
MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 22, 2020

FROM: Lou Masters
on behalf of the Monroe Township Board of Education Ad-Hoc Committee

TO: Steven Riback, President, Monroe Township Board of Education

CC: Dr. Dori Alvich, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Adam Layman, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

RE: 2019 Ad-Hoc Committee Growth Recommendation

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to recommend, to the Monroe Township Board of Education, a course of action regarding the growing student population within our community.

Background

In response to the 2019 failed referendum, the Board of Education and District administration created a special ad-hoc committee to investigate community growth and possible future referenda. This new committee included a more diverse cross-section of Monroe Township, from parents & senior citizens to district staff members and Board of Education representatives. The Board of Education, in partnership with the ad-hoc committee, solicited input and proposals from the community on the best options for housing the ever-increasing student enrollment.

Basis for Recommendation

The ad-hoc committee reviewed 34 submitted proposals. Firstly, each proposal was evaluated against five requirements:

1. It is not illegal
2. It is not unethical
3. It does not negatively impact providing a thorough and efficient education
4. It is under the BoE's purview
5. It addresses the district's growth issue

This initial review eliminated 19 proposals. The team also reviewed existing enrollment numbers from the most recent District demographic study, estimating that the district would need to plan for 3000 unhoused students. The team suggested to the Board of Education that a new demographic study would be prudent – this was approved at the August 2019 Board of Education meeting and is pending completion.

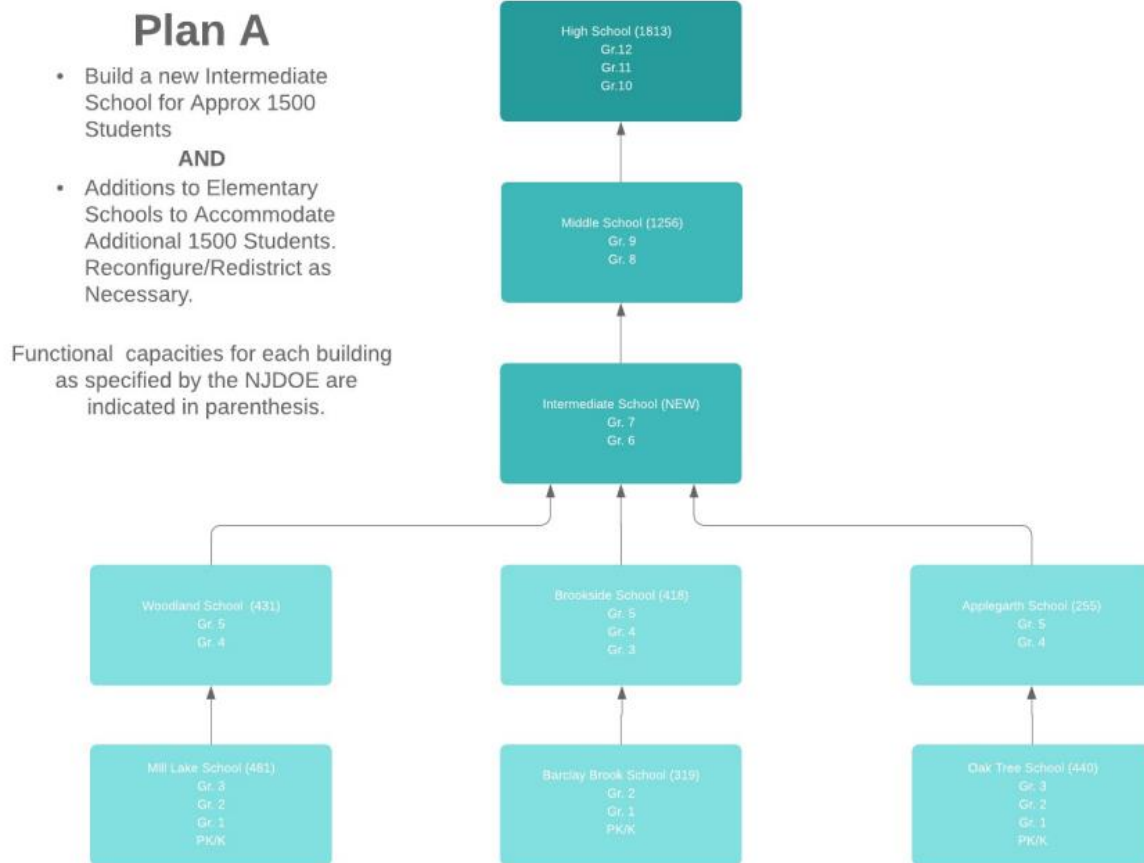
Secondly, the remaining proposals were reviewed comprehensively, focusing on two core guidelines:

1. It is a sound and desirable idea that addresses the growth concerns
2. It is worthwhile recommending to the BoE for consideration

The team discussed and suggested several additional guidelines:

1. Adding on the current HS is more costly due to curriculum and classroom requirements.
2. Moving 9th grade to the MS would have significant cost savings, but will impact the crowded MS. A MS grade shift would also be required.
3. Building an intermediate school may net us the largest increase in seats (5,6=1400; 5,6,7=2100). However, the solution should target providing an additional 3000 seats (estimated).
4. A centralized earlier grade school would be the most cost-efficient in terms of classrooms. However, we need to consider how big a school is appropriate for the age group.

These guidelines resulted in the construction of three ad-hoc proposals:

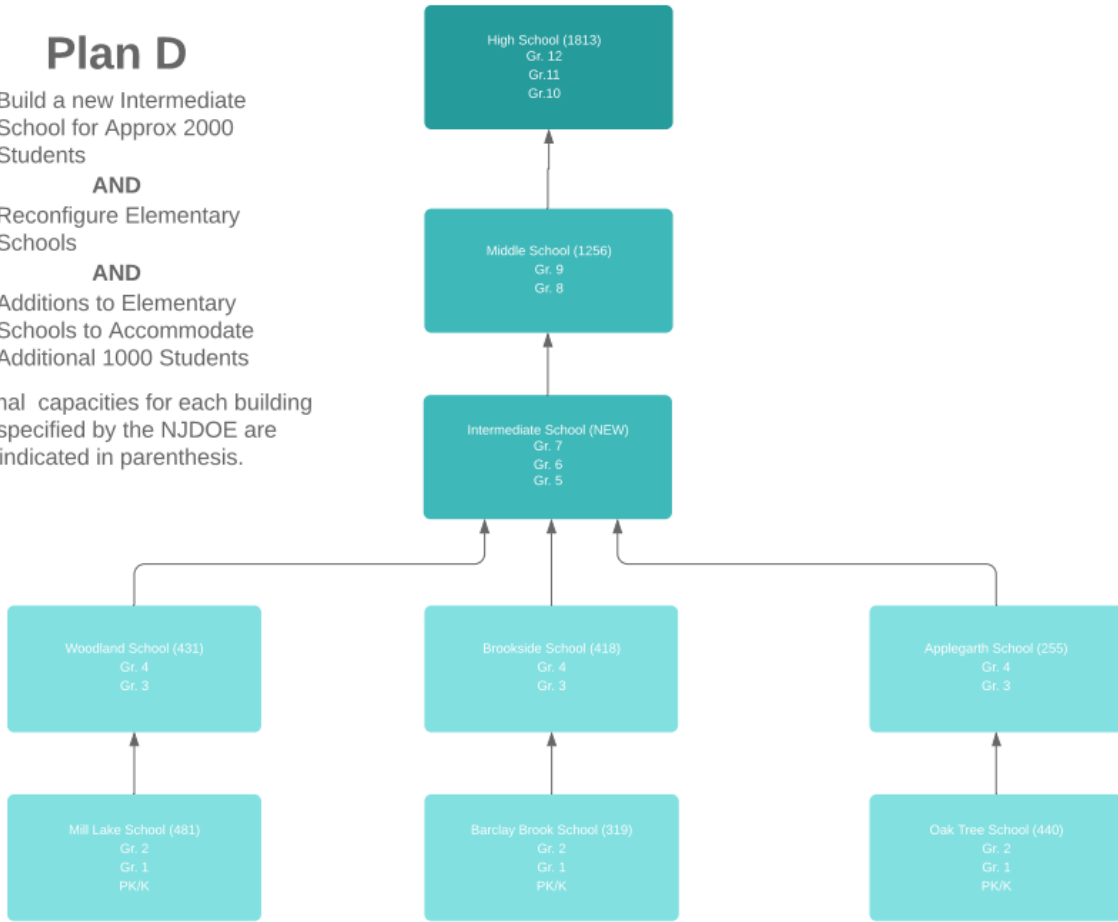


MEMORANDUM

Plan D

- Build a new Intermediate School for Approx 2000 Students
- AND**
- Reconfigure Elementary Schools
- AND**
- Additions to Elementary Schools to Accommodate Additional 1000 Students

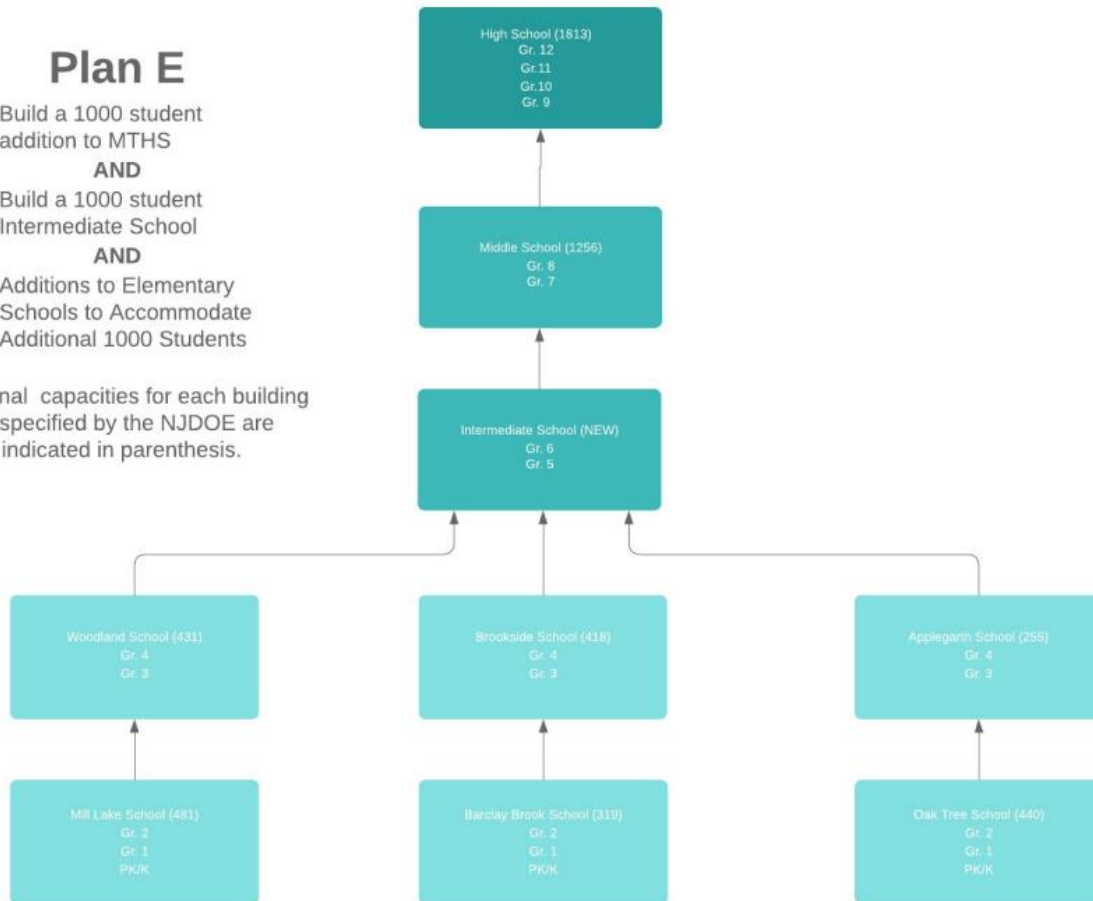
Functional capacities for each building as specified by the NJDOE are indicated in parenthesis.



Plan E

- Build a 1000 student addition to MTHS
AND
- Build a 1000 student Intermediate School
AND
- Additions to Elementary Schools to Accommodate Additional 1000 Students

Functional capacities for each building as specified by the NJDOE are indicated in parenthesis.



On November 13, 2019, the committee received public feedback on the proposed plans, which was then incorporated into a final discussion and construction of a recommendation.

Recommendation

The ad-hoc committee recommends¹ to the Monroe Township Board of Education:

1. Construction of a 5/6 (two grade) intermediary school
2. Addition (partial) of permanent classroom space to the High School, utilizing the existing expansion footprint at the rear of the building - the committee did not recommend a complete addition as specified in the previous (2019) referendum – only what is required to reduce current High School overcrowding issues related to unhoused students

¹ Possibly subject to updated demographers report

MEMORANDUM

Reference 1 – Supporting Documentation

Additional supporting material is available on the Monroe Township Board of Education District website: <https://www.monroe.k12.nj.us/>