

EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent, and critical thinker.

December 7, 2016

Dear ELPS Elementary Parents/Guardians:

On Monday evening, the Board of Education moved forward in charging an Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee comprised of parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administration and board members to develop a redistricting plan for our three elementary schools. The Ad Hoc Committee will be identifying and addressing the challenges with redistricting, developing a communication plan, identifying any applicable costs and impacts to the general fund budget, and investigating the direct impact on students and families. A plan will be presented to the Board of Education in February.

Redistricting our elementary schools is something that has been discussed for years, but was never acted upon due to the uncertainty and ongoing planning associated with the elementary school building renovations. With recent new enrollment projections which are significantly higher than those projected at the K-4 level back in 2014 (previous study), there is a need to maintain three elementary schools with approximately 300 students in each building, rather than move to a two-school model with approximately 500 students in each building.

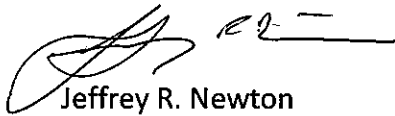
Therefore, it is important to note the following for our parent community:

- Elementary school renovations/alterations remain on target with a timeline of having a spring 2017 referendum to make improvements to all three buildings.
- Current K-4 building enrollments are unbalanced and remain at the following: Niantic Center School: 167 students, Lillie B. Haynes School: 301 students, and Flanders School: 346 students.
- Flanders School is currently at capacity and new housing development is occurring in the Flanders area.
- Both Lillie B. Haynes and Niantic Center currently have multiple empty classrooms to accommodate students through redistricting.
- Redistricting our elementary schools will provide balance and equity for all kindergarten through grade four students across the district.
- During the process last year of deciding on two elementary schools vs. three elementary schools and associated renovations, it was determined that our parent community supports smaller neighborhood schools.
- All current and factual information pertaining to the elementary redistricting process can be found on our website at the following link: eastlymeschools.org or elpsk12.org.

The ELPS Redistricting Ad Hoc Committee will hold their first meeting next Wednesday, December 14, 2016, at 4:15 pm in the Central Office conference room. Additional meetings are scheduled for December 20 and January 4, 2017. Opportunities for parent information sessions are being planned.

Feel free to contact me at any time with questions regarding this process.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey R. Newton', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeffrey R. Newton
Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Board of Education Members