

INTRODUCTION / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The goal of this report is to provide the Elizabethtown Area School District with an overview and evaluation of its existing educational facilities, information on school district demographics, enrollment projections and facility options and cost estimates. The intent is to provide the School District Board of Directors with the necessary information which will allow them to make decisions regarding both the short term and long range master plan for annual capital improvements and necessary improvements at each facility.

Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates Report Team

- M. Scott Vencil
Project Manager, Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates
- Chris Barnett
Project Manager, Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates
- ELA Group, Inc.
Civil Consultants
- GPI, Inc.
Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical Consultants

“Society is changing rapidly and education is being challenged to follow suit. As we expand our knowledge of how we learn, we must also expand our concept of what constitutes a stimulating and creative learning environment. The single most difficult task in this transformative process is that of altering the public’s image of a school facility. Expanding the planning and design process to involve all of the stakeholders and incorporate the societal issues of today makes sense.”

“At Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates, we believe in a transparent educational facility design process, with a learner-centered focus and client driven, collaborative approach, one which builds and supports community linkages, an important step in the transformation process.

“As such, the information contained within this report is to be considered as preliminary information, providing a benchmark from which more detailed planning and informed decision-making can begin.

PDE REQUIREMENTS

The following list summarizes the nature and content of the study as required by the Pa Department of Education.

- 1 Overview of the school district including such factors as geography, population and wealth

Overview of the school district including such factors as any distinguishing characteristics that will have an impact on facilities such as geographically separate population centers

Overview of the school district's educational program that highlights any special facility needs including any instructional practices or planned curriculums that will require special design features
- 2 An analysis of projected enrollment
- 3 A review as to whether projections 5 to 10 years into the future are reasonable and reliable
- 4 The likely enrollment for each building and for each grade structure
- 5 An analysis of each building's capacity as it relates to the educational program including, not only how many students can building house, but if each building provides the types of educational space dictated by the educational program
- 6 An analysis of each building's physical condition including the condition and projected useful life of each building's major components (heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing and electrical), any code related issues, whether the building is accessible, structurally sound and energy efficient
- 7 Costs to upgrade each building to current standards
- 8 An analysis of construction options including the pros and cons of each alternative
- 9 Cost estimates for each option
- 10 Documentation regarding the author's credentials including education, experience qualifying the authors to perform the study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Originally in May, 2007 when the School District began looking at the enrollment projections prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Current Enrollment plus 10% was higher than the Highest Projected Enrollment. The decision for a new grade configuration, schematic design of a new 4-6 intermediate school and two other existing elementary schools were based on these enrollment figures. However, when the Pennsylvania Department of Education issued their updated enrollment projections dated 08/2007 (2006 Enrollments), enrollment projections for 2014 – 2015 for K-12 students indicated a growth rate of about 15.2% over the next ten year period. In addition, enrollment projections for 2014-2015 for K-3 students indicated a growth rate of about 26% over the next ten year period and enrollment projections for 2014-2015 for 4-6 students indicated a growth rate of about 31% over the next ten year period. The 31% growth rate for 4-6 students was a large increase over the previous projections being used and eliminated the room for growth that was being designed into the new 4-6 intermediate elementary school.

Because of this, the School District considered an add alternate to the base bid of the 4-6 building project to add two classrooms per grade level for an additional 150 student capacity. This add alternate, had it been accepted, would have increased the capacity of the new intermediate school to 1,275 which would provide some additional capacity based on the highest projected enrollment in 2016-2017. After further review and discussion it was determined to not include the add alternate in the bid documents. The 4-6 intermediate building was designed to accommodate future expansion so any future growth required would be handled at that time. And at the time of these 4-6 intermediate discussions, the growth rate for the K-3 students did not have an effect on the capacity being planned in the existing elementary schools.

- The Elizabethtown Area School District maintains curriculum instruction organized into an elementary division, middle division and a high school division. Curricular design has been aligned with a K-3, 4-6, and 7-12 configurations.
- Elizabethtown Area SD encompasses three (3) small to moderately sized townships or population centers and one (Elizabethtown) borough with a relatively moderate population.
- Regional and district local population has increased in the last decade – 10.4% and 10.5%, respectively. However, both regional and local historic trends indicate a rate of increase that is slowing.
- Over the past several decades, the district local population as a percentage of the county population has steadily increased at an average of 5.7% from a low of 5.3% in 1960.
- State agencies project a continued increase in regional population through 2020, however the rate of increase shall be significantly slower. However, for district local population through 2020, state agencies project growth with a slightly higher rate of increase.

ELIZABETHTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Wide Feasibility Study

- As a result of the above noted state agency projections, the district local population as a percentage of the county population is projected to increase ever so slightly from the 5.7% average to a high of 5.8% by 2020.
- Student population has steadily increased for the last twenty (20) years (1990-2010) with a 761 student increase at 23.9%.
- Historic trends indicate that over the last 20 years the District student population averaged 14.2% of the district local population. However, this percentage has been declining over the past several years.

• The K-12 district total school population has increased approximately 1.7% or 67 students during the past ten (10) year period from 2000 to 2010. PDE projections indicate a consistent increase through 2020.

• The K-3 district total elementary population has decreased approximately 3.1% or 37 students during the past ten (10) year period from 2000 to 2010. PDE projections indicate a consistent decrease through 2020.

• The 4-6 district total intermediate school population has decreased approximately 2.3% or 22 students during the past ten (10) year period from 2000 to 2010. PDE projections indicate a consistent increase through 2020.

• The 7-8 district total middle school population has decreased 0.8% or 5 students during the past ten (10) year period from 2000 to 2010. PDE projections indicate a consistent increase through 2020.

• The 9-12 district total high school population has increased 16.9% or 192 students during the past ten (10) year period from 2000 to 2010. PDE projections indicate a consistent increase through 2020.

- Student population trends dictate that future enrollment through 2020 could be 4,420 students. This is based on a projected 13.3% of students per district local population in the year 2020. Sufficient data does not exist to continue the annual decline of the student population percentage beyond 2020. Therefore, given the estimated increase in local population and assuming the 13.3% ratio is carried over into 2020, the trends dictate this increase in student enrollment by the year 2020.
- District births are projected to decrease with an average of 321 births over the next five (5) year period.

ELIZABETHTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Wide Feasibility Study

- Over the past 20 years, district total population has increased while the ratio of students per district local population has declined - 14.2% (1990) to 13.3% (2010). This may be attributed to birth rates in the school district have steadily declined since 2005. This student decrease may also be attributed in large part to home schooled students, parochial and private school enrollments, retention rates, families with children moving out / migration patterns, retirement couples moving in, etc.
- The Cohort survival forecast indicates that the current district student enrollment will continue to increase through 2020 by approximately 1.5% from 2010 enrollments. Birth rates and retention ratios should be analyzed annually, as well as reviewing current and planned housing starts in order to recognize changing enrollment patterns within the school district. This forecast does appear to substantiate PDE projections of a substantial increase in student population.

