

Thompson-Hardy District Pros and Cons

Pros:

1. By combining all students within one district, there is the potential to reduce the number of classrooms needed, thus reducing the number of modular or permanently constructed classrooms needed, which would be a cost savings to the town.

Cons:

1. Disruptive to neighborhoods.
2. Model does not realize the reduction in needed classrooms. In fact, increases the number needed by one, based on the metric of no more than 23 students in grades 3-5; 22 students in grades K-2. If the average class size is increased to 24 across all grade levels, then the number of classrooms could be reduced by 3, assuming no increase in 2015-2016 across all grade levels. An increase in the number of students at any grade will result in class sizes of 25 or greater.
3. Potentially long commutes to school (Example – student living near Rt. 2 is assigned to Thompson), eliminating the reality of neighborhood schools for some families. In order to achieve the balanced class sizes in the model, home location in the combined district would need to be a secondary consideration.
4. Only a short-term solution to the increasing enrollment at Thompson and Hardy. A combined total enrollment of 1,000 students will require 44 classrooms (assumes 23 per classroom). Thompson and Hardy combined have only 40 classrooms (assumes separate music and art rooms at each school). The number of classrooms needed could exceed 44 depending upon the distribution of students among the grades.
5. Once a student is assigned to a school, s/he remains at that school through grade 5, which would make it difficult to “undo” the singular district concept later.