



Our Children, Our School
Our Future

Netcong Elementary School

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Mrs. Bernadette Dalesandro
President

Mr. Anthony Arbolino
Vice President

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Dear Netcong Borough Residents,

I hope this correspondence finds you well and that you are enjoying the summer.

To be completely transparent, collaborative, and cooperative, I write to you today on behalf of the Netcong Board of Education regarding a motion passed Tuesday at our regularly scheduled board meeting on July 23, 2024.

The Board of Education unanimously and unequivocally passed a motion to participate and apply for a state grant to conduct a feasibility study regarding possible regionalization of our school system.

The Netcong Board of Education is committed to undertaking this study at no cost to taxpayers ensuring zero financial liability. This initiative aims to explore opportunities to enhance educational offerings for our children responsibly and sustainably.

Our sister districts, Byram, Stanhope, and Lenape Valley, will also include the motion on their August board agendas for discussion and a vote. Once all the districts have had the opportunity to vote on participating in the study, we will proceed with the application process. Once the application is approved, funds will be distributed to begin the feasibility study.

The first part of the feasibility study will be to conduct a demographics study which will include data specific to Netcong Borough's needs. This will help evaluate the need for additional classroom space due to the increase in several large housing projects within our borders.

After the feasibility study has been completed, the Board will vote on whether to present it to the voters of our constituent districts for approval or rejection of the creation of an all-purpose regional school district.

It is important to stress that the Board of Education cannot vote to regionalize. That power and impactful decision rests with the voters of Netcong, Stanhope, and Byram. You, the voter, will have the final say. It is the fiduciary responsibility of the Board of Education to gather the information and present it to the public for a vote.

This informative letter intends to ensure the public is correctly informed about what is occurring. The Netcong Board of Education is committed to keeping you informed of the process every step of the way.

What is regionalization?

Regionalization refers to the process of combining school districts. It can be a cost-saving measure that may also impact the quality of education.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) offers the School Regionalization Efficiency Program (SREP) Grant to help public school districts study the feasibility of regionalization

and consolidation. The grant helps districts cover the costs of feasibility studies and create a plan to form or expand regional school districts. The feasibility study will determine the financial and educational impact of forming a pre-K-12 regional school district versus what we currently have, which is a pre-K3 to 8th grade that sends its 8th graders, upon graduation, to Lenape Valley Regional High School.

What factors will a feasibility study consider?

A feasibility study will evaluate factors like enrollment, facility utilization, districts with small enrollment, existing send/receive relationships, administrative staffing, class size, debt and contractual obligations, faculty needs, and attrition.

Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns that this letter has not answered or provided, I invite you to either email me at Bdalesandro@netcongschool.org or call me directly at (201) 602-2287. I will happily answer any questions and concerns to the best of my ability.

In closing, the Netcong Board of Education is committed to providing a thorough and efficient education to all our district's students. We are dedicated and committed to that responsibility. That is why we have unanimously agreed to move forward with a zero-cost analysis of how to possibly provide more opportunities and a better educational product for the students we serve.

Yours in education,

Bernadette Dalesandro
NJ Board member of the year 2023-2024
Netcong Board of Education President
Morris County School Boards Association President