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MEMORANDUM

To: Anita LaChance, Director of Recreation and Facilities Management

Subject: District Enrollment Projections

Project Name: Hall Elementary School

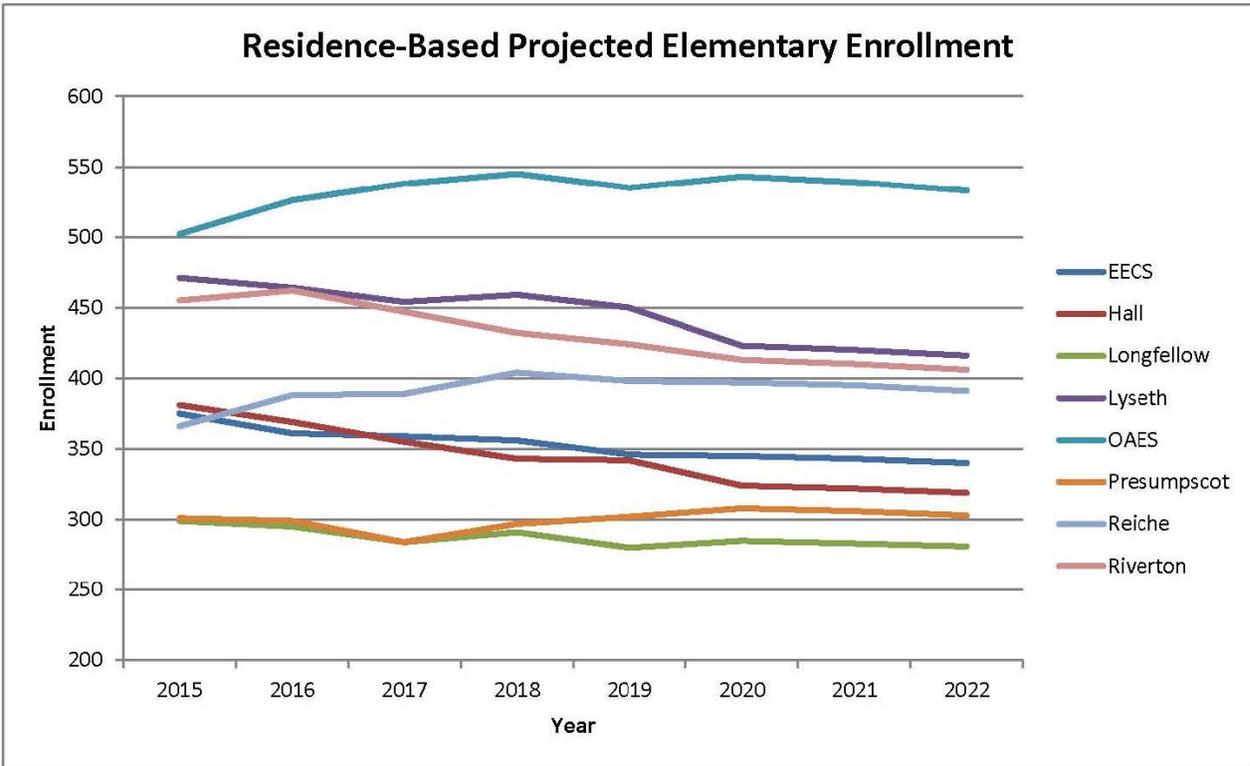
Date: March 03, 2015

We have recently received the 2014/2015 enrollment projections from Davis Demographics (DDP). The projections utilize the Maine State Department of Health reports for birth data in the city as well as historical student data that was provided by Portland Public Schools and planned residential developments in the city as reported by the Portland Planning Department.

The live birth rate for the city is compared to the incoming kindergarten class five years later. This comparison establishes the annual “capture rate” which is utilized in the preparation of long term projections. Earlier enrollment projections from 2012/2013 showed a one-year spike in the capture rate which, if held long-term, could have resulted in a gradual increase in the overall district population. The latest projections, and two more years of data, indicate that the birth capture rate spike has not held and current trends predict a decrease in student population-- 6,987 students in 2014 to 6,846 in 2022, a drop of 2% over that time period.

The enrollment projections further break down the overall district enrollment for K-5 students into individual school districts. The projections are “residence-based”, which means they are based upon where students reside, not necessarily where they attend school. DDP calculates residence-based projections in the belief that the best way to plan for future facilities changes is to know where the next group of students will be residing, not necessarily which school they are currently attending. Since these projections are based upon where students reside, the figures used as a base for each school’s resident population may differ from the actual reported enrollment for each school. An “attendance matrix” is provided in the enrollment projections report in order to gauge the effect of out-of-district student enrollment.

Five of the eight mainland elementary schools show a projected decrease in resident students between the current enrollment and 2022: Longfellow Elementary (-9.5%), Hall Elementary (-16.2%), Lyseth Elementary (-11.7%), Riverton (-10.7%) and East End Community School (-9.5%). An increase in students is projected at Ocean Avenue Elementary School (+6.2%) and Reiche Elementary School (+6.8%). Presumpscot Elementary School is projected to have a relatively stable student population.



Residence-Based projections by school

As part of the 21-step State process for school project construction, a regional analysis is required to ensure that school districts are planning comprehensively for the best long-term solution. For most municipalities, this means reaching out to neighboring towns to understand if a shared solution might be mutually beneficial. For a large city with multiple schools within the district, like Portland, this might mean reviewing long-term capacities across several elementary school districts to see if a regional solution might make sense to explore. Given the declining resident student population in the Hall School district, a decision will need to be made by Portland Public Schools and the City, working with DOE as a partner, whether to build a smaller school than initially planned, move district boundaries, or consider other options for a more comprehensive regional solution.

While everyone has been working extremely hard to bring the Hall school project to the voters in a November 2015 referendum, the due diligence to explore and debate these options will take additional time.