How much money would be saved by reorganizing the District?

- If we reorganize, the Board would approve an amended budget in July, with final numbers attributed to the reorganization. At this point, the district estimates saving approximately \$900,000 in the first year and, in subsequent years, it anticipates that the savings would be over \$1,000,000 annually. The conclusive dollar amount that would be attributed to reorganization would be finalized one year after the plan is implemented.

6. When would the reorganization of the District be implemented?

- The reorganization would be implemented by the District in preparation for the first day of school in September 2018.

7. What are the benefits to the community and to the children if the District is reorganized?

Student Benefits of Reorganization

There are many benefits that the children in Clinton Township would realize by reorganizing the District, including:

- Grade three students, who would attend Round Valley School, would have new co-curricular options like instrumental music.
- Children in sixth grade would have access to more co-curricular programs when they attend Clinton Township Middle School. For example: sports teams, art club, video journalism/on-line news, Camerata Singers, drama club, Law Fair Adventures, movie making, student council, yearbook, Relay for Life, and poetry club.
- Clinton Township Middle School was designed and built to teach students utilizing the middle school model, including departmentalized instruction and schedules that would provide them with a solid bridge to high school. Sixth grade students would now be able to take advantage of this buildings layout and structure.
- Students in kindergarten and first grade would benefit from a larger recess space at Patrick McGaheran School.
- All children would be attending school with students closer to their appropriate developmental stage.
- Clinton Township students would attend each school for a longer period of time than in recent years and would have fewer transitions from building to building over their elementary and middle school years. This permits students to remain in familiar surroundings, with the same staff for a longer time, allowing them to establish, build, and sustain relationships.
- The reorganization increases the total number of students per building, facilitating more student involvement in activities, thus enriching their overall academic, social, and emotional experience in the District.
- Special education transitions would have a three-year-span, allowing students with special needs to remain in a familiar environment for a longer period of time.

Community Benefits

- The community would realize a reduction in school taxes while maintaining quality schools where they live. Good quality schools help support and maintain property values in Clinton Township.

8. What would not occur within the District and to the children due to reorganizing the District?

- Class sizes **would not** increase.
- How the children are supported socially and emotionally **would not change**.
- Co-curricular programs **would not be eliminated** and would remain intact.
- **The quality of education** that the children receive would remain the same and with **anticipated opportunities for curricular enhancements**.

9. What would happen to the teachers? Would there be a reduction in staff? How many teachers would lose their jobs?

- We anticipate that through attrition – the resignation and retirement of current personnel – non-tenured staff, who were non-renewed at the May 14th Board of Education, would be considered for available positions.

10. What would happen to the principals and the vice principals when the District is reorganized?

- All staffing would be finalized in June, regardless of the district organizational structure.

11. How would Spruce Run School be reorganized? What would Spruce Run School be used for?

- Kindergarten and first grade would move to Patrick McGaheran. Prekindergarten would remain at Spruce Run School, and the school would be repurposed as an Early Childhood Center.

Repurposing Spruce Run School

- The reorganization plan would allow Spruce Run School to be repurposed into an Early Childhood Center capable of serving as a revenue-generating educational program facility. The committee felt strongly that the implementation of several small revenue generating educational programs in Spruce Run School would allow the District to break-even with the operating costs of that building.
- It was recommended not to lease to a non-educational program or to sell Spruce Run School, so that the District could maintain it as an educational facility if the student population were to grow in the future. The operation of the school as an educational facility provides the District with the option to move students back into Spruce Run School if enrollment increases, without the need to upgrade the facility to new building codes, which would save the District an enormous amount of money.
- Superintendent Dr. Pamela Fiander outlined the potential uses for the open space, with options such as: an Early Childhood Caring Center for children ages two to four, the creation and development of the Hunterdon County Center for Professional Development, and a satellite school for children with special needs.
- There are up to four separate, private entrances into Spruce Run School. This would allow for each program to have its own doorway, so that the other existing programs would not be interrupted by those entering and existing the building from other programs.

12. Why has the District decided to repurpose Spruce Run School and not sell it or rent it?

- The Board and administration would not want to sell Spruce Run School because they believe that in the future, student enrollment may once again increase, and they did not want to burden the tax payers with the potential of building another school.
- To rent Spruce Run School would require a great deal of management on behalf of the District's administration. The potential decision not to rent the entire school out to another business could be made to preserve the building as an educational facility so that if student enrollment increased, the District would have a building where they could easily move both staff and students. As an additional benefit, the building could be up to code if it re-opened as an educational facility.

13. Would there be any changes to the education that the children receive? Would the children's education be impacted or changed with the reorganization of the District?

- The children would continue to receive an outstanding education and would be supported socially, emotionally, and intellectually with this reorganization plan.

14. Would class sizes increase after the District is reorganized?

- Class sizes **would not** change due to the District's reorganization.
- The Board of Education and administration have made it clear that whatever changes might be made in the District, they would not negatively impact the quality of education that the children receive nor would they negatively impact how the children are supported socially or emotionally.
- This reorganization would simply move students to another location to receive the same level of education and support that they have always received in the Clinton Township School District.

15. When would the Superintendent assign staff (teachers, principals and vice principals) to their appropriate school – where they would teach?

- Each spring, multiple staffing scenarios are run by the administrative team. Enrollment, schedules, certifications, and special education needs are considered.
- Once a decision is made as to the organization of the district for the fall of 2018, a recommendation would be made to the Board on staff placements, and action would be expected to be taken at the June 25th BOE meeting on the Superintendent's recommendation for staff placements.

16. How would the District communicate updates on the reorganization to the parents, community and staff?

- The community, parents, and staff would be continuously updated with e-mails, at monthly Board meetings, in the Board's monthly newsletter, on the District's website, and in the Clinton Township Newsletter. Below are links that members of our community and staff could bookmark to view updates from the District on this reorganization.
 - [District Website](#)
 - [Board's Monthly Newsletter](#)
 - [Clinton Township Newsletter](#)
- There would be a new tab placed on the front page of the District's website that would contain all the historic and most recent information regarding this reorganization.
- For those interested community members that do not have children in the District, they could sign-up to receive e-mail updates on the tab and providing your contact information.

17. How would each teacher's classrooms be moved?

- An outside moving company would be contracted to box and move classrooms and offices. Our target date would be to have classroom and offices moved by Friday, August 17, 2018.

18. What time would school start for Patrick McGaheran, Round Valley School and Clinton Township Middle School?

- a. SRS – 8:55 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- b. PMG – 8:55 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
- c. RVS – 8:50 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
- d. CTMS – 7:50 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

19. Would sixth grade students now be permitted to participate in school sports and other co-curricular programs at CTMS?

- Sixth graders would have more opportunities to participate in sports and co-curricular programs at CTMS, which are developmentally appropriate for them.

20. Would the 3rd grade students have access to co-curricular programs at Round Valley?

- Yes, third grade students would have access to opportunities such as instrumental music and after school programs.

21. Would the middle school model continued to be practiced at CTMS?

- Middle school students, grades six, seven, and eight, would continue to be educated with the Middle School Model. The administration and Board have always and continue to support this model as the most appropriate and effective way to educate middle school students.

22. Would every school have a principal, nurse, custodian, social worker, guidance counselor, secretary?

- School staffing would include administrative and appropriate support personnel at all buildings.

23. How would lunch be handled?

- Food service programs would continue to be available for all students. Designated lunch periods would be determined at the individual building levels.

24. What would be the impact on lunch and recess?

- Lunch and recess times would be building-based determined to ensure that schedules are developmentally appropriate for each age group.

25. Would the before and after school care still be offered?

- Yes. The Work-Family Connection would continue to offer child caring services.

26. Can the District guarantee that the movement of teachers' classrooms, offices and supplies be completed by the start of the 2018 – 2019 school year?

- An outside moving company would be employed to pack and move the 30 classrooms and seven offices this summer, and to be in place by August 17. The company would be conducting the move in July, so that there is plenty of time to reach the targeted completion date.

27. What are the costs of reorganizing the District?

CONSULTANTS:

Educational Consultant	10,000
Financial Consultant	10,000
Legal Consultant	10,000
Communication Consultant	10,000
Seniority Study	8,500
Demographic Study	2,500
Project Manager	15,000
Moving Company	39,000
Dumpster Purging	4,000
Stickers/Boxes	500
SWAT Team Cleaning Crew for Moving	10,000
Additional Summer Tech Help	7,500
Contingency Fund	15,000
	142,000

28. What happens if current student enrollment reverses?

- As is a standard practice, the District would continuously monitor and project student enrollment in the short and long term. Should enrollment reverse, then the district has the option to use Spruce Run School in the future.

29. How would this reorganization impact outside organizations from using our schools for activities?

- The District is very welcoming and generous in its use of facilities by outside organizations, as we believe the buildings belong to the community. This philosophy and practice would continue.

30. Is the PMG playground improper for use by younger children?

- PMG actually has more space available for multi-age students than Spruce Run. The Superintendent is currently assessing the appropriateness of equipment and would make a recommendation for any potential modifications.

31. Would there be age-appropriate bathrooms at PMG for kindergarten students?

- At SRS, the district had to obtain a waiver each year because bathrooms were not available in the classrooms, as required by the DOE. However, at PMG, there are six classrooms with bathrooms, and the kindergarten students would be in those classrooms. With this, there would be less time in transition back and forth to the hallways, and more time to focus on learning.

32. Would the sixth grade students have a garden at CTMS like they have at RVS?

- The current RVS garden would be enjoyed by third, fourth, and fifth grade students, and with the available property at CTMS, a sixth grade garden can be cultivated.

33. Would bus rides be longer for students than they are this year?

- **Route lengths would be equal to what is currently offered.** This year, the shortest transportation time is one (1) minute; the longest is 46 minutes (district wide). The majority of the students on average have a 30-35 minute ride. With the reorganization, and a two-tiered system, **routes would not exceed the lengths this year.** We would continue to assess and make adjustments during the school year if changes are needed, which is a standard procedure used annually.