

Manchester Public Schools



SMARTR Committee Submittal



School Modernization and Reinvestment Team Revisited Charge

During their Joint meeting on January 30, 2012, the Board of Directors and Board of Education proposed establishing a working group, School Modernization and Reinvestment Team Revisited (SMARTR), to develop and recommend a long term big picture strategy for finishing this decade's school building investments to include recommendations for:

1. The number of schools required to provide appropriate and sustainable educational facilities for the next generation.
2. The impact of enrollment data and student demographic data on grade level configuration and racial balance in our schools.
3. The impact of curriculum and instructional changes over the next twenty years on school design and functional use of school building space.
4. Capital Improvements necessary for appropriate and quality space given a recommended strategy including priority immediate investments.

Team membership shall consist of:

4 members of the Board of Education, selected by the Board of Education;

4 members of the Board of Directors, selected by the Board of Directors;

1 member of the Building Committee, recommended by the Committee to the Board of Directors for approval;

4 members of the public to be approved by the Majority and Minority Leaders of both Boards.

The team shall have an initial budget of \$30,000 with which to engage appropriate expert advice/analysis. The team shall report out to the Board of Directors and Board of Education jointly at the end of July 2012 or sooner if the process dictates.

Guiding principles established to meet charge

- Identify a school design(s) to provide appropriate and sustainable educational facilities for the next generation.
- Meet the needs of current and projected enrollment data and student demographic data on a grade level configuration.
- Allow for a racially balanced school district.
- Provide equitable access to high quality education options.
- Consider the impact of curriculum and instructional changes over the next twenty years.
- Identify capital improvements necessary for appropriate, high quality, engaging learning environments.
- Demonstrate long term fiscal responsibility with consideration given to cost-sharing and education legislation.

SMARTR Committee - Leadership, Plan Framework and Timeline

- **SMARTR Leadership**
 - Chair – Mike Crockett
 - Vice-Chair – Megan Alubicki
 - Secretary – Jason Doucette
 - Committee Facilitator – Sarah Walton
- **Major Plan Phases**
 - Educational and Program Model
 - Facility Design
 - Architectural Design
- **Timeline**
 - Tentatively targeting delivery of a recommendation supporting a potential November 2013 Referendum
- **Other Plan Highlights**
 - Regular Updates to the Board of Education and the Board of Directors
 - Development of a Survey Tool

Over the course of 10 meetings the SMARTR Committee has...

- Established a website containing all the materials reviewed by the committee, and all meeting minutes to ensure transparency in the process.
- Reviewed the January 2012 Facilities Critical Assessment Report
- Received a guided tour given by the School Facilities Director, of all 14 buildings school buildings, to observe and discuss the building conditions outlined in the 2012 Facilities Critical Assessment Report.
- Received two Presentation by Milone & MacBroom
 - School-age population projections (5-10 year projections)
 - Demographic analysis by school neighborhood (utilizing 5-10 year projections)
- Reviewed a range of research on grade configuration compiled by Bristol Public Schools (a demographically similar community).
- Connecticut State Department of Education presentation regarding School Choice, Kathy Demsey, CSDE Consultant

Continued...

- Reviewed and discussed following information provided by the Superintendent
 - CMT Achievement Data
 - Measure of eligible economically disadvantage families disaggregated by grade level
 - May 2012 Enrollment – Elementary & Secondary
 - Resident students not enrolled in a Manchester Public School
- School Size, Class Size and Grade Configuration, and the Impact on Student Achievement, reported by Sarah Ellsworth, Ph.D. CREC Division of Data Analysis, Research and Technology
- Discussion with Matt Geary, Principal of MHS, regarding configuration and future planning.
- Discussion with Bruce Douglas, Ph.D., Executive Director, CREC
 - Establishing and managing magnet schools
 - CREC's role as the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC), and partnership opportunities
 - Success of Inter-district & Host magnet schools in the region
 - Innovative school design and themes based on the strengths and needs of communities
- Set a working, internal timeline that allows for the possibility of a November 2012 referendum option.

SMARTR Committee Findings

Due to:

- The explosion of public school options in the Manchester region in the past five years
- The increase of residents choosing those options
- The challenge of maintaining the State mandated racial balancing
- The ability to ensure equitable opportunities throughout the district

FINDING:

The viability and sustainability of the current neighborhood school concept is questionable.

SMARTR Committee Findings Continued...

Due to:

Some buildings receiving substantial capital investment over the past 6 years.

- Manchester High School (9-12)
- Illing Middle School (7-8)
- Bennet Academy (6 grade)
- Manchester Pre-school Center (Pk3-Pk4)
- Highland Park Elementary School (K-5)

FINDING:

A significant capital investment in buildings that will house elementary grades will be required, particularly in our Title I schools.

SMARTR Committee Findings Continued...

Due to:

- The growing population in the north end of town (Robertson School)
- The projected continued growth in the north end of town
- The shift in population and enrollment trends

FINDING:

There is a need to develop a response to the projected shift in enrollment and its impact on facility demands.

SMARTR Committee Findings Continued...

Due to:

- CREC report findings
- Research review compiled by Bristol Public Schools
- Discussion with MHS Principal, Matthew Geary

FINDING:

There is a need to investigate alternatives to the current grade configurations , with consideration given to school size and reduction of transitions.

SMARTR Committee Findings Continued...

Due to:

- Over 900 Manchester students electing to enroll in schools outside of the Manchester Public Schools
- The growth in schooling options that include before and afterschool programming, themed curriculum delivery, and a range of grade configurations

FINDING:

There is a need to explore options that allow for Manchester Public Schools to remain competitive, given the region's many school choices.

SMARTR's Request to the BOE

What curriculum and instructional considerations should the SMARTR committee be aware of moving forward?

Are there facility considerations of which the SMARTR committee should be aware of moving forward? (plans to close school buildings)

Are there topics the Board of Education would like the SMARTR committee to investigate?

SMARTR's Request to the BOE continued...

Are there options that the Board of Education would not support if put forward by the SMARTR committee (i.e. magnet school option, redistricting, changing neighborhood school concept)?

Will the Board of Education be able to respond to the SMARTR committee's findings and requests at the next BOE meeting ?