

Public Presentation
Future of Four Schools
Clinton Township School District

Four Options Under Consideration
May 8, 2017 and May 22, 2017



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Background and History

- ✎ The Clinton Township Board of Education added the Clinton Township Middle School as a fourth school in 2007.
 - Construction completed on the Middle School in 2007
 - The new middle school was a response to the 1,831 student population creating overcrowding in the three operating District schools.
- ✎ Enrollment began to decline in 2007-08
 - Enactment of State of New Jersey Legislation, the Highlands Act designed to protect farm lands in western New Jersey, also prevented building on most vacant land in Clinton Township.
 - As of 2012, three large companies left Clinton Township and have not been replaced.
 - Current District enrollment is approximately 1,350 students. Two demographic studies cite that enrollment is likely to be stable with modest increases in the next 5-7 years.

District Enrollment Challenge Action

- The Boards of Education in Clinton Township have been grappling with the decline in enrollment and in particular they have worked diligently since 2014 to find a solution to their enrollment challenge. They have now concluded it is time to consider a specific course of action to be implemented as soon as possible.

Factors Affecting Options

- ∞ Spruce Run Student and Teacher Expenses 2016-17
 - Salaries: \$2,579,107, Benefits: \$939,316, TOTAL: \$3,518,423.17
- ∞ Spruce Run Annual Operating Cost: Approximately \$510,000
- ∞ Residential Housing Sales: 2014 (189), 2015 (182), 2016 (195)

2014 2BR-32	3BR-42	4BR-81	5BR-15
2015 2BR-37	3BR-50	4BR-71	5BR-7
2016 2BR-37	3BR-57	4BR-75	5BR-12
- ∞ Transportation Savings with school closing: \$287,922 (2016-17)
- ∞ Preliminary architectural discussions re: Addition of Second Floor Feasibility
- ∞ Estimated Improvement Costs to remaining schools following Spruce Run closure: 2014 Report: \$850,000 minimum Middle School
- ∞ Zoning Considerations: Preliminarily reviewed with Town Officials and most use seems permissible. Possible variance.

Option 1

Repurpose Spruce Run School

Definition of Repurpose:

Efforts designed and supervised by the Clinton Township Board of Education.

Examples:

- ☞ The creation of an Early Childhood Center serving children from ages 2 through Kindergarten.
- ☞ The creation of a school serving children ages 3 through 21 with autism as permitted by the Department of Education.

The Early Childhood Center

Advantages

- ☞ The Early Childhood Center would have a two-tiered tuition schedule. District residents would have an adjusted tuition and out of district residents would pay full tuition.
 - Area private centers charge \$12,000-\$14,000 for a ten month program.
 - Before and after school care should be offered at an additional cost.

Disadvantages

- ☞ Cost Effectiveness
 - Costs of faculty and staff for relatively small population.
 - Is there sufficient out-of-district interest to enhance revenue?

School for Children with Autism

Advantages

- ∞ No single educational entity exists in Hunterdon County dedicated specifically to children with autism.
- ∞ Whenever possible and based on the needs of the child, most districts maintain the education of a child with autism.
- ∞ Children with severe autism present a greater challenge to the educational district to meet the needs of the child.

Disadvantages

- ∞ State of New Jersey mandates a ratio of class size 6 or fewer students.
- ∞ The Morris Union Jointure provides service to northern New Jersey - present population is approximately 250 students.

Option 2

Leasing Spruce Run School

Leasing Potential of Spruce Run School

- ∞ Footprint allows for two to four independent lease occupants.

Example: Vocational Technology program or private business

- ∞ Several access/entrance points to serve as designated private entrances for occupants.
- ∞ Ample parking - two roads for access to the school
- ∞ Facilities are superior to other functioning small schools.
- ∞ Attractive to an entrepreneur as a complete lease for larger use or subleasing.

Option 2

Leasing of Spruce Run School

Advantages

- ∞ The Board of Education would set standards for leasing options.
- ∞ The Board of Education would be responsible for securing an agent to represent the Board to search for leasing organizations.
- ∞ The term of the lease could be five to ten years allowing for the District to retain ownership of the building.
- ∞ Safeguards against construction and land procurement costs for a new school should enrollment increase in the future.
 - Newly constructed 800 student elementary school in Perth Amboy, New Jersey cost \$57,000,000 without land expense.

Option 2

Leasing of Spruce Run School

Disadvantages

- ⌘ Serving in a landlord/leasing position.
- ⌘ Difficult to predict market for leasing.
- ⌘ Although Spruce Run is proximal to Routes 78, 31 and 22, some companies may want to be located on major roads.
- ⌘ Leases may not be fulfilled as tenants can not meet contract.
- ⌘ Depending on occupants, there could be mandated expenditures from the Department of Education.

Option 3

Sale of Spruce Run School

Sale of Spruce Run School

- ∞ Potential range of sale price could be \$2,500,000-\$4,000,000 according to commercial real estate professionals consulted.
- ∞ Predicting the length of time the school might be on the market is difficult and unknown.
- ∞ The school might be uninhabited for several years posing additional issues to reopen the facility as a school. The State Department of Education may require costly upgrades to the facility to meet new codes prior to reopening.
- ∞ The impressive landscape could attract land developers to multiple uses such as condominiums or townhouses.

Option 3

Sale of Spruce Run School

Advantages

- ∞ The sale provides one-time influx of money.
- ∞ The funds can be used to offset expenses of transitioning from a four to a three school District.
- ∞ The annual operating costs of \$510,000 for Spruce Run School would be eliminated.

Disadvantages

- ∞ Length of time the building remains unsold.
- ∞ Property is adjacent to residential area.
- ∞ Once the building is sold, the opportunity to address an increase in enrollment is very limited.

Option 4

Additional Waiting

Additional Waiting

- ⌘ Waiting 3-5 years for possibility of potential changes in District/County demographics.
- ⌘ Additional waiting time would serve to determine most feasible course of action.

Advantages

- ⌘ Safeguards against increase in enrollment through demographic changes.

Disadvantages

- ⌘ Sectors of the District feel the student enrollment will never return to the former 1,600 - 1,800 student range.
- ⌘ There is sentiment in the community that the district should not postpone the decision any longer.

Timetable for Action

- ∞ The Clinton Township Board of Education members will likely make their decision as to the Option or Options they want to pursue. They are expected to make their decision between the beginning of June 2017 and the conclusion of end of September 2017.

Appreciation for Support and Help

- ☞ Ms. Maria Grant-Board of Education President
- ☞ Dr. Gina Villani-Superintendent of Schools
- ☞ Vito Gagliardi Esq.-Attorney for the District
- ☞ Board of Education Members
- ☞ Anthony Juskievicz-Business Administrator
- ☞ Ms. Cheryl Zarra-Secretary Business Department
- ☞ Dan Gorman-Buildings and Grounds Supervisor
- ☞ Ms. Melissa Goad-Principal Spruce Run School
- ☞ Jeff Ward-Clinton Township Tax Assessor
- ☞ Tony Porto-Hunterdon County Tax Assessor
- ☞ Jerry Ford-Transportation Coordinator