

1. Do we still have excess capacity without the modular classrooms?

Yes.

Audubon Elementary School: There are two classrooms at Audubon Elementary School that are stand-alone modular classrooms (meaning that students must leave the school enclosure to walk to these two modular classroom). Based on 25 students per classroom, these two total 50 students.

Arrowhead Elementary School: There are four classrooms at Arrowhead Elementary School. These four have been integrated into regular construction in a way that they are similar to other regular classrooms in Arrowhead. Based on 25 students per classroom, these four total 100 students.

Eliminating all six classrooms would reduce capacity District-wide by 150 students.

2. Why was an architect used to complete the capacity study?

Thompson Associates Architects and Planners supplements the role of the Pennsylvania Economy League. PEL offers expertise in demographic and housing analysis and enrollment projections. Thompson Associates offers expertise to assess the physical condition of existing schools and to assess the educational appropriateness of existing instructional spaces. Student capacity analysis is a part of the educational assessment.

3. What is Mr. Thompson's education background/expertise related to determining elementary school capacity?

James R Thompson AIA holds a Bachelor of Science in Art and Design from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Master of Architecture from Carnegie Mellon University.

Mr Thompson has dedicated his 30-year career to school planning and design. He served as the Principal Architect for over one hundred school projects during the past 19 years. This experience includes district-wide planning for twenty Pennsylvania public school districts.

His Pennsylvania public school experience includes planning and design projects for Upper St Clair School District, State College Area School District, the School District of Springfield Township, the School District of Cheltenham Township and Marple Newtown School District. In addition, his school experience includes school planning and design projects in Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia and Maryland.

4. Do you think it would be educationally sound to pack our classrooms with 25 students?

Yes. 25 students per classrooms is educationally sound at both the elementary level and the secondary level for regular education instruction. The size of the regular classrooms in Methacton School District far-exceed the 660 square foot minimum mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for 25

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students. We recommend smaller class sizes for kindergarten and first grade, to allow teachers to focus more individualized attention on students that lag their peers entering school.

The size of the regular classroom (area in square feet), use of push-in type special education and pupil support services, and dedication of classroom space for computers all affect the ‘fit’ of a specific number of Methacton students to an instructional space. The size of regular classrooms would be a factor in determining whether students seem crowded, or ‘packed’ in a regular classroom. Dedicated space for computers declines as the school district implements notebook computer solutions that take less and less dedicated space.

5. *Mr. Thompson, how were special education students accounted for in the class size study?*

We account for each student assigned to a regular education classroom irrespective of individual special student needs that sometimes take them out of that regular classroom. Methacton School District dedicates appropriate classroom space for pull-out type special education and pupil support services. These pull-out services reduce the number of students in the regular classroom at certain times of the day. We do not count any student capacity for these full-size special education and pupil support classrooms

6. *Were considerations made for the students and their assistants who work for them?*

Yes. Certain students are assigned teacher aides. Methacton classrooms are large enough for students, teacher and assigned aides. Administrators assign students with aides mindful of the size of the classroom and location of other students with assigned aides.

7. *What is your plan for special education compliance?*

We collaborated with Methacton administrators to identify the appropriate number of full-size classrooms needed for pull-out type special education and pupil support services.

8. *[Regarding the modulars at Arrowhead and Audubon no longer being needed] Mr. Thompson, did you include these modular classrooms in your totals for the capacity study when they were designated for removal? Can't we just get rid of them or is it your intention to now put elementary kids back into the trailers?*

At the time of the assessments, the two modular classrooms at Audubon Elementary School and the four modular classrooms at Arrowhead Elementary School were all in use. All six are counted in the existing District-wide capacity. Three of the six were in use as regular classrooms at the time of the educational assessment.

9. *If your projections are wrong, how would you find the extra capacity in the remaining schools? Would you need even larger class sizes?*

Increasing class sizes would be one option. However, for the four existing elementary schools that remain after consolidation, there is a total of eight ‘flex’ classrooms among these four elementary schools that

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could be assigned as regular classrooms (to accommodate a grade level ‘bubble’, for example) or to supplement existing special education / pupil support classrooms (IU autism classroom, for example).

Alternatively, we identified needed future, comprehensive renovations at Arrowhead Elementary School in a five- to ten-year timeframe. At the time of a renovation, the District could adjust the capacity of Arrowhead and replace the four existing modular classrooms.

We looked at feasible options that added small classroom additions to existing elementary schools. For example, the recent Woodland Elementary School additions and alterations project included planning for a future four-classroom addition. We identified feasible sites for similar small classroom additions at Arrowhead, Eagleville and Worcester Elementary Schools, if required at a future date.

10. Why were these temporary classrooms included in the capacity analysis?

All six were in daily use at the time of the assessments.

11. What will be the effects on classroom size (increases to 22 or more students per section? At what grade levels?) and availability of space in the other schools if Audubon is closed?

Balancing enrollment in attendance areas with school capacity of existing schools to remain is the task of the community group and consultant redrawing attendance lines. Our assessment identifies the student capacity of each proposed elementary school at 476 students (see Figure 5.7 in Section 5.3 of our study).

John Andrews:

- ***In the Study Report, the Utilization Factor for K to 4 is shown as 100%. Seems 90 or 95 % would be more realistic, especially to give necessary long-term endurance to the choice of sending areas, considering the many possible changes in ‘education’. The other schools capacity calculations used an 85% utilization factor, albeit they lack this sending area issue.***

The utilization factor is used for secondary grades to account for scheduling limitations of individual instructional spaces. Most Methacton secondary classrooms sit vacant for one or more instructional periods. For example, a classroom might sit vacant during a teacher planning period because the Principal had no other elective class that needed the instructional space.

Long-term endurance of the location of the attendance area lines could be affected by shifts in population from one attendance area to another, or inaccuracies in the enrollment projection. In either event, Methacton School District could employ the flexibility cited in question 9 (assignment of ‘flex’ classroom, increase class sizes or small classroom additions) at any individual elementary school, in lieu of shifting attendance area lines. District administrators could shift individual families (ideally, on a voluntary basis). Finally, in the event of a major renovation at Arrowhead Elementary School, optional changes of school capacity could be accompanied by strategic shifts in attendance area lines.

- ***For a 90% utilization factor, if Audubon is closed, PEL’s K to 4-projection for 2016 of 1728 students is well above the reduced capacity of 1553 ($0.9 \times (2225 - 500) = 0.9 \times 1725 = 1553$), and stays higher through 2024. Please comment.***

We rate District-wide capacity for the Close Audubon Option in Figure 5.7 at 1904 students. We build factors of safety into our Options in ways other than your proposed utilization factor. For example, our recommendation to eliminate the student capacity of one elementary school was mindful of PEL’s five-

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and ten-year enrollment projections for continued decline in student enrollment at the elementary level. Additionally, use of ‘flex’ classrooms could be employed to address localized ‘bubbles’ of students in any given attendance area.

- ***The majority of Methacton students always come from the resale of existing homes and not new homes. The PEL enrollment study ignores a rule called “reversion to the mean” and any discussion of home resales. Here the issue is ignorance of home resales. They averaged only 280 from 2008 thru 2012 due to ‘the great recession’. In the prior five years, they averaged 450. The ‘reversion’ has already started and will likely be gradual. It’s tied to ‘economics’ in the sense that seniors will sell and young families will be a large part of the ‘buyers’. A reasonable projection of this reversion process would result is about 1860 students in K to 4 by 2024. Please comment on how this risk of rising enrollment will impact adequate facilities if the Audubon school is ‘lost’? (Not allowed here is whether PEL is right or wrong).***

Figure 5.7 in our study identifies the student capacity of the Close Audubon option at 1904 students. We address the flexibility to incorporate unanticipated enrollment growth in question 9. Consider that the one of the eight ‘flex’ classrooms can be used to address a ‘bubble’ of students at any grade level in any school. At the time of an anticipated renovation project at Arrowhead Elementary School, the school could be expanded to five sections per grade level. Similarly, at some future date, Eagleville, Woodland or Worcester Elementary School could be expanded to five sections per grade level with small classroom additions.

- ***At Audubon there are two ‘seminar-sized’ areas. What does this mean and what capacity should be assigned to them. How are they typically used?***

Our assessment does not assign student capacity to instructional spaces under 660 square feet. Audubon Elementary School incorporates an appropriate number of full-size classrooms for pull-out type special education or pupil support services. Either of these two Audubon seminar rooms could be used as a conference room for meetings among staff or with parents. For example, this size conference room is needed for IEP meetings with parents and the IEP team.

- ***On page 21 of the Study, is the ‘shift’ from 2225 to 2500 students due to ‘recapture’ of rooms now used for special education requirements?***

Working in collaboration with Methacton administrators, we verified that each of the existing schools could accommodate four sections each of grades K (half-day) through 4; a total of 18 regular classrooms. Based on 25 students per section, five existing elementary schools could accommodate 2500 students.

- ***On page 21 of the Study, the chart shows “467 (students) @ 22/sec”. This is wrong. Proof follows: 2225-1733 = 492, not 467. Also, Mr. Thompson gets to 2225 by using 25/sec. Please comment.***

Based on 22 students per section, five existing elementary schools could accommodate 2200 students.
 $2200 - 1733 = 467$ students.

- ***What are the details of the proposed special education reconfigurations and what are their ‘pros and cons’, including compliance with PDE requirements?***

Each of the four proposed elementary schools incorporate five full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services (in addition to 18 regular classrooms). Each of the existing elementary schools

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features 1 to 3 additional 'flex' classrooms. 'Flex' classrooms can be assigned to accommodate special education and pupil support services, if needed.

- ***Comment upon an option to close Skyview, move grade 6 to Arcola and grade 5 to the primary schools in light of considerable overcapacity at Skyview and Arcola. (A number of schools that switched to 5-6 schools are reverting to K to 5s for better education, including Cheltenham, our model for the add of Skyview).***

At Skyview, we explored repurposing this new school for alternative grade configurations and closing older schools with expensive deficiencies. Arcola does not have room for all of sixth, seventh and eighth grades. We explored and rejected an option that split sixth grade between Skyview and Arcola.

Grade 5-6 upper elementary schools are less-prevalent in Pennsylvania. We know of several; Upper St Clair, Easton Area, Wyomissing, Spring Ford, Cheltenham Township and Cannon-McMillan. K to 4 and 5 to 8 are common in other states, Ohio for example.

- ***It seems that 25/sec in the lowest grades will not 'sell' in Methacton or most other districts. Can you develop alternative capacity numbers for the primary schools, or fix PSERS costs so as to make affordable tax bills increases?***

Projected enrollments for Methacton kindergarten and first grades are consistently lower than projected enrollment for grades two through four. In practice, with four sections per grade level, kindergarten and first grade enrollments will consistently have less students per section in Methacton.

- ***In one of his Options, Mr. Thompson suggests construction of four-room adds at primary grade schools. Other than at Worcester and Woodland, which are already facilitated for that possibility, how would he do that and with what impact on school operations?***

Eagleville Elementary School site could support a small classroom addition at the southwest end. Such an addition would necessitate modifications to the playground and ball fields. Arrowhead Elementary School site could support a classroom addition as a replacement for existing modular classrooms. Adding capacity to any of the elementary schools requires confirmation that cafeteria seating, plumbing fixture counts and other similar support services can accommodate an increase in students.

Joyce Magann:

Consolidating can change the status quo in a building, and create unforeseen schedule conflicts, especially when working to create schedules that provide students with services from itinerant providers moving between buildings. A broad perception that a building has space may not be so accurate when the detailed needs of all services for the building are considered. The less flexible the space for itinerant services, the more rigid the schedule ends up. That rigidity does not serve students.

- ***Which programs/instruction, beyond the graded classroom settings, occur in each building? What kind of space do they need to fully serve the component of current and redistricted students in that building?***

Each of the four proposed elementary schools incorporate five full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services (in addition to 18 regular classrooms). Each of the existing elementary schools features 1 to 3 additional 'flex' classrooms. 'Flex' classrooms can be assigned to accommodate special

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education and pupil support services, if needed. Some programs/instruction can be appropriately located at Skyview Upper Elementary (IU autism or District-wide emotional support, for example).

I specifically think of special education related services, like Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Counseling, Gifted Instruction, plus the special subject areas like art, library, music, PE, computer labs, music instruments, etc. There may be others that I am unaware of, those just came to the top of my thoughts, as many of those services are itinerant.

I think our community expects a plan that fully considers those needs, accounting for dedicated spaces, as part of the needed capacity of any building.

Each of the four proposed elementary schools include dedicated instructional space for five special subjects: art, vocal music, instrumental music, physical education and library. Methacton does not require dedicated computer labs. Each school features mobile notebook computer labs available to all teachers on a sign-out basis.

We collaborated with Methacton administrators to verify that each of the four proposed elementary school dedicated appropriate space for special education and pupil support services.

Relating to expanding on #6

- ***How has the workspace needed for Personal Care Aides and Instructional Aides been accounted for in the plan for 22-25 students per classroom, in both special education and mainstreamed environments?***

Methacton administrators assign students with teaching aides mindful of the size of the actual classroom and whether multiple students with assigned teaching aides can be appropriately accommodated in available space. The District strives to hold student enrollment at 22 students per section. Floating the enrollment of a section above 22 to 25 students requires the judgement of Methacton school Principals to place students in appropriate sized classrooms.

- ***Do rooms at capacity of 25 have the appropriate space for the required support staff, and still maintain assorted equipment, learning stations, mobility, and other physical needs of the graded and mainstreamed classrooms.***

Yes. Although regular classrooms have space for 25 students (plus teacher, teacher aide, furniture and equipment), Methacton administrators strive to hold enrollment at 22 or below. The District favors pull-out type support services. At certain times of the day, many of the students leave the regular classroom for special education or pupil support services.

Computers are taking up less classroom space. Today, mobile labs of notebook computers are stored outside of the classroom.

Relating to expanding on #7

- ***In anticipation of redistricting, What are the specific plans for special education compliance in each building? Especially in regards to the assigned rooms/space for required itinerant services like Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and any other adaptive and supportive services?***

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Each of the four proposed elementary schools features five dedicated, full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services. Each school has 1 to 3 ‘flex’ classrooms the school Principal can utilize to supplement special education and pupil support services, if needed.

Relating to expanding on #8

- ***How does the lifespan and use of modulars affect the capacity study? What is the life span of the existing modular spaces?***

We count the existing modular classrooms already in regular use in Audubon and Arrowhead in our capacity study. We recommend that Methacton School District replace Arrowhead modular classrooms with permanent construction in a five- to ten-year timeframe.

- ***Are the modular spaces throughout the district still in use (not just Audubon)?***

Methacton School District maintains two modular classrooms at Audubon, four at Arrowhead and two at Methacton High School. Audubon could not function appropriately without the two existing modular classrooms. Three of four Arrowhead modular classrooms are used for regular classrooms. In some ways, teachers prefer the Arrowhead modular classrooms versus the trapezoidal-shaped regular classrooms. The modular classrooms at the high school are in poor condition and are not used for regular instruction.

- ***When those modulars have served their time, will they be replaced with new modulars? Or will those programs reintegrate into the existing building spaces?***

We recommend replacing the four modular classrooms at Arrowhead Elementary School with a classroom addition. At the time of a comprehensive renovation of Arrowhead, we recommend an updated enrollment projection and adjusting the capacity of Arrowhead (up or down), accordingly.

- ***What specific activities and instruction have historically been assigned to the modular teaching spaces? Have those modular uses been fully accounted for in consolidation buildings, which will have increased enrollment and thus expanded service?***

Modular classrooms are almost always procured for regular classrooms to address unanticipated increases in enrollment. Over time, many modular classrooms are incorporated into regular construction (as at Arrowhead) and remain in use as regular classrooms. Three of four modular classrooms at Arrowhead are assigned as regular classrooms. Alternatively, modular classrooms are adapted over time to pupil support or special subject classrooms, as at Audubon (see also the two modular classrooms at Methacton High School).

If elementary classes begin the year at or close to the 25 student cap, how are NEW/transfer students, arriving throughout the year, distributed into the district buildings & spaces?

We include eight ‘flex’ classrooms, district-wide, that can be designated as regular classrooms to address ‘bubbles’ of unanticipated students in any specific elementary school at any specific grade level. For example, four sections of 25 students translate to five sections of 20 students. District administrators already make these types of decisions, annually.

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Andrew Sander

In order to show the effects of the proposal to close Audubon Elementary in a clear and concise matter, Please confirm the following two tables are correct:

Table A. shows an increase in capacity of the four proposed remaining elementary schools by increasing the average class size from historical norms of 21.5 students per class to 25 students per class.

The existing classrooms have a student **capacity** of 25 students. Methacton School District strives to maintain an average **enrollment** of 22 students. This remains our goal for regular classrooms in our options.

TABLE A

Arrowhead				Eagleville						
	# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity			
Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	2	50	100			
1st	3	25	75	1st	4	25	100			
2nd	3	25	75	2nd	3	25	75			
3rd	3	25	75	3rd	4	25	100			
4th	3	25	75	4th	3	25	75			
Total	14		400	Total	16		450			
Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	8	400
1st	3	25	75	1st	3	25	75	1st	13	325
2nd	3	25	75	2nd	4	25	100	2nd	13	325
3rd	3	25	75	3rd	4	25	100	3rd	14	350
4th	3	25	75	4th	4	25	100	4th	13	325
Total	14		400	Total	17		475	Total	61	1725

Table B shows student capacity in the proposed remaining elementary schools after increasing class size from 21.5 to 25 (as indicated in Table A.) and then "recapturing" Pupil Support / Special Education classrooms from their current use to support traditional education classes:

TABLE B

Arrowhead				Eagleville						
	# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity			
Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	2	50	100			
1st	4	25	100	1st	4	25	100			
2nd	4	25	100	2nd	4	25	100			
3rd	4	25	100	3rd	4	25	100			
4th	4	25	100	4th	4	25	100			
Total	18		500	Total	18		500			
Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	2	50	100	Half-Day K	8	400
1st	4	25	100	1st	4	25	100	1st	16	400
2nd	4	25	100	2nd	4	25	100	2nd	16	400
3rd	4	25	100	3rd	4	25	100	3rd	16	400
4th	4	25	100	4th	4	25	100	4th	16	400
Total	18		500	Total	18		500	Total	72	2000

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- The reports prepared identify the use of 22 students per class (a little above the MDS Elementary Historical Average) in the graphical analysis, but not in any of the tables or calculations. Therefore, the below tables have been created to show capacities utilizing 22 students per class (in lieu of Table A and Table B which use increased class sizes of 25 students per class). Please confirm the below tables are calculated correctly.**

Table C. shows capacity at the proposed remaining 4 elementary schools at 22 children per class (just below historical norms) without any “recapture”.

TABLE C

Arrowhead				Eagleville						
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity			
Half-Day K	2	44	88	Half-Day K	2	44	88			
1st	3	22	66	1st	4	22	88			
2nd	3	22	66	2nd	3	22	66			
3rd	3	22	66	3rd	4	22	88			
4th	3	22	66	4th	3	22	66			
Total	14		352	Total	16		396			
Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	44	88	Half-Day K	2	44	88	Half-Day K	8	352
1st	3	22	66	1st	3	22	66	1st	13	286
2nd	3	22	66	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	13	286
3rd	3	22	66	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	14	308
4th	3	22	66	4th	4	22	88	4th	13	286
Total	14		352	Total	17		418	Total	61	1518

2. Kindergarten Capacity Anomaly:

In each elementary school, there are 2 classrooms for 1/2 day kindergarten. You are calculating max capacity by utilizing both classrooms for 2 sessions each. That may be a fair way of showing Maximum capacity (assuming your student population fits perfectly into the number of students per class per grade). However, it is not a fair way of showing excess capacity as if there are only 3, 1/2 day classes of kinders, you still need to have both classrooms. The 1/2 day of remaining capacity cannot be considered "excess" as the 1/2 day kindergarten model requires this room. Therefore when considering excess capacity, you can only consider 3 sections of Kindergarten for the two rooms. Please provide agreement to this statement or a counter argument and associated figures.

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TABLE D

Arrowhead				Eagleville						
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity			
Half-Day K	2	43	64	Half-Day K	2	43	64			
1st	3	22	66	1st	4	22	88			
2nd	3	22	66	2nd	3	22	66			
3rd	3	22	66	3rd	4	22	88			
4th	3	22	66	4th	3	22	66			
Total	14		328	Total	16		372			
Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	43	64	Half-Day K	2	43	64	Half-Day K	8	256
1st	3	22	66	1st	3	22	66	1st	13	286
2nd	3	22	66	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	13	286
3rd	3	22	66	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	14	308
4th	3	22	66	4th	4	22	88	4th	13	286
Total	14		328	Total	17		394	Total	61	1422

We would not count four sections of kindergarten in situations where we planned three sections of grades one through four. We plan four sections each for grades one through four in these scenarios. No matter what the enrollment, we count the capacity of four sections of kindergarten. Our recommendations are mindful that Methacton kindergarten and first grade projected enrollments are consistently lower than second, third or fourth grade enrollments. Kindergarten and first grade sections will consistently have fewer students per section.

3. Removal of Pupil Support / Special Education classrooms

Section 2, page 2 of the MSD Districtwide Facility Study states "We determined, in consultation with District Administrators, that 4 to 7 full-size classrooms would be appropriate space dedicated to special education and pupil support services for a District elementary school, based on current student needs. As a result of this analysis, we determined that each of the five elementary schools could operate four sections per grade..."

Please provide the analysis. Was an analysis done school by school, and class by class in order to create a route for the MSD? If not, please provide such an analysis. It would be appreciated if any analysis provided includes the specific Pupil Support / Special Education rooms to be "removed" and how the activities currently being performed in those rooms will be continued. Additionally, please provide a detailed analysis of the ADA compliance and Fire Code compliance as well as the adequacy of the square footage of each room to handle a "traditional classroom" setting. Also, please provide a detailed analysis of each class that would remain as rooms for Pupil Support / Special Education needs. The analysis of these rooms would also need to include meeting the legal requirements of Pupil Support / Special Education as well as traditional ADA and Fire Code compliance. Hopefully this analysis will satisfy the need to understand student density. As some of the described spaces may be too small to accommodate additional classes or the retrofit costs and disruption would be excessive.

Our study describes the existing five elementary schools in Section 5.1 K-4 Option (1) – No Change. Whether a full-size classroom is assigned as regular classroom, special education and pupil support services or reserved as a ‘flex’ classroom is the domain of the school Principal (in collaboration with Methacton administrators).

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Arrowhead currently utilizes 14 regular full-size classrooms of 26 total. Proposed use of 18 regular full-size classrooms leaves 5 full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services plus 3 additional 'flex' classrooms.

Audubon currently utilizes 18 regular full-size classrooms of 23 total. Proposed use does not change. We recommend this school for closure.

Eagleville currently utilizes 16 regular full-size classrooms of 24 total. Proposed use of 18 regular full-size classrooms leaves 5 full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services plus 1 additional 'flex' classroom.

Woodland currently utilizes 14 regular full-size classrooms of 25 total. Proposed use of 18 regular full-size classrooms leaves 5 full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services plus 2 additional 'flex' classrooms.

Worcester currently utilizes 17 regular full-size classrooms of 25 total. Proposed use of 18 regular full-size classrooms leaves 5 full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services plus 2 additional 'flex' classrooms.

In terms of ADA compliance, Arrowhead has deficiencies. We recommend that architectural barriers to full-accessibility be removed as part of its next comprehensive renovation, estimated to occur in a five- to ten-year timeframe.

In terms of fire code, all schools operate safely with modern emergency signal and lighting systems. We recommend that the emergency systems at Arrowhead be upgraded to the latest technology as part of their next comprehensive renovation, estimated to occur in a five- to ten-year timeframe.

In each individual Elementary School section of the MSD Districtwide Facility Study, it is indicated there are five dedicated spaces for special subjects: physical education, art, vocal music, instrumental music and library. Are these spaces in addition to the number of current classrooms you indicate for each of the elementary schools in your Methacton School District Districtwide Facility Study?

Yes

Please also address the concern that while you state we can meet current student needs, how confident are you that we will be able to meet future student needs in the event the identification of students with a need for Pupil Support / Special Education continues to rise and there is a legal requirement for the MSD to meet those needs.

Needs for special education and pupil support services fluctuate based on Methacton enrollment, number of students with special needs and changes in regulations. We recognize that the enrollment could decline while the number of students with special needs could increase. Methacton administrators collaborated with our team in assessing the appropriate number of full-size classrooms needed for the options proposed. We incorporate 'flex' classrooms in the options to provide flexibility to address unanticipated special needs in the least-restrictive environment.

The below table follows the Thompson reports to remove certain Pupil Support / Special Education class rooms and reuse them as traditional classrooms (using historical class size). Please confirm the calculations as they differ from your report due to the use of an average of 22 students per class (in lieu of increasing class size to a 25 student average). Please confirm the calculations.

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TABLE E

Arrowhead				Eagleville				Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	8	264
1st	4	22	88	1st	4	22	88	1st	4	22	88	1st	4	22	88	1st	16	352
2nd	4	22	88	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	16	352
3rd	4	22	88	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	16	352
4th	4	22	88	4th	4	22	88	4th	4	22	88	4th	4	22	88	4th	16	352
Total	18		418	Total	18		418	Total	18		418	Total	18		418	Total	72	1672

In your scenario in TABLE E, count all four kindergarten sections at 22 students for a total student capacity of 440 students. As a reminder, there are eight ‘flex’ classrooms available to accommodate unanticipated ‘bubbles’ in individual schools. Any of the four schools could add a fifth section to any grade level using one of these ‘flex’ classrooms. Allowing grades two through four to float from 22 students to 25 students provides flexibility to add 12 more students in any grade level of the four schools.

4. Is there enough current excess capacity to absorb the students of a shuttered Audubon School?

The following table updates Figure 3.2 in the MSD Districtwide Facility Study (it shows capacity based on 22 students per class, captures the Kindergarten anomaly and “recaptures” Pupil Support / Special Education classes. Please confirm the calculations.

TABLE F

School	2014-15 Enrollment	Capacity based on 22 students per class Incl. Recapture	Occupancy Percentage	Student Excess (Deficit) Capacity
Arrowhead	295	418	71%	123
Eagleville	356	418	85%	62
Woodland	299	418	72%	119
Worcester	367	418	88%	51
Total	1317	1672	79%	355

As can be seen in the above table, there is only a student excess capacity of 355 to handle the 433 students from the proposed closing of Audubon. This is based upon a class size around the historic average, “recapture” Pupil Services / Special Education rooms and takes into account the kindergarten anomaly. As can be seen, this number is lower than

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the Audubon 2014-15 Enrollment of 433. Even if we were to not take into account the kindergarten anomaly, and believe that we would have perfectly matched class and grade sizes to the very rigid number of classes per grade, we would be at an excess capacity of only 451 students which is only 18 greater than the student population at Audubon. As a professional, would you recommend a school district close a school to attain this greater than 99% utilization figure? What would happen if our student population grew at all? For example, what would be the effect if a family similar to “The Duggars” (a family with greater than 15 children) moves into the Methacton School District?

Your discussion of this point is especially important as during your presentation to the board, when discussing a level of 22 students per class yielding a capacity of all existing five schools of 1,958 students (based on an average of 22 students per class for all five elementary schools), it was stated that the excess “when you spread that over 5 schools that is not a lot of leeway of excess capacity when measured school by school”.

When we undertake a district-wide study, we offer our professional judgement on a wide range of factors. We build flexibility and factors of safety into our proposed options. For the Close Audubon Option, described in Section 5.3 of our study:

- We set aside an appropriate number of full-size classrooms for special education and pupil support services.
- Our enrollment projection describes a slow, gradual decline at grades kindergarten to four.
- We identify eight ‘flex’ classrooms district-wide that could address unanticipated ‘bubbles’ of enrollment at any grade level and any school.
- We identify ‘float’ of 12 students in grades two, three and four (36 students total) in any school.
- We explore the option to expand student capacity at Arrowhead Elementary school to five sections per grade level as part of an anticipated renovation in a five- to ten-year timeframe. Expanding Arrowhead from four to five sections per grade level would increase student capacity by 119 students from 476 to 595 students at Arrowhead.
- We explored the feasibility of adding small classroom additions at Eagleville, Woodland or Worcester Elementary Schools, should unanticipated enrollment occur in the future.

- 5. During your presentation to the board, you discussed a project at Upper Sinclair which showed that high utilization is not necessarily the most efficient use of space. Please provide additional information (without any disclosure issues) to help us make sure the same situation does not apply to the MSD.***

I conducted a District-wide study for Upper St Clair School District seventeen years ago. I conducted a District-wide study for Saint Clair School District last year. I do not recall this story, or the point of my story.

- 6. The MSD Districtwide Facility Study utilizes input from PEL, including projected figures, to determine excess or deficit capacity. I am not asking you to opine on these numbers, we would just like confirmation it is not your responsibility to vet these numbers and they are simply an input for you.***

Yes

- 7. Please provide a scenario analysis utilizing both 22 student per class averages and 25 student per class averages, in the same format as Figures 3.7 and 3.9 of your MSD Districtwide Facility Study for the K to 4 Grade Levels utilizing a 1,640 Fifth-year 2019-20 Enrollment level and a 1,860 Tenth-year 2024-25 Enrollment***

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level. I am simply asking for the mathematical calculation. Please do not opine on the projected numbers. The purpose is for simple scenario analysis.

We offer this analysis in Section 5.3 Summary of K-4 option (3) – Close Audubon. Figure 5.7 compares to your TABLE G with 3 exceptions:

- We count four sections of kindergarten in student capacity.
- We include 12 students of ‘float’ in grades two, three and four in student capacity.
- We count capacity of the existing modular classrooms in use at Arrowhead Elementary School.

Figure 5.7 identifies a student capacity of 1904 students compared to your fifth-year projection of 1640 students. A 1904 student capacity offers Methacton School District 16% of excess capacity flexibility, without counting any of the eight ‘flex’ classrooms and without new construction.

For year ten, we propose three schools each with a student capacity of 476 students. To address this unanticipated growth to your tenth-year projection of 1860 students, we propose to add a fifth section per grade level as part of an additions and alteration project for Arrowhead for a student capacity of 595. The sum of student capacities for these four elementary schools is 2023. A student capacity of 2023 offers Methacton School District 9% of excess capacity flexibility, without any of the eight ‘flex’ classrooms. In this scenario, Methacton School District reserves the flexibility to increase any of the other schools; Eagleville, Woodland or Worcester from four sections per grade level to five sections per grade level (adding increased capacity of 119 students for each school) with small classroom additions.

- 8. Please provide an estimate of costs to get Audubon ready for sale in the event MSD would determine it would be in the best interests of the district to sell the property. Additionally, please provide an estimate of costs to "mothball" the school in the event MSD determines it is in the districts best interest to hold on to the land and building in the event enrollments revert to the mean. Understanding you time is important, basic ranges would satisfy this request.***

Analysis of property sale requires a *pro forma* type analysis.

- There are operational costs during the period of vacancy (environmental control, grounds keeping costs, security, insurance, etc.) estimated at \$40,000 annually.
- The revenue possible for sale of property depends on the use of the facility. Highest and best use of a school is as a school. Unfortunately, a new private school in the community could draw off Methacton students and affect enrollment. In practice, the as-is sale price of an aged school is usually very modest, with few comparable school sales for appraisers to analyze.
- Clearing the site for sale as land has merit. The sale price for land can be reliably appraised compared to other comparable land sales in the community. We estimate the abatement and demolition of the Audubon property at \$750,000, including soft costs. Deduct the cost of abatement and demolition from the appraised sale price for a realistic net sale price.
- Placing the property on the community tax-rolls might generate on-going tax revenue for Methacton School District, given the right development.

Analysis of property mothballing:

- There are operational costs during the period of vacancy (environmental control, grounds keeping costs, security, insurance, etc.) estimated at \$40,000 annually.
- The school will have renovation needs from time to time to maintain the property in warm, safe and dry condition. Maintain environmental control to avoid development of mold problems and peeling paint. Maintain roofs and masonry to avoid water incursion to avoid accelerated deterioration and mold problems. Maintain security to avoid vandalism and outright theft (copper piping and wiring, for example).

- 9. Capacities of the Cafeterias at Skyview and Arcola came up during the Q&A session. After discussing the potential pitfalls of starting lunch too early and***

ending too late, there was additional discussion regarding arrangement of tables. You indicated you would have to look into it much deeper to provide a definitive answer on cafeteria capacity. Were you asked to do this for the Elementary Schools as this can be a real problem with young children? If so, what were the results? If not, how much effort would it be for you to undertake such an analysis in the event the board determines one is necessary? Additionally, has any analysis been completed regarding the bathroom facilities, ADA compliance and Fire Safety compliance in the event 4 schools need to absorb the Audubon student population. If not, how much effort would you need to expend to do such an analysis?

No. We are no longer looking to expand the student population at Skyview or Arcola. Both schools were designed to enroll many more students than current five- and ten-year enrollment projections from PEL. Cafeteria seating capacity questions centered on the changing trend in table style; from long high-capacity rectangular tables to less-efficient smaller round tables. In addition, District administrators endeavor to start lunch later and end earlier with fewer lunch sessions. Less sessions require more students per session. We did not explore options to expand cafeteria seating to either shift to more less-efficient (but nicer for student socializing) round tables or fewer lunch sessions.

We propose the following scope of services for cafeteria analysis. We prepare furniture layouts to determine seating capacity. We meet with the school Principal to determine the number of lunch sessions and possible timing. We meet with food service managers to analyze serving capacity (often the duration of a lunch session is constrained by slow serving lines). We compare seating capacity to number of students.

In our facility condition assessments, we did not identify deficiencies at Eagleville, Woodland or Worcester in toilet room facilities, accessibility or fire safety compliance. Arrowhead Elementary School will require major renovations in a five- to ten-year timeframe. Current Arrowhead deficiencies, identified in Section 4 of our study, should all be addressed in a major renovation project. Despite deficiencies, Arrowhead Elementary School is safe to accommodate the 476 students identified in Figure 5.7 of our study.

10. During your presentation, a board member said to you “he likes to look at the past before going forward...in 2007/2008 (we) projected enrollments of 6,500 (K-12) students and the public said the birth rates are declining and we should not build the schools... we don’t want to make a change (shutter schools) and go the other way where if there is not enough room”. Please confirm your answer to this question especially in consideration of any of the items described above.

11. Four modular classrooms at Arrowhead:

Please provide reasoning that the 4 modular classrooms at Arrowhead, which have been stated to be in need of repair/upgrades, are included in the capacity. This is important as members of the MSD Board have voiced concern over these modular facilities. If you believe the modular classrooms are to remain, please provide an estimate of cost to repair/upgrade them. Note, if we were to remove the use of the 4 modular classrooms, we would yield the following capacity (considering class size of 22 and the kindergarten anomaly):

We agree that without maintaining or replacing the four modular classrooms, Arrowhead Elementary School would not have 18 regular full-sized classrooms to accommodate four sections at grade levels K to 4, plus 5 special education and pupil support classrooms, plus ‘flex’ classrooms. In certain ways (air conditioning and natural lighting, for example) the existing four modular classrooms are more desirable

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than the existing trapezoidal classrooms. In fact, three of the four existing modular classrooms are currently occupied by regular classrooms.

We estimate that Arrowhead will require a comprehensive renovation in a five- to ten-year timeframe. We looked for clues to Methacton architectural standards (and the disposition of modular classrooms) expected for future elementary school renovations at either Audubon or Arrowhead Elementary Schools.

Methacton School District undertook a comprehensive renovation of Woodland Elementary School in recent years. At that time, the student capacity of Woodland Elementary School was adjusted to complement the enrollment projection, with classroom additions. Modular classrooms at Woodland were eliminated. Based on the scope of construction and cost of the Woodland project, we estimated the Arrowhead project at \$20 to \$25 million.

We recommend replacing these four modular classrooms with permanent construction at the time of needed comprehensive renovations of Arrowhead Elementary School. Planning and design includes a careful analysis of all aspects of support, including toilet fixture counts, café seating capacity, café serving capacity, etc.

TABLE G

Arrowhead				Eagleville						
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity			
Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	2	44	66			
1st	3	22	66	1st	4	22	88			
2nd	3	22	66	2nd	4	22	88			
3rd	3	22	66	3rd	4	22	88			
4th	3	22	66	4th	4	22	88			
Total	14		330	Total	18		418			
Woodland				Worcester				Total		
	# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Hist. Avg. Students per Class	Student Capacity		# of Classrooms	Student Capacity
Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	2	44	66	Half-Day K	8	264
1st	4	22	88	1st	4	22	88	1st	15	330
2nd	4	22	88	2nd	4	22	88	2nd	15	330
3rd	4	22	88	3rd	4	22	88	3rd	15	330
4th	4	22	88	4th	4	22	88	4th	15	330
Total	18		418	Total	18		418	Total	68	1584

Please confirm the above numbers would have a negative effect on the capacity described in question #5 above and it would further reduce the excess capacity available to absorb the students from the proposed to be closed Audubon Elementary School.

We identify the total student capacity for the Close Audubon Option described in Section 5.3 of our study. Figure 5.7 identifies student capacity at 1904 students, without using any of the eight ‘flex’ classrooms and without new construction.

A fifth section per grade level could be planned and designed in a five year timeframe at Arrowhead Elementary School. Five sections per grade level would increase the student capacity at Arrowhead to 595 students. 1904-student capacity plus 119 added student capacity at Arrowhead totals 2023 students.