



Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.

Single Issue Meeting: Future of Hudson Maxim

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

7:00 p.m.

High School Cafeteria

- Purpose: have audience gain understanding of realities and challenges the district faces
- Realities
 - a. Enrollment down 34% in 10 year period
 - b. 61% increase in per pupil cost in 10 year period due to:
 - Program expansion
 - Transportation
 - Services (i.e. therapies, nurses, etc)
 - Specialization
 - c. 266 kids from Hopatcong attend school out of district
 - d. Choice schools are draining enrollment
 - e. District **must** become competitive i.e. increase programs and scope of opportunities
 - f. Inefficiency in operations
 - g. 3,268 number of seats available in district. 1,608 kids recognized in district for 2017-18 school year
 - h. State Aid cuts are “doomsday scenario” - cut from 10 million to 2 million tentatively during 8 year period
 - All \$611,000 in emergency state aid must go back in Capital Reserve
 - Hoping legislators come to “their senses” and cuts are not as extreme
- Hudson Maxim
 - a. Built in 1908
 - b. Lacks certain facilities that are appropriate to the population of children that it serves
 - Classrooms are too small
 - Cafeteria is less than ideal
 - Playground is functional yet small → safety concerns
 - Cannot add anything to building if wanted to
 - Computer classes take place in the hallway
 - No place for OT and PT
 - Little office space
 - No parking
 - c. Served community well but *somewhat* outdated
 - d. Enrollment is maxed out
 - e. Excellent school → not great because of the facility, but great because of staff, families, students
- **Recommending to BOE that the HMX School be shut down September 2019 and operations be moved to DA. That will be the site of Pre-School, Kindergarten and Grade 1**
 - a. HMX can easily be duplicated by 2 at the DA school

- Will save 350k in operational costs and 150k in professional costs
 - a. Will keep guidance counselor and nurse in district
- Cannot cut teaching staff members
 - a. As if stands right now, no teaching staff member will be affected by the closing of HMX
- Will have to cut administrative positions
- Facts if HMX stayed open:
 - a. Upgrade bathrooms in required classrooms
 - b. No accommodation for new students
 - c. Play area
 - d. Parking
 - e. Pick up/drop off
 - f. HVAC
 - g. Building heated by steam currently but the pipes are old and in the walls

Questions

1. **What is the grade re-distribution for other schools?**
Answer at next week's meeting
2. **Is it true that Town Council is interested in the building?**
No. Gave ideas who may be interested
3. **Hopatcong HS becoming regional district with Lenape?**
For next week but not a likely scenario
4. **Plan for keeping choice school students in district**
Will contact parents of students applying for choice schools for next year and ask for a meeting
5. **What will the class sizes be?**
No plan to change class sizes.
6. **Have you thought about what will happen when the population grows?**
Currently 107 homes for sale in the borough. Average family size in current homes is 3.1 people. If every house sold tomorrow and 2 kids from each house we could handle that number.
7. **Does the number 266 include students with IEP that are sent OOD?**
That number does not include students that are sent out of district. Includes choice, tech, charter, etc.
9. **Would it be easier to put entire HMX grades in building with more room and grades with less in HMX building?**
Does not make sense with current financial reality
10. **What percentage of savings would be reinvested into schools and what percentage into budget constraint?**
Cannot answer question right now. Meeting with faculty over next few weeks to discuss. There will be no surplus if the school is sold.
11. **What happens to principals and secretaries?**
Principal position will be abolished (talking positions not people). Two custodian positions abolished. Believe the secretary will be maintained.

12. Why can't it be claimed a historic building?

Not an easy task. Building was added onto. HMX is not historical site right now.

13. What will happen to Mrs. McFadden?

The HMX principal position will be cut. New positions will be made that people can apply for.

14. Has any research been done into when kids are being pulled? Any research into why?

That is why a meeting will be planned. "Chasing" the reasons. That is why we need to compete. Need to have programs that cater to career/technical training.

15. How will bussing change?

Met today to discuss more to follow.

16. Will start times be staggered?

Will be an adjustment, not finalized yet.

17. With the decrease in student population and state aid how do superintendent and BA justify salaries?

Superintendent is frozen for 5 years and did not take merit pay. Does not take benefits. BA salary is on par with peers

18. Estimated cost to move schools?

One scenario is HMX is packed up and moved. Hire HS students to help. Interjected by ex-student saying other people cannot pack up their classrooms. Expectation is that staff will pack.

19. What is the highest number we have ever had in district?

Not sure. Would predict close to 3,000

20. Are non-tenured included in not cut guarantee?

Yes as long as they perform well

21. How will the lack of elevator in DA be addressed?

Issue will be addressed the same as it is now. Extra room downstairs for class if a child needs to be moved. Children with mobility needs will be downstairs.

22. What is superintendent going to do about fixing walls in HMX now?

Doing best to fix HMX cosmetically but this is huge part of the problem

23. Ancient PA system?

No sense in fixing now. Would be a waste of money. Ordering walkie-talkies that can be used next year.

24. When you close the building and it is not sold how much would it cost to maintain building?

Need to keep heated and person on site or it can be winterized as per input from parent F. Richard.

25. How will this move deal with CST members at HMX?

Decision is up to Director of Special Services.

26. How will we deal with enrollment if it continues to increase and students stay at High School?

HS can hold up to 1100 students. It would be "miracle" if HS ever got to capacity.

27. Why are we planning for future by looking at the past?

Not just looking at our past, also looking at other districts. If in trouble in 10 years then we have done an amazing job growing the district.

28. What is the building restriction on 2 acres?

Would need to check with the town. If BOE approves recommendations then next step would be to meet with real estate agent.

29. What is the real estate value of HMX property?

Insurance is for 4 million – real estate agent will give comparative value.

30. When the school is sold and the inspection happens how much will we need to spend?

Will sell as is. Under assumption the building will be demolished.

31. DA up to code?

DA is up to code. Code stays with school building until improved by 51% of its value.

32. Can we bring chorus and French back to the MS?

Will try our best. Need to make segue between the HS and MS better.

33. Can building be rented to town for something like a community center?

Building would need to be brought up to code. Would cost more than sell-value.

34. Has a developer or contractor already showed interest?

Not directly to current superintendent

Cost of Charter School Students

Sussex County Charter School for Tech	17 Students	\$270,000
Ridge and Valley Charter School	1 Student	\$13,028
Team Academy	1 Student	\$19,785

Cost of Choice Students

To be provided