



North Hills School District

District Grade Reconfiguration Report

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History, Statement of Purpose, and Problem

In 1973, the North Hills School District had a student population of 8,514 and a building configuration that included: two high school buildings (Rice Building (11-12), Marone Building (9-10),) Ross (7-8), West View (7-8) and 11 elementary schools (K-6). In 1973-74, the North Hills School District was comprised of 3,842 elementary school students. For the district, the 1973-74 school year began a rapid decline in district enrollment that lasted 17 consecutive school years and reached its low point of 4,256 students in 1989-90. This decline was a drop of 50 percent of the student population over this time period.

As population declined the district began closing and reconfiguring schools. The 1977-78 school year saw the closing of Quail and Evergreen Elementary Schools. In 1983-84, the district closed Berkley Hills, Hamilton, Highland, Martin, Oakwood, Ridgewood, and McIntyre elementary schools; converted Ross and West View to elementary schools; and reconfigured the Marone Building into the Senior High School for grades 10, 11 and 12 and the Rice Building into the Junior High School for Grades 7, 8 and 9.

By 1983-84, the North Hills School District operated eight schools; Senior High (10-12), Junior High (7-9), Highcliff (K-6), McIntyre (K-6), Northway (K-6), Perrysville (K-6), Ross (K-6), Seville (K-6), and West View (K-6).

As the district opened for school in 1985-86, the student population was 4,644. Of these 4,644 students, 2,000 were elementary students, the lowest elementary population in the history of the school district. The next 11 years saw a growth in elementary student enrollments. In 1992-93, the school district re-opened McIntyre Elementary (K-6). This growth trend reached 5,092 students in 1996-97 with 2,645 of the students being elementary school students. During this period, the elementary population grew by 24 percent, and the secondary population grew by 16 percent.

In early 2000's, the North Hills School District enrollment was once again on a decline and the aging buildings were not equipped to face the academic challenges of the 21st century learner. The demographic study used in the master plan showed a projected enrollment decline through the year 2013.

In 2000, the North Hills Facilities Master Plan called for the closure of three of the district's seven elementary schools (Northway, Perrysville, and Seville) and major renovations to the Senior High and three elementary schools (McIntyre, Highcliff, and Ross). The Master Plan called for the district to move into the new century with a High School (10-12), Junior High School (7-9) and four elementary schools (K-6).

In 2008-09, the student population was 4,435 with 2,154 students in grades K-6. At this time, the district enacted the elementary phase of the Facility Master Plan as it closed Northway, Seville, and



Perrysville and began construction to McIntyre Elementary. With the closure and construction projects, the district established four district elementary school attendance areas in 2010 for the opening of the 2010-11 school year. The 2010-11 school year saw the completion of the Highcliff Renovation project, followed by the completion of the Ross Elementary School Project in 2011-12.

In the 2013-14 school year, the North Hills School District established North Hills Middle School and created the Middle School teaming concept for grades 7 and 8. Grade 9 was moved to the high school building creating a 9-12 high school. The high school world language department was relocated to the “Quad” of the junior high school building, and the district operated an open campus concept with high school students traveling between buildings for classes.

The trend of increasing student populations that began with the 2012-13 school year continued, and McIntyre and Ross elementary schools approached full capacity. In response, the district established a committee to examine the school attendance areas and commissioned a demographic study. The demographic study report indicated an increasing population through the year 2025. Through this process, the North Hills School District re-assigned neighborhoods from Ross to West View and Highcliff and reassigned neighborhoods from McIntyre to Highcliff starting in the 2016-17 school year.

In 2017-18, the North Hills School District completed an addition to McIntyre Elementary to expand its capacity to house increasing student populations in the McIntyre attendance area. The district transferred the elementary Life Skills program to McIntyre in order to create additional space at Highcliff Elementary as the building also was approaching capacity.

With the opening of the 2018-19 school year, the district is in its seventh consecutive year of increased population. The population reached 2,546, the largest elementary school enrollment (K-6) since the 1997-98 school year. Over that seven-year period, the district’s elementary population increased by 468 students. The 2018-19 kindergarten class is the largest class in the district with 389 students, and 132 of those students, or 34 percent, are at McIntyre Elementary. Highcliff Elementary has reached its classroom capacity and is running 29 sections in 29 rooms with little to no space for student support programs. Ross Elementary also is nearing its capacity with 30 sections in 31 rooms with limited space for student support programs.

At the start of the 2018-19 school year, in an effort to increase safety at the high school and middle school campus, the district ended its practice of an open campus concept and relocated the world language department to the high school building. This move vacated 12 classrooms in the middle school building that was already operating well under its intended capacity.

With increasing elementary populations pushing our four elementary schools to capacity, the district is again faced with addressing elementary student placement. As we explore the best solution to this issue, administrators evaluated the following seven options.



1. **Redistrict Elementary Attendance Areas** - Redistricting will not alleviate the strain on the buildings as it has in the past; therefore, moving neighborhoods will not be a viable option moving forward.
2. **Elementary Grade Reconfiguration** - This option explored reconfiguring the elementary schools into K-2 and 3-6 buildings while keeping the district's K-6 format. Although the educational, social, and emotional value of this model is intriguing, this model will run out of capacity in two to three school years as our increasing enrollment trend is predicted through 2025.
3. **Ross Elementary School Addition** - This option explored adding classroom space to Ross Elementary and redistricting neighborhoods. This option is costly and will not solve the capacity issue that exists at Highcliff Elementary without a major redistricting project. A districtwide redistricting project would impact all four elementary schools by moving students in and out of all elementary schools as we would have to re-establish all four school attendance zones.
4. **Highcliff Elementary School Addition** - This option explored adding classroom space at Highcliff Elementary. Highcliff Elementary had to obtain a steep slope variance exception to the 2010 renovation project in order to add classrooms. The building's footprint maximizes the topography of the property and leaves no additional land in order to add additional classrooms to the site. Therefore, an addition to Highcliff Elementary is not possible.
5. **Half Day Kindergarten** - This option explored reducing kindergarten from the current full day program to a half day program. Moving to a half day kindergarten would prove to be detrimental to the academic success of the students in the foundational years of school. Additionally, it does not solve the capacity issue as it would not create enough relief for the increasing student enrollment. Furthermore, parents would be responsible for all midday student transportation for all morning departures and for afternoon arrivals as the district does not provide transportation for kindergarten students. Currently, the district is not contracted with ABC Transit for midday runs outside of the transportation of A.W. Beattie Career Center students.
6. **Increase Elementary Class Size** - This option explored increasing the elementary class sizes. However, increasing the elementary class size will not render a long-term solution to the capacity issue. This plan would impact individual classrooms in specific grades in specific buildings. It would cause the district to approach 30 students in a classroom at the upper grade levels. This may be used as a temporary solution, but it is not recommended as a permanent solution. Using 2018-19 student population data, increasing class sizes to: 25 students in K-1, 27 students in grades 2 and 3, and 30 students in grades 4, 5 and 6 would have the following impacts:
 - a. Increase average elementary class size from 22.3 to 24.25



- b. Impact 9 of 114 sections or 8 percent (4 of the 9 are at Highcliff)
 - i. K - Ross
 - ii. Grade 1 - Highcliff, Ross, West View
 - iii. Grade 2- No Impact
 - iv. Grade 3 - Highcliff
 - v. Grade 4 - Highcliff
 - vi. Grade 5 - Highcliff and McIntyre
 - vii. Grade 6 - Ross

- 7. **District Grade Reconfiguration Project** - This option explored reconfiguring the district's grade structure by moving Grade 6 to the middle school. This option would create four K-5 elementary schools, a 6-8 Middle School, and a 9-12 High School. This option is the recommended plan as it creates relief to the elementary capacity to handle the projected increases in enrollment through the 2025 school year. This option is now possible due to the closed campus concept that was implemented at the high school and middle school campus at the start of the 2018-19 school year. This document outlines the details of this option, provides a timeline for action, and identifies implementation and additional considerations.



Section I - Space and Capacity

As we explore the option of moving Grade 6 to the middle school, we have addressed several essential questions.

What are the Capacities of the North Hills School District’s Buildings?

The North Hills Facilities Master Plan established six academic buildings. The chart below details the six academic buildings, their capacity, enrollment, and usage data for the 2018-19 school year.

School	Classrooms	Classrooms in Use	Student Enrollment	School Capacity Based on 22 Students Per Classroom	Operational Percentage**
High School	78	78*	1,311	1,715	76.4%
Middle School	75	60*	651	1,650	39.5%
Highcliff	29	29	630	640	98.4%
McIntyre	34	31	697	750	92.9%
Ross	31	30	670	685	97.8%
West View	28	24	549	615	89.2%

- * Classroom use at the secondary level is factored differently than elementary as they operate on a per period schedule based on the student master schedule. The number of rooms in use will vary each period. Additionally, based on the scheduling of students, rooms are assigned to multiple teachers throughout the day, which cannot be done at the elementary schools.
- ** Operational percentage is calculated by dividing the current student enrollment by the school capacity (22 students per classroom). This percentage can go over 100 percent as the district’s class size policy allows for greater than 23 students in each of our K-6 classrooms.

Does the Grade 6 Class Fit into the Middle School Building?

Yes. The Grade 6 class will fit into the middle school building. The classroom usage chart for 2018-19 gives a clear indication of the space and capacity issue facing the district. With the 2018-19 school year, we are operating two elementary schools at greater than 98 percent capacity and one at 93 percent, while the middle school building is operating at only 40 percent capacity.



The district would not need to build any additional classroom space onto the middle school building in order to accommodate a 6-8 middle school. This plan is now possible due to the closed campus concept implemented on the high school and middle school campus at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. Closing the campus opened up 12 classrooms at the middle school that once housed the high school's World Language Department. Additionally, middle school teachers do not share classrooms. This indicates that even more space is available with the existing building capacity as the classrooms are in use; but, each academic classroom is being used 5 periods in a 9 period day and thus is running academic classrooms at 55% capacity.

How Many Rooms Would be Needed for Grade 6 at the Middle School?

We will be operating a “school within a school” model for Grade 6 at the middle school. This model will be explained in greater detail in Section II - Curriculum and Scheduling. A “school within a school” model uses the current Grade 6 academic schedule and places it into the time structure of the middle school. This results in a mostly unchanged student day with self-contained classrooms with homeroom teachers and the departmentalization of the core subjects of English Language Arts, math, science, and social studies. This model would require 14 classrooms using our current class size policy and would place 25 or 26 students each Grade 6 classroom. Although this model would require 14 classrooms, I recommend using 16 sections with class sizes of 22 or 23 students. The Grade 6 departmentalization instructional model requires an even number of teachers, so moving to 15 sections is not an option for the “school within a school” model. I will use 16 academic sections throughout this study for calculations.

How Much Capacity at Each Elementary School is Created by Removing 6th Grade?

We are currently running four Grade 6 classrooms at each elementary school. By moving the sixth-grade to the middle school, each school would have four additional classrooms to: (1) educate students in grades K-5, (2) provide student support, or (3) implement programs that we currently do not have space for at the elementary level.

Section II - Curriculum and Scheduling

The North Hills School District Curriculum is the road map to instruction and learning. Our curriculum provides learning opportunities for students by providing a rigorous curriculum that is cross-curricular and developmentally appropriate in all subject areas and at all levels. Grade 6 is a critical academic year as students begin developing learning independence in order to be successful in the Middle School teaming concept. The sixth-grade year is also an important year for the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students as they prepare to exit the self-contained classroom environment that exists in the traditional elementary school.



To ease this transition, sixth-grade teachers are departmentalized based on subject, and students are assigned to different teachers for the core subjects. This departmentalization allows students to move between teachers in a controlled environment and provides the opportunity for teachers to deliver lessons in academic areas based on their instructional strengths. We believe departmentalization results in a better learning environment for students and a stronger professional environment for staff.

As we explore the moving Grade 6 to the middle school, we have to determine what model of learning would be best for our students and staff. Do we operate a “school within a school” model in which the Grade 6 curriculum program is largely undisturbed from its current state where students and staff are scheduled as they would be in an elementary school? They are simply relocated to the middle school building for their daily operations. Do we operate Grade 6 as a middle school team concept as we currently run for our grades 7 and 8 students? The middle school teaming model divides students into academic teams for core subject areas of English, math, science, and social studies. The team approach offers cohesion among a smaller number of students within the larger student population. This section evaluates both models as they pertain to Grade 6 operating at the middle school.

To understand the curriculum impact of the sixth-grade models, we must first understand the academic time established for our current sixth-grade academic day compared to the time structure of the middle school teams.

- Current Time Allocation for Each Grade 6 Subject:
 - 80 minutes ELA
 - 80 minutes Math
 - 40 minutes Social Studies
 - 40 minutes Science
 - 6 Day Cycle - Computer Science, Art, Music, Library, PE x 2
 - 30 minutes Band and Orchestra are “pulled out” during TRIBE Time

- Team Time Allocations for Grade 7 subjects:
 - The Middle School teaming schedule operates on nine, 40-minute periods each day.
 - 40 minutes English
 - 40 Minutes Math
 - 40 Minutes Science
 - 40 Minutes Social Studies
 - 40 Minutes Reading at three levels
 - A = 40 Minutes of Reading in one semester and 40 Minutes of World Language in one semester
 - B = 40 Minutes of Reading all year
 - C = 80 Minutes of Reading all year
 - 40 Minutes - Computer Science and PE - 1 each semester



- 40 Minutes - Trimester Specials of Art, Family Consumer Science, Technology Education
- 40 Minutes - Music
 - Student Choice of Band, Chorus, Orchestra, or General Music

How Would we Run Grade 6 as a “School within a School” Model?

A “school within a school” model is where the sixth-grade curriculum would be largely undisturbed from its current state. Students and staff would be scheduled as they would be in an elementary school using the departmentalization plan currently in place.

There are several changes that would need to be made to special area schedules. The main differences between the “school within a school” model at the middle school versus the Grade 6 model at the elementary school are within special area courses. With this “school within a school” model, we would also be able to add a STEM opportunity for sixth-grade students. In comparison to the current six-day cycle in the elementary buildings, Grade 6 students would receive:

- 30 General Music classes vs 30 General Music classes a year
 - 78 Instrumental (Band/Orchestra) classes vs 60 Instrumental (Band/Orchestra) classes
 - **OR**
 - 78 vocal music classes vs 0 vocal music classes
- 60 Art classes vs 30 Art classes a year
- 60 Computer Science classes vs 30 Computer Science classes a year
- 72 Physical Education classes vs 60 Physical Education classes

Regardless of the model chosen, recess will not be offered to Grade 6 students, and the district will take advantage of the additional 30 minutes of time by adding academic opportunities for students. The middle school day also is 30 minutes longer than the elementary day. Combining those time periods, we are able to capture an additional hour of academic time.

- Typical schedule for a student and the departmentalization of the teacher in the “School within a School” Model

PD	Departmentalization Group A	Departmentalization group B
1	English	Math
2		
3	Social Studies	Science



4	Lunch	Lunch
5	Math	English
6		
7	Science	Social Studies
8	A/B Band/Orchestra/Vocal Music - M W F PE - T TH	
9	Trimester Tri 1 - Art Tri 2 - Computer Science Tri 3 - STEM 6	

How Many Area School Districts Include 6th Grade in their Middle School Model?

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Avonworth – 6-8 | Highlands – 6-8 | South Fayette – 6-8 |
| Baldwin-Whitehall – 6-8 | Keystone Oaks – 6-8 | South Park – 5-8 |
| Bethel Park – 5-6, 7-8 | McKeesport – 6-8 | Steel Valley – 5-8 |
| Chartiers Valley – 6-8 | Montour – 5-8 | Upper St. Clair – 5-6, 7-8 |
| Deer Lakes – 6-8 | Moon – 5-8 | West Allegheny – 6-8 |
| Elizabeth Forward – 6-8 | Mt. Lebanon – 6-8 | West Jefferson Hills – 6-8 |
| Fox Chapel – 6-8 | North Allegheny – 6-8 | West Mifflin – 4-8 |
| Gateway – 5-6, 7-8 | Penn Hills – 5-8 | |
| Hampton – 6-8 | Quaker Valley – 6-8 | |

Twenty-five (25) of the 42 school districts or 60 percent of school districts in Allegheny County include Grade 6 students in their middle school configuration.

Section III - Staffing

A school district grade reconfiguration project will require a staffing evaluation of the necessary additions, transfers, and displacement of district staff members. In addition to classroom teachers, the project requires an evaluation of non-instructional staff, support staff, administrators, food service and custodial staff.



A. Act 93 - Administrative Staff

Moving Grade 6 to the middle school returns this school to a three grade-level building that would house approximately 1,000 students with approximately 80 academic staff members. This student population would require an assistant principal to be added to the middle school for the purposes of student management and teacher supervision.

I recommend adding an Assistant Principal to the middle school and re-establishing the House Principal Model that was in effect when the building was a Junior High School and housed Grades 7, 8 and 9 with a similar number of students. This would divide the assistant principal student management duties into houses based on student last names and would divide the teacher management responsibilities by content.

B. NHEA - Teaching Staff

North Hills School District employs 16 classroom teachers to educate the sixth-grade class. The district also assigns school counselors, reading specialists, special education teachers, gifted education teachers, art teachers, music teachers, physical education teachers, and computer science teachers to meet the daily academic needs of sixth-grade students.

The need to move classroom teachers with the students is easily understandable, but the assignment of support teachers is not as simply defined as these staff members have responsibilities to students in Grades K-5 as well.

Staff needed to operate Grade 6 at the North Hills Middle School include:

16 Classroom Teachers

- 1 School Counselor
- 3 Special Education Teachers
 - 1 Autistic Support
 - 2 Learning Support
- 1 Gifted Education Teacher
- 1 STEM Teacher
- 1 Reading Specialist
- 1 PE Teacher
- 1 Art Teacher
- 1 Music Teacher
- 1 Computer Science Teacher



Classroom Teachers

The current class size policy caps the number of students in a sixth-grade classroom at 27 students. Implementing the “school within a school” model for Grade 6 will require 14 academic sections based on the current student populations of our Grades 3, 4 and 5 classes, but I am recommending maintaining the 16 academic sections model. Looking ahead into the 2022-23 school year, we will need to develop a staffing model with 16 academic sections as the current second-grade class is approximately 380 students. This student population results in 14 sections being over the class size limit of our policy guidelines for Grade 6. Using 14 academic sections in conjunction with our class size policy for Grade 6, our maximum capacity for sixth-grade at the middle school is 378 students. Using 16 academic sections in conjunction with our class size policy for Grade 6, our maximum capacity for Grade 6 at the middle school is 432 students. As previously stated, an odd number of 15 sections is not possible as you must have an even number of teachers in a departmentalization model.

School Counselor

We currently have five school counselors for four elementary buildings. The additional counselor is placed at Ross Elementary to assist with the student support of a building that holds the district’s Autistic Support and Emotional Support programs. I am recommending that we maintain five counselors at the elementary schools. I am recommending we add a school counselor to the middle school and operate on grade-level counselor model to help with the academic, social, and emotional issues that students in this critical developmental stage are facing. The grade-level counselor model would assign a counselor to each grade that would stay with that group of students throughout their middle school years. This allows for the counselors and students to build relationships with a greater opportunity of student success through the middle school years.

Reading Specialists

We currently have two reading specialists at McIntyre and Ross Elementary School and three reading specialists at West View and Highcliff Elementary Schools. I would recommend transferring a reading specialist position from the elementary school to the middle school to address the reading support needs of sixth-grade students. The Grade 7 and 8 reading staff cannot provide enough support for the additional students.

Special Education Teachers

We have three learning support teachers at each elementary school. Although, we recently added a learning support teacher to three of our four elementary schools in the 2018-19 school year, we need to continue to strengthen the foundation of learning for the special education population at the elementary school. I recommend maintaining our current model of three learning support teachers per elementary school building model. Additionally, we have two autistic support teachers and one emotional support teacher at Ross Elementary and one life skills teacher at McIntyre Elementary.

I recommend that we hire three special education support positions for the middle school as indicated below:

- One Autistic Support Teacher - Grades 6-8



- Two Learning Support Teachers - Grade 6

This model allows us to add Autistic Support to the middle school for student support. We currently do not have a middle school Autistic Support program, and it is a program that is absolutely needed as our autistic student population moves out of the elementary schools into our secondary buildings.

Emotional Support students can be added to the current Emotional Support structure at the middle school. The middle school Emotional Support program can be strengthened with paraprofessional support.

We have two learning support teachers per grade at the middle school. By adding two learning support teachers to Grade 6, we can continue with the two learning support teachers per grade level model. We currently run Life Skills for Grades 7 to 9 at the middle school. Life Skills students would be assigned to the current Life Skills teacher expanding that program to include students in Grades 6 to 9. We have space in the building and in the caseload and responsibility of the Life Skills program. The high school Life Skills model educates students through age 21. Maintaining Grade 9 Life Skills at the middle school level is developmentally appropriate for this program.

Gifted Education Teachers

We have 1.5 GATE teachers at the middle school to support students in Grades 7 and 8. The Gifted Educator caseload cannot exceed 65 students, and we are averaging 42 gifted students per grade. Expanding the GATE program to include students in Grades 6 to 8 would require 2.5 GATE teachers. The additional GATE position would be a new hire.

Special Area Teachers- Art, Music, Physical Education, STEM, & Computer Science

Based on the scheduling of the special area classes for Grades 7 and 8 and ensuring appropriate coverage of the K-5 special area programs, we would need the following additions to the middle school to accommodate Grade 6 students:

- Art Teacher - New Hire
- Music Teacher - New Hire for Orchestra/General Music
- Computer Science Teacher - New Hire
- PE - Transfer one elementary PE position to the Middle School
- STEM Grade 6 Teacher - New Hire (K-6 or middle level science)

C. ESPA - Educational Support

In evaluating the support staff, we will need to add one secretary and one special education paraprofessional that will be assigned to middle school emotional support. By adding an assistant principal to the middle school and establishing an administrative office, we will need to add this secretarial position to support the assistant principal.



We will be creating a Grade 6-8 Autistic Support room that will need paraprofessional support. Moving the Grade 6 Emotional Support and Learning Support students into the middle school will not create enough relief to the elementary Emotional Support and Learning Support programs to warrant a transfer of elementary paraprofessional support to the middle school to meet this need.

Therefore, I recommend we hire one assistant principal secretary and one paraprofessional to support the special education population at the middle school without compromising the support needs of the elementary schools.

D. SEIU - Food Service

We will need to add one lunch period to the middle school to accommodate Grade 6 lunch. This will create a staffing model for K-5 and 6-8 lunch that has minimal workforce time added and is slightly more expensive compared to the current K-6 and 7-8 model.

With Grade 6 at the middle school, the Elementary Food Service staffing model will remain the same with no additional cost or reduction in workforce hours. At the middle school, 15 minutes will need to be added to four positions each day. Additionally, there will need to be a 1.5 hour supplemental position that will be added in the morning for the student breakfast program.

E. SEIU - Custodial

The current custodial staffing model is based upon square footage of building space and will not require additional staff at the middle school, nor require the reduction of staff at elementary schools.

Overall Staffing Recommendation

To summarize the staffing needs of this school district grade reconfiguration project, we will need to add the following positions to the North Hills School District Staffing Model to accommodate a K-5 and 6-8 reconfiguration:

- 1 Assistant Principal (Act 93)
- 1 School Counselor (NHEA)
- 1 Art Teacher (NHEA)
- 1 Music Teacher (NHEA)
- 1 Computer Science Teacher (NHEA)
- 3 Special Education (NHEA)
- 1 Gifted Education (NHEA)
- 1 STEM (NHEA)
- 1 Secretary (ESPA)
- 1 Paraprofessional (ESPA)

The approximate financial impact of these additional positions will be included in **Section V - Cost Analysis** of this document.



Section IV - Time and Transportation

In the 2013-14 school year, in conjunction with the North Hills School District establishment of the Grade 7 and 8 North Hills Middle School and Grade 9 to 12 North Hills High School, the district changed the time and transportation structure for all students.

At that time, the district was in the third year of a five-year transportation contract with First Student and was able to decrease eight buses from the transportation fleet. The decrease in buses resulted in a savings of \$42,000 per bus or \$336,000 for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. In 2016-17, North Hills School District entered a transportation contract with ABC Transit. In that contract, the cost per bus increased to \$60,200.

Over the five-year period since enacting the current time and transportation model, the district paid approximately \$2.1 million less in transportation as compared to the previous transportation model.

As we configure the grade structure for the elementary schools and the middle school, we again have the opportunity to explore time and transportation models. In these models, we will explore opportunities that could eliminate the K-8 busing at Highcliff and West View elementary schools, place all four elementaries on a common start and end time, increase academic time at elementary schools, and maintain the time structure at the middle school and high school to maintain separate bus runs for the high school and middle school students.

Below is our current time structure for reference and bus fleet usage, as well as five different options to transport students to our six academic buildings and the impact of each option. **Option 6 represents no change to time structures of our buildings and transportation and simply indicates a change in grades at the middle school and the elementary schools.**

Current Time Structure:

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
7-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-6	West View/Highcliff	8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
K-6	Ross/McIntyre	9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.



Option 1

Option 1 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
6-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-5	All Elementary Schools	9:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Option 1 Impacts

Schools	Option 1 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds 15 minutes of academic time to the day • Students arrive 30 minutes later • Students dismiss 45 minutes later
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds 15 minutes of academic time to the day • Students arrive 15 minutes earlier • No change in student dismissal time

Option 1 Summary

Option 1 allows for a single elementary dismissal time and allows 50 minutes between Middle School dismissal and Elementary dismissal. Morning runs will be relatively easy, but the afternoon will be tight with a 50-minute difference in dismissal times at the middle school and the elementary schools. Due to the restructured time frame of the elementary school runs and the time span between dismissal at the middle school and the elementary schools, the district would have to deploy eight additional buses to transport students under this model. **Each bus has an annual cost of \$60,200. This model would cost \$481,600 annually.**



Option 2

Option 2 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
6-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-5	All Elementary Schools	8:50 a.m. – 3:50 p.m.

Option 2 Impacts

Schools	Option 2 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separates middle school bus runs from Highcliff and West View
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds 30 minutes of academic time to the day Students arrive 20 minutes later Students dismiss 50 minutes later Separates Highcliff and West View bus runs from middle school
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds 30 minutes of academic time to the day Students arrive 25 minutes earlier Students are dismissed 5 minutes later

Option 2 Summary

Option 2 allows for a single elementary dismissal time and allows 55 minutes between Middle School dismissal and Elementary dismissal. Morning runs will be relatively easy. Afternoon will be easier than Option 1 with a 55-minute difference in dismissal times at the middle school and the elementary schools. Due to the restructured time frame of the elementary school runs and the time span between dismissal at the middle school and the elementary schools, the district would have to deploy seven additional buses to transport students under this model. **Each bus has an annual cost of \$60,200. This model would cost \$421,400 annually.**



Option 3

Option 3 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
6-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-5	All Elementary Schools	8:55 a.m. – 3:55 p.m.

Option 3 Impacts

Schools	Option 3 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No change
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Separates middle school bus runs from Highcliff and West View
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adds 30 minutes of academic time to the day ● Students arrive 25 minutes later ● Students dismiss 55 minutes later ● Separates Highcliff and West View bus runs from middle school ● Allows for all elementary schools to be on the same time schedule
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adds 30 minutes of academic time to the day ● Students arrive 20 minutes earlier ● Students dismiss 10 minutes later ● Allows for all elementary schools to be on the same time schedule

Option 3 Summary

Option 3 allows for a single elementary dismissal time and allows 60 minutes between Middle School dismissal and Elementary dismissal. Morning and afternoon runs will be relatively easy because of the restructured time frame of the elementary school runs coupled with the time span between dismissal at the middle school and the elementary schools. The district would have to deploy seven additional buses to transport students under this model. **Each bus has an annual cost of \$60,200. This model would cost \$421,400 annually.**



Option 4

Option 4 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
6-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-5	Highcliff/West View	8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
K-5	McIntyre/Ross	9:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Option 4 Impacts

Schools	Option 4 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No change
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No change
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adds 15 minutes of academic time to the day ● Students arrive 15 minutes earlier ● Continues K-8 busing
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adds 15 minutes of academic time to the day ● Students arrive 15 minutes earlier

Option 4 Summary

Option 4 has a split elementary start and dismissal time and is similar to the current structure. The impact from this option would mainly be in the morning runs as it reduces the time between the middle school start and the start of West View and Highcliff by 15 minutes. Thus, the runs for those schools in the mornings would need to be significantly shortened and would require two additional buses to transport students under this model. **Each bus has an annual cost of \$60,200. This model would cost \$120,400 annually.**



Option 5

Option 5 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
6-12	Middle School/High School	7:40 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.
K-5	Highcliff/West View	8:40 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
K-5	McIntyre/Ross	9:25 a.m. – 3:55 p.m.

Option 5 Impacts

Schools	Option 5 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students arrive 20 minutes later ● Students dismiss 40 minutes later ● Establishes 6-12 busing
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students arrive 10 minutes earlier ● Students dismiss 10 minutes earlier ● Establishes 6-12 busing
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students arrive 10 minutes later ● Students dismiss 10 minutes later ● Separates Highcliff and West View bus runs from Middle School
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students arrive 10 minutes later ● Students dismiss 10 minutes later

Option 5 Summary

Option 5 returns the district to a combined middle school and high school schedule and will transport students in Grades 6-12 on the same buses. This would return to a model used by the district prior to 2013-14 with two separate transportation runs for elementary. This would return the traffic and safety issues on the hilltop campus that existed under the former transportation plan for Grades 7-12. This option would have 2,700 students and 225 staff members arrive and depart the campus in a very short time frame. Additionally, because the district would be adding the entire middle school population (Grades 6 to 8) to the high school transportation model, it would require an additional 12 buses to be available to transport this group of students. **Each bus has an annual cost of \$60,200 per bus. This model would cost \$722,400 annually.**



Option 6

Option 6 Grade Configuration Changes

Grade Configuration	Building(s)	Student Schedule
9-12	High School	7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
6-8	Middle School	7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
K-5	Highcliff/West View	8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
K-5	McIntyre/Ross	9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Option 6 Impacts

Schools	Option 6 Impacts
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
Highcliff/West View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
McIntyre/Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change

Option 6 Summary

Based on the complexities of the Grade 6 transition to the middle school, the additional staffing costs that will be required for the Grade 6 transitions, and the adjustments that would be felt by our North Hills community, I am recommending Option 6 which results in no changes to our transportation time structures. We can continue to explore transportation and time models in the future. At this time, a change to the time and transportation structure in combination with a staffing structure change is not financially feasible.

Option 6 is the recommended option.



Section V - Cost Analysis

The cost analysis of this project requires an evaluation of the staffing model from Section III and Transportation from Section IV of this document. Overall cost of the project hinges upon the transportation model selected by the district.

Position	Number of Positions	Salary Cost	Benefits Cost	Total Cost
Act 93	1	\$78,000	\$25,800	\$103,800
NHEA	9	\$414,000	\$232,168	\$646,168
ESPA - Secretary	1	\$32,818	\$19,682	\$52,500
ESPA - Paraprofessional	1	\$15,975	\$8,660	\$24,635
SEIU Food Service - MS Breakfast	1.5 hours	\$15/ Hour	NA	\$4,000*
SEIU Food Service - MS Lunch	4 positions increase 15 minutes	\$15/ Hour	NA	\$3,000*
TOTAL STAFF				\$ 834,103

Transportation	# of Buses	Cost per Bus	Total Cost	Cost Difference
Current Model	25	\$60,200	\$1,505,000	N/A
Option 1	33	\$60,200	\$1,986,600	\$481,600
Option 2	32	\$60,200	\$1,926,400	\$421,400
Option 3	32	\$60,200	\$1,926,400	\$421,400
Option 4	27	\$60,200	\$1,625,400	\$120,400
Option 5	37	\$60,200	\$2,227,400	\$722,400
Option 6	25	\$60,200	\$1,505,000	\$0

*Food service costs will impact the food service budget, not the General Fund, unless there is a budget deficit in the food service operating budget.



Budget Considerations

Using the Act 1 Index of 2.3 percent for the 2019-20 fiscal year, the total possible tax increase based on our Millage Rate would yield a \$1,076,400 increase to the annual budget. Based on increasing costs to salary, benefits, transportation, and operations, the district will have to seriously investigate the impact this project has on the short-term and long-term financial position of the district during the budgeting process.

Section VI - Implementation

The timeline for implementation is based upon the decision as to when this plan will be initiated. Each year, once kindergarten enrollment numbers are firm, we evaluate the impact of our student population as compared to the current class size policy. As the student populations exist for the 2018-19 school year, there appears to be some relief as students move up in grade levels; however, the potential exists for the district to run out of classrooms at one or more elementary schools based on new student registrations during the current school year and into the summer.

Reconfigure for the 2020-21 school year

If the district chooses to reconfigure to a K-5 elementary school and a 6-8 middle school for the 2020-21 school year, we will need to have a contingency plan to address grades and/or buildings that reach or exceed capacity during the 2019-20 school year. By reconfiguring in 2020-21, the district has the opportunity to provide transition activities and end of elementary school opportunities for both the Grade 5 and 6 students throughout the 2019-20 school year.

As a contingency, in the event that any school would reach its classroom capacity, and then need additional space for students, the district would have to strictly adhere to the guidelines stated School Board Policy No. 205:

“Children who are not registered to attend school by June 1, may be assigned to a district school outside their attendance area.

Class size guidelines outlined in this policy will be used in making class size decisions; however, the Superintendent shall have discretion in adjusting class sizes, and assignment of grade-level support personnel based upon class composition or the nature of other extenuating circumstances.”

I would recommend that we plan for the following activities for Grades 5 and 6 in the 2019-20 school year as we transition students from elementary school to the middle school:

- Track and Field Day
- Elementary School Graduation Ceremonies
- Middle School Orientation



- Middle School Musical Performance
- Bus Safety Patrol Leader
- Class field trips
- Other events specific to each school's Parent/Teacher group.

Section VII - Elementary Operations Impact

The impact on the elementary school buildings would be immediate as it would create four classrooms in each elementary school to be used for K-5 education. This plan essentially moves approximately 90 students from each school, which will provide relief to the building as a whole, scheduling of special area classes, library usage, cafeteria usage, and playground usage.

This model will provide additional opportunities for principals, counselors, reading specialists, math specialists, gifted education teachers, and other support staff to interact with students as the population of each building will decrease by approximately 15 percent.