



School Administrative Unit #41

Hollis, Brookline & Hollis-Brookline Cooperative School Districts
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
4 Lund Lane

Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
603.324.5999 fax 603.465.3933

March 17, 2021

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Brookline School Board with regards to the potential workforce housing development proposed for route 13 in Brookline. The School Board held a special meeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 to deliberate on the impact this proposed housing would have on the School District. The Board unanimously supported the following two motions:

1. MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO SUPPORT THE MORATORIUM ON THE 80-UNIT WORKFORCE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT (5-0).
2. MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO SUPPORT A STUDY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE IMPACT OF THE 80-UNIT WORKFORCE HOUSING ON THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL SYSTEM (5-0).

The School Board utilizes the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) to complete the District's enrollment projections on an annual basis. The K-6 projected enrollment in Brookline is projected to go from 557 to 618. Depending on where those students fall (assuming the grade level projections are accurate), this could require potentially 3 additional classroom sections. Looking into next school year, some of our projected class sizes are greater than the specifications outlined in School Board Policy IIB and other projected class sizes are just below the specifications.

After discussing available spaces within our existing elementary buildings, we would have to re-evaluate how our specials (music, art, and computers) are taught. We would have to consider options such as taking back the computer labs, the STEM lab, the music classrooms, and/or the art classrooms to become traditional classrooms and move specials to a cart.

Trying to accommodate more than the NESDEC projections would require vastly different considerations. The School Board has been provided two presentations regarding facilities upgrades for RMMS during this school year. As a result of these two presentations the formation of a facilities study committee has been in process and will be officially formed at the School Board's next regular meeting on March 24, 2021. This committee is scheduled to provide regular feedback to the School Board during the upcoming school year as we prepare to make recommendations for potential warrant articles in March of 2022.

Andrew Corey
Superintendent of Schools
andrew.corey@sau41.org

Gina Bergskaug
Assistant Superintendent
gina.bergskaug@sau41.org

Kelly Seeley
Business Administrator
kelly.seeley@sau41.org

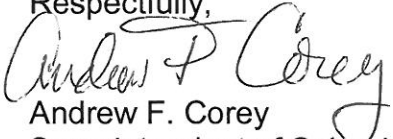
Robert Thompson
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
Robert.thompson@sau41.org

Our neighbors in Amherst recently completed a thorough study to analyze similar needs (<https://ifac.sau39.org/>). The end result includes two building projects: the construction of a new PreK-5 school with a price tag of \$66 million, and a complete overhaul of the middle school with a price tag of \$31 million.

This projected NESDEC enrollment increase will also impact transportation and at a minimum result in an additional bus being added to the fleet to meet the increase in ridership both in Brookline and for the Cooperative District.. The cost of adding an additional bus route calculates to somewhere between \$45,000 - \$55,000 (based on time and mileage) increase to our transportation budget. Any additional enrollment increase will most likely result in the need to further increase our bus fleet.

As Superintendent my goal is to provide information for your discussion and allow all factors to be considered regarding the potential impact further housing units could have on the School District(s). I appreciate your taking the time to review this letter submitted on behalf of the Brookline School Board and would be most happy to make myself available to answer any questions that the Planning Board may have.

Respectfully,


Andrew F. Corey
Superintendent of Schools

Andrew Corey
Superintendent of Schools
andrew.corey@sau41.org

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Assistant Superintendent
gina.bergskaug@sau41.org

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Business Administrator
kelly.seeley@sau41.org

Robert Thompson
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
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