

April 8, 2015

To: Nashoba Regional School Committee

Subject: School Choice

From: Mark Jones, Stow

The NRSD Committee should declare that the High School is closed to all new School Choice students. The High School is over capacity.

The management theory of effective use of School Choice income, is to not allow the additional population cost additional money. That standard has not been met: there is effectively less than zero available capacity at the HS. Choice Students are a full part of the marginal cost of operating the HS.

Indicators that the High School has exceeded its capacity include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. The School-Committee-authorized installation of two modular classrooms, and the increased number of staff positions for FY 2016. The classrooms are donated by the town of Stow, with an installation cost of about \$100,000 for FY 2016. (If purchased new this pair of classrooms would cost in the vicinity of \$250,000, including installation.)
- b. At all times during the daily schedule there are approximately 100 students that have a non-classroom study hall, located in the auditorium hallway. The Principal has indicated it is preferable to house these students in classrooms for a more directed study environment.
- c. The Science classroom are effectively not able to accommodate one more class-section, though there is a demand for more science sections.

The High School was believed to have a capacity of around 1,250 after the 2002 renovation, but the changing curriculum, and creation of specialized classroom meeting spaces (for example, the Special Education program absorbed four general classrooms) has reduced the effective capacity of the High School to less than 1,000.

Changing the School Choice policy for the HS for grades 9 through 12 to have zero new choice students makes possible, as existing School Choice population ages out of the District:

1. the potential to reduce excess population at the HS, and
2. the potential for the HS to be capable of absorbing likely growth in the resident student population that moves into town, without further impairing the quality of life at the High School.