



East Granby Public Schools Efficiency Review

Respectfully submitted by
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*“In order to transform schools successfully,
educators need to navigate the difficult space between letting go
of old patterns and grabbing on to new ones.”*



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EAST GRANBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EFFICIENCY REVIEW

Overview

The East Granby Board of Education adopted the following goal:

“In an attempt to control costs the East Granby Board of Education will develop a plan to examine how Board of Education resources are currently deployed. The Board of Education will also identify and evaluate operational options and alternatives to current practice with the goal of increasing efficiency. This exploration will include but not be limited to pursuing collaboration with other school districts, examining shared services agreements, and other potential opportunities that will assist in maintaining and improving services and/or controlling or reducing costs.”

Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) was employed as the consulting agency to assist the board in meeting their goal. The consultants on this project were David Holden and Joe Townsley. The following objectives were identified:

1. Compare East Granby’s district metrics to similar sized Connecticut school districts.
2. Identify opportunities for expenditure reductions that do not adversely affect student services.
3. Recommend options to increase public confidence that the district is using public resources efficiently and wisely.
4. Provide recommendations of possible ways to achieve further efficiencies through collaboration with other school districts.

This report synthesizes the collective data of the consulting team whose work over the past months provided a review of the fiscal and operational components of the district including key documents such as contracts, staffing data, program costs, tuition payments and shared service agreements. Additionally, twenty-one interviews were conducted with school district staff members and elected officials.

The data gathering process for this project included interviews with the following individuals. We thank them for their time and input.

Joseph Doering	Board of Education, Chairman
James Grenon-Francoline	Board of Education, Vice Chairman
Michele Holt	Board of Education, Secretary
Robert Ravens-Seger	Board of Education, Member
Dr. Christine Mahoney	Superintendent
Susan Greco	Business Manager
Stella Ross	K-12 Curriculum Director
Sherry Lewton	K-12 Social Worker
Karen Gogel	K-12 Student Support Services, Director
Betsy Cutting	K-12 Information Technology Specialist
William George	K-12 Information Technology Specialist
Steven Mosher	K-12 Technology Specialist
David D. Peling, Sr.	Principal, High School
Robert McGrath	Asst. Principal, High School
Melissa Bavaro-Grande	Principal, Middle School
Maylah Uhlinger	Principal, Allgrove School
Christopher Roche	Principal, Seymour School
James M. Hayden	First Selectman
David Wing	Town Facilities Director
David Kilbon	Board of Finance, Chairman
Mark Porter	Board of Finance, Vice Chairman
Sterling Viets	President, Rainbow Transportation Services

Methodology

Following an initial presentation to representatives from the Town of East Granby Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, representatives from the taxpayers association, and members of the public, the East Granby Board of Education entered into a contract with CREC to study and analyze the current efficiency level of the East Granby Public Schools in response to their 2015 Board of Education goal. Data was collected directly from members of the school district administration, from the CT State Department of Education, from readily available public documents, and from interviews. Once the data gathering was completed, comparative analyses were performed given the available metrics. The findings, commendations and recommendations, where appropriate, are presented below.

Financial Analysis/Comparisons

The report contains nine tables which provide comparative data over time and within a fiscal year. The source of the data is the ED001 End of Year Financial Report. Form ED001, the END OF YEAR SCHOOL REPORT, is the primary source of financial information on education in the state. The data are used in calculating state grants and providing statistical information to local, state and federal decision makers. The ED001 report must be filed by September 1 annually.

The ED001 is designed to collect all expenditure data for public prekindergarten through grade 12 education in your town or region. This includes board of education expenditures and expenditures from state and federal grants as well as the value of in-kind services. There are several categories of expenditures, however, which must not be included in this report regardless of their inclusion in the board of education budget. Specifically, the ED001 does not include expenditures for the following:

Community services; Nonpublic school health services; Nonpublic school transportation services (to nonmember students); Nonpublic expenditures from state and federal grant programs; Adult and adult basic education programs; Vocational agriculture services to adults and out-of-school youth; Continuing education programs; Volunteer services; Tuition summer school; Student activity funds; Salaries and fringe benefits for uncertified personnel in certified positions; Non-educational expenditures; Other nonpublic expenditures; and PTO and PTA contributions.

Employee benefit expenditures reported in the ED001 such as retirement, health insurance, etc. must be reported “net” of related revenues from non-local tax sources (e.g., contributions from the State Teachers’ Retirement Board, employee co-payments, etc.).

The ED001 must be completed using the accrual or modified accrual basis of accounting and cover the period July 1 through June 30 regardless of whether your district operates on the uniform fiscal year.

For local and state audit purposes, all supporting documentation and work papers generated in completing the report must be maintained.

As reflected in **Table 1**, the East Granby Board of Education actual expenditures have increased in a steady progression over the past three years.

TABLE 1

	Actual Expenditures	\$ Increase over	% Increase over
Year	BOE Budget	Prior Year	Prior Year
2011-12	\$ 13,585,084		
2012-13	\$ 14,007,144	\$ 422,060	3.1%
2013-14	\$ 14,537,278	\$ 530,134	3.8%
2014-15	\$ 15,124,376	\$ 587,098	4.0%

As reflected in **Table 2**, the Town of East Granby expenditures which support the Board of Education in the areas of facility maintenance and management, field maintenance, DPW services, Town Treasurer services, property and liability insurance, equipment, and minor school construction have fluctuated over the past three years in part due to the level of equipment acquisition or minor repairs performed annually. However, this significant level of town support is to be commended and should continue to be enhanced in the future when support for the Board of Education can be provided by the Town at a lower cost than could otherwise be obtained.

TABLE 2

	Actual In-Kind	\$ Change over	% Change over
Year	Expenditures	Prior Year	Prior Year
2011-12	\$ 265,724		
2012-13	\$ 334,085	\$ 68,361	25.7%
2013-14	\$ 261,319	\$ (72,766)	-21.8%
2014-15	\$ 389,136	\$ 127,817	48.9%

Finding: Table 3 illustrates the East Granby comparison with three other districts plus the average of their District Reference Group using 2013-14 expenditures across selected functions. District Reference Groups (DRGs) is a classification system in which districts that have public school students with similar socioeconomic status and need are grouped together. Grouping like districts together is useful in order to make legitimate comparisons among districts. Two school districts were selected for comparison based on their high school per pupil expenditure. North Stonington, Bloomfield and East Granby have enrollment similarities and represent the highest per pupil expenditure in the state. Bolton was included as requested by the Board of Education. These figures were the most recent available for comparison.

TABLE 3

Selected Function Expenditures Summary (Dollars per Pupil)										
2013-2014 Data - As Submitted										
Dist Code	District Name	Instructional Programs	Pupil And Instructional Support Services	School Based Admin	General Admin	Plant Services	Buildings and Debt Services	Special Education Transportation	Regular Education Transportation	Total Transportation Per Resident Student
11	Bloomfield	\$ 11,744	\$ 2,396	\$ 1,514	\$ 1,610	\$ 2,433	\$ 2,412	\$ 12,336	\$ 953	\$ 1,051
102	North Stonington	\$ 10,514	\$ 1,180	\$ 937	\$ 1,403	\$ 1,528	\$ 756	\$ 2,287	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,236
40	East Granby	\$ 10,097	\$ 2,019	\$ 1,248	\$ 916	\$ 1,819	\$ 778	\$ 29,678	\$ 426	\$ 721
12	Bolton	\$ 9,277	\$ 1,669	\$ 806	\$ 1,168	\$ 1,342	\$ 1,041	\$ 16,535	\$ 554	\$ 865
DRG D Average	24 Communities	\$ 9,230	\$ 1,433	\$ 939	\$ 707	\$ 1,677	\$ 1,324	\$ 11,668	\$ 578	\$ 812

Table 4 illustrates the East Granby comparison with three other districts and the average of their District Reference Group (DRG) of 2013-14 net current expenditures per pupil. Net current expenditures (NCE) are calculated as defined in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-261(a) (3). NCE includes all current public elementary and secondary expenditures from all sources, excluding reimbursable regular education transportation, tuition revenue, capital expenditures for land, buildings and equipment, and debt service. The information for determining NCE is provided from the End of Year School Report (ED001).

TABLE 4

Net Current Expenditures (NCE) per Pupil*					
2013-14 Data - As Submitted					
Town Code	Town Name	ADM**	NCE	NCEP	NCEP State Rank
		2013-14	2013-14	2013-14	
11	BLOOMFIELD	2,188	\$ 43,850,655	\$ 20,045	12
102	NORTH STONINGTON	786	\$ 12,069,303	\$ 15,361	78
40	EAST GRANBY	921	\$ 15,168,938	\$ 16,463	55
12	BOLTON	803	\$ 12,771,874	\$ 15,900	66
DRG D Average-24 Communities				\$ 14,699	
*The net current expenditures divided by the number of pupils					
** Average Daily Membership= number of students					

Finding: Table 5 compares the East Granby data with three other districts and the average of their District Reference Group (DRG) of 2013-14 expenditures across selected objects.

TABLE 5

Selected Object Expenditures Summary (Dollars per Pupil)								
2013-14 Data- as Submitted								
Dist Code	District Name	Salaries	Employee Benefits	Instructional Supplies	Educational Media Supplies	Instructional Equipment	Purchased Services	Other
011	Bloomfield	\$ 13,293	\$ 3,631	\$ 400	\$ 72	\$ 348	\$ 2,483	\$ 986
102	North Stonington	\$ 10,159	\$ 3,201	\$ 442	\$ 11	\$ 402	\$ 1,630	\$ 991
040	East Granby	\$ 10,483	\$ 2,939	\$ 533	\$ 79	\$ 122	\$ 2,023	\$ 957
012	Bolton	\$ 9,921	\$ 2,725	\$ 465	\$ 10	\$ 10	\$ 1,594	\$ 625
DRG D Average-24 Communities		\$ 9,610	\$ 2,551	\$ 204	\$ 42	\$ 101	\$ 2,051	\$ 493

Table 6 illustrates the East Granby comparison with their District Reference Group (DRG) as well as three other selected comparative districts of 2013-14 special education expenditures and the percent of those special education expenditures against the total operating budget. East Granby is below the median relative to the comparable districts in the % of special education expenditures and has been consistently below the state average in its prevalence rate (special education students relative to total student population) currently at 10.9%.

**TABLE 6
Special Education Expenditures**

SOURCE: 2013-2014 End of Year School Report ED001					
Town	Name	DRG	Total Current Expenditures	Special Education	Special Education %
7	Berlin	D	\$ 46,860,082	\$ 8,820,473	18.82
9	Bethel	D	\$ 45,610,671	\$ 10,001,841	21.93
14	Branford	D	\$ 53,980,648	\$ 10,943,884	20.27
27	Clinton	D	\$ 31,343,862	\$ 7,409,889	23.64
28	Colchester	D	\$ 40,982,800	\$ 8,799,697	21.47
33	Cromwell	D	\$ 28,350,479	\$ 4,850,168	17.11
40	East Granby	D	\$ 15,539,610	\$ 3,256,771	20.96
42	East Hampton	D	\$ 28,931,794	\$ 6,898,079	23.84
45	East Lyme	D	\$ 44,229,705	\$ 9,390,148	21.23
72	Ledyard	D	\$ 36,155,552	\$ 9,802,712	27.11
84	Milford	D	\$ 114,196,387	\$ 26,728,476	23.41
94	Newington	D	\$ 68,646,864	\$ 11,805,461	17.2
96	New Milford	D	\$ 62,314,358	\$ 14,434,136	23.16
101	North Haven	D	\$ 50,005,371	\$ 9,661,411	19.32
106	Old Saybrook	D	\$ 24,565,757	\$ 5,329,295	21.69
119	Rocky Hill	D	\$ 38,062,552	\$ 7,099,183	18.65
126	Shelton	D	\$ 69,390,319	\$ 13,340,042	19.22
131	Southington	D	\$ 90,295,129	\$ 24,236,198	26.84
137	Stonington	D	\$ 36,002,481	\$ 9,038,698	25.11
148	Wallingford	D	\$ 108,836,114	\$ 23,696,263	21.77
152	Waterford	D	\$ 46,840,014	\$ 11,440,517	24.42
153	Watertown	D	\$ 40,391,211	\$ 9,020,100	22.33
159	Wethersfield	D	\$ 56,703,594	\$ 12,214,739	21.54
164	Windsor	D	\$ 67,607,901	\$ 16,886,212	24.98
11	Bloomfield	G	\$ 46,228,773	\$ 6,082,003	13.16
12	Bolton	C	\$ 14,084,237	\$ 3,110,563	22.09
102	North Stonington	E	\$ 12,993,452	\$ 2,335,240	17.97

Capital Planning and Maintenance

Findings:

The Town and the Board of Education are to be commended for the most recent joint assessment of the capital needs of the community. The Capital Advisory Committee Report dated May 2014 was reviewed which included an assessment of each of the Town public buildings including the schools. Standardizing the prioritization, tracking, management and projection of costs, and updating maintenance repair status through the use of software was a prime recommendation. Additionally, such a system should include preventative maintenance programs to achieve and potentially extend the useful life of components and systems. The Town of East Granby purchased the software program 'Facility Dude' in 2015.

Recommendations:

Standardizing the historical and projected project data in terms of the formatting across all town facilities would clearly improve the efficiency in communicating, assessment and decision making going forward. Since the Seymour School was renovated as new in 2011-13 time period, we recommend that data for this school be entered first and become the base upon which other facilities are added. The facility needs of the Allgrove School and the High School/Middle School complex should be updated annually at least 4-6 months in advance of the budget development process and communicated to all of the town major boards. Included in the update should be the task/project to be completed, the year in which funds would be appropriated, the year in which the actual repair/ improvement be completed, and the source of funding (operating budget, grant, capital budget, etc.) Of particular concern should be the age of the building roofs, annual preventative maintenance, and the remaining useful life. We recommend that a status report be provided to the East Granby Board of Education every six months regarding the progress of data input, updating, and forecasting.

Independent Auditor's Reports

Findings:

The Financial Statements for the 2013 and 2014 fiscal year completed by the independent auditors were reviewed. The Board of Education and school administration are to be commended for the relatively minor management findings concerning controls in the area of student activity funds and the timely correction of the deficiencies.

East Granby Public Schools Capacity Analysis

Findings:

The historical submissions of the CT State Department of Education ED-050 School Facilities Survey were reviewed and the Superintendent of Schools provided 2015 administration adjusted student capacities. The ED-050 is a detailed survey of the current condition of the school facilities in each community in Connecticut that evaluates on a four point scale the condition of building and grounds, the status in indoor air quality, green cleaning progress, and district wide future facility planning. In addition, the most recent New England School Development Council (NESDEC) Enrollment Report was reviewed for the East Granby Public Schools historical and projected student enrollments. **Table 7** illustrates the student capacity data:

TABLE 7

School	Historical Capacity	2015 Administration Adjusted capacity	Administration Capacity Adjustment	Actual 2014-15 Enrollment	Excess Capacity
Allgrove	340	308	-32	205	103
Seymour	300	264	-36	187	77
EGMiddle	300	350	50	217	133
EG High	300	575	275	264	311
Total	1240	1497	257	873	624

The actual East Granby Public Schools October 1, 2015 enrollment as reported was 853 students, 20 fewer than October 2014 and 31 lower than the student population projected in the NESDEC enrollment report.

Recommendation:

Given that the historical and projected student enrollment for the East Granby school district is relatively flat, we are recommending that the Board of Education explore the following options. First, investigate how the school district can attract high school students on a tuition paying basis. Secondly, identify the possibilities of the town and the school district utilizing the excess space in the grade 9-12 facility. Next, explore the options of creating a regional high school with a neighboring school district. The excess capacity in the high school/middle school and the cost of the operational expenditures for the additional square footage are artificially inflating the per pupil cost of the high school.

High School Per Pupil Expenditure Analysis:

Table 8 identifies the reported 2013 high school expenditures for the 24 DRG D districts. On a per pupil basis, East Granby High is the highest of the 24 districts and over \$6,000 per pupil higher than the DRG D district average of \$14,922. This finding is not surprising in that East Granby High has the lowest student enrollment so that significant fixed costs of operating a high school facility are spread over fewer students. For additional information, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education Research Bulletin on District Reference Groups in your packet.

Name	DRG	High School	Students	Expenditures	High School Expenditures per Pupil
Berlin	D	'09-12	961	\$14,738,419	\$15,337
Bethel	D	'09-12	959	\$15,043,805	\$15,687
Branford	D	'09-12	1049	\$15,979,044	\$15,233
Clinton	D	'09-12	579	\$7,735,567	\$13,360
Colchester	D	'09-12	937	\$12,281,342	\$13,107
Cromwell	D	'09-12	535	\$7,050,475	\$13,178
East Granby	D	'09-12	271	\$5,736,792	\$21,169
East Hampton	D	'09-12	529	\$7,600,466	\$14,368
East Lyme	D	'09-12	1130	\$16,005,743	\$14,164
Ledyard	D	'09-12	961	\$11,519,100	\$11,987
Milford	D	'09-12	2001	\$35,689,865	\$17,836
Newington	D	'09-12	1421	\$20,858,027	\$14,678
New Milford	D	'09-12	1491	\$17,885,274	\$11,995
North Haven	D	'09-12	1190	\$15,392,671	\$12,935
Old Saybrook	D	'09-12	526	\$7,577,271	\$14,405
Rocky Hill	D	'09-12	732	\$11,023,736	\$15,060
Shelton	D	'09-12	1578	\$25,015,473	\$15,853
Southington	D	'09-12	2034	\$24,730,969	\$12,159
Stonington	D	'09-12	771	\$10,706,091	\$13,886
Wallingford	D	'09-12	2073	\$28,694,041	\$13,842
Waterford	D	'09-12	844	\$16,180,589	\$19,171
Watertown	D	'09-12	926	\$12,130,941	\$13,100
Wethersfield	D	'09-12	1157	\$22,009,225	\$19,023
Windsor	D	'09-12	1200	\$19,901,774	\$16,585
DRG D Average					\$14,922

Table 9 compares selected area high schools relative to their expenditures per pupil which find that East Granby has the third highest expenditures per pupil and the second smallest in student enrollment within the data set.

TABLE 9
2013 Selected Districts High School Expenditures

Name	DRG	High School	Students	Expenditures	High School Expenditures per Pupil
Avon	B	09-12	1083	\$14,182,187	\$13,095
Bloomfield	G	09-12	673	\$14,529,087	\$21,589
Bolton	C	'09-12	359	\$5,338,911	\$14,872
East Granby	D	'09-12	271	\$5,736,792	\$21,169
Granby	B	09-12	759	\$10,767,706	\$14,187
North Stonington	E	09-12	203	\$6,019,158	\$29,651
Simsbury	B	09-12	1554	\$21,884,134	\$14,082
Suffield	C	09-12	860	\$10,247,624	\$11,916
Windsor Locks	F	09-12	552	\$9,752,682	\$17,668

High School Comparisons

Town	Enrollment 2015-2016	Administrative FTE
East Granby*	268	2.0
Bloomfield	620	2.0
Bolton	302	2.0
North Stonington	255	1.8

*The high school assistant principal has multiple district responsibilities. See appendix for details.

Technology

Findings:

Our review, with the assistance of Douglas Casey, CREC Director of Technology, provides an overview of the staff, responsibilities, accomplishments, and potential opportunities to leverage the technology team in East Granby Public Schools. This group includes two full-time (Betsy Cutting and Bill George) and one half-time (Steve Mosher) employee who support 174 staff and 877 students in 4 locations, 1,645 devices, and a host of data systems.

From an operations and efficiencies perspective, the team is able to leverage free and low-cost resources to benefit the district and still embrace best technology practices. One example is their use of the Google application suite to provide for a support (ticketing) system that allows staff to request help and the team to track and prioritize issues. They appear to put cost containment at a premium, based on the core infrastructure leveraged to run the district. Other examples include the use of free virtualization technologies to limit the number of servers housed in the district, thereby reducing energy and maintenance costs. The technology group were early adopters of the Meraki mobile device management platform, allowing them to use this powerful suite of tools to manage iPads and other devices at no cost. Core servers that manage the district's domain as well as firewalls run on the free Linux operating system.

The relatively small number of staff on East Granby's technology team manage a wide array of responsibilities. In addition to the central servers and network mentioned above, the team manages all wireless access and security as well as a mixture of standard telephone and voice-over-IP telecommunications servers and handsets. They support a diversity of hardware types, from older netbooks that they have configured to work as Google Chromebooks, as well as various third-party devices and systems, such as security cameras and bus monitoring systems. To contain costs, the technology team repairs almost all devices in house and has shifted printing away from costly desktop devices to large, multi-function workgroup printers that have a low cost per page.

Just as diverse as the hardware they support, the team manages an array of software solutions for the district. These systems include district e-mail (staff and students), Google Apps for Education, Munis, ProTraxx, Discovery Education, EdLine, and others. They also manage communications technologies, including district Web pages and the emergency notification system, SchoolMessenger.

In addition to operational systems, the technology team supports instructional software. This proved instrumental in the preparation for and rollout of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium tests over the

past year. They also manage the district's student information system, Rediker, including scheduling and programming of custom report cards for all schools. The team owns responsibility for the submission of all state reports out of Rediker as well. For all of these systems and overall instructional technology best practices, the team offers professional development for staff and students.

The ability of East Granby's team to fulfill the above duties with limited staff is commendable. Team members did point to the limitations of having just 2.5 staff members to address the volume of support tickets. Making Mr. Mosher's position full time would lead to faster resolution of these requests, benefitting staff and students throughout the district. The team expressed a desire to reach a 1:1 computing ratio, with a device available per student, and regretted the apparent failure of the Bond Commission to fund the latest state infrastructure grant. They remain dedicated to this goal, nonetheless, and will no doubt make creative and cost-effective strides toward accomplishing it.

Recommendation:

The technology team is a critical element of the district's educational program. Continue to support the staff, the use of no cost or low cost initiatives, and look to further on-line educational offerings for staff and students. Take advantage of all eligible technology purchases that are eligible for E-Rate participation.

Student Transportation

Findings:

The study included a review of the East Granby Board of Education's contract with Rainbow Transportation Services, Inc. Mason Thrall, CREC Director of Operations, and an expert in student transportation assisted in this review. The current contract expires June 30, 2018. The superintendent of schools confirms that the company is fulfilling the contractual obligations as set forth in the contract. The high school assistant principal also serves as the school district's transportation coordinator. The transportation coordinator is responsible for all issues associated with the transportation of all students in the East Granby school system.

TABLE 10

COMPARATIVE PER PUPIL TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES

District Code	District Name	Special Education Transportation	Regular Education Transportation	Total Transportation Per Resident Student
11	Bloomfield	\$ 12,336	\$ 953	\$ 1,051
102	North Stonington	\$ 2,287	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,236
40	East Granby	\$ 29,678	\$ 426	\$ 721
12	Bolton	\$ 16,535	\$ 554	\$ 865
DRG D Average	24 Communities	\$ 11,668	\$ 578	\$ 812

As reflected in **Table 10**, the 2013-2014 East Granby transportation expenditures are below the average of their district reference group as well as the three other districts pulled for comparative purposes. The special education per pupil transportation figures are subject to fluctuation from year to year due to the students served and their educational placements. In the previous four years, East Granby's expenditures have varied from a high of \$16,121 to a low of \$9,787. In our opinion, the district is very efficient in their student transportation system.

Recommendations:

Request the president of Rainbow Transportation Services be contacted and a request made to reopen the contract for the purpose of renegotiating the cost of the current diesel fuel charges.

As a potential cost savings, remove from the contract the language stating that *an East Granby school bus cannot operate beyond ten years of service and/or five year average*. Transportation experts report that busses currently being manufactured can safely operate well beyond ten years. School busses are inspected annually by the DMV and are statutorily required to be serviced often.

Conduct a cost benefit analysis for increasing the late bus services from the high school and middle school from the current one day per week to four days per week in preparation for the development of the 2016-2017 budget.

Continue contacting neighboring school districts to identify the potential of sharing bus and van transportation to and from out of district sites.

Contact other school districts to discuss their interest in participating in a fuel purchasing consortium.

Explore with town officials the potential of sharing in the property tax revenue collected from the bus company for storage of busses on town property. This tax revenue would be used to help offset student transportation costs. This can also be accomplished by having the BOE hold titles to the school busses and register them in the name of the BOE. The bus company would continue to insure, maintain, and operate the busses as their own. The BOE would assign the busses back to the bus company at the end of the contract. This agreement would be included in a new contract.

Explore the potential use of the “no-cost” or “low-cost” CREC transportation experts to assist in negotiating the next school transportation contract.

Student Tuitions

Finding:

In the 2014-15 fiscal year, 74 East Granby students attend career/vocational schools and/or magnet schools at a tuition cost to the district of \$158,962. In the same fiscal year, 55 Open Choice students attended East Granby schools and East Granby received \$470,825 in tuition revenue. This resulted in a net financial gain to the community of \$311,863.

Recommendation:

We commend the district for the educational and financial gains from their participation in these tuition programs and recommendation that these be enhanced whenever possible.

Central Office Staffing

Finding:

The central office staff which is comprised of two administrators and two support people provide support services to the entire school district.

Recommendation:

Provide cross training with comparable town personnel in the event that either the BOE or Town staff are out, functions like payroll, accounts payable, human resources services etc. can still function at a high level. Explore the opportunity for the Town of East Granby to handle non-certified human resources services for the Board of Education, and/or with neighboring districts.

Cooperative Programs

Finding:

East Granby, through the Educational Resources Collaborative (ERC), participates in the cooperative purchases of photocopiers, environmental services and participates in the Farmington Valley Diagnostic Center for regional special education services. OSHA training received from this program is also shared with the Town employees at no additional charge.

The BOE purchases electricity through a cooperative. #2 heating oil was previously purchased through a cooperative but found it didn't function well in controlling costs. Business insurance is purchased cooperatively through the Town. Custodial supplies are purchased through the same vendor as the Town for improved pricing. CREC approved vendors are utilized for purchasing many of our district supply needs. Professional development is shared with surrounding districts when appropriate. Cooperative transportation with Granby and Suffield is utilized when cost effective and efficient. Bus services are shared with Granby for students going to Suffield Vo-Ag and Asnuntuck Community College. Out of district special education transportation is shared where ever possible. The Board of Education has a part-time social worker and shares services with the Town's social worker who also serves Granby. Adult education is provided through a cooperative with Windsor Locks. Interscholastic athletic opportunities are provided for students through co-ops with Suffield, Granby and Windsor Locks.

East Granby receives offsets to its data and phone charges through the federal E-Rate (Universal Services Fund, or USF) program. The district uses the firm E-Rate Exchange to manage filings, vendor bidding, and other aspects of this program. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 established the E-Rate program in an effort to aid U.S. schools and libraries in promoting technology and obtaining affordable telecommunication and Internet services. Last year, USF restructured its award calculations, allotting higher offsets to data circuits to schools as well as core switching and wireless equipment, along with reductions in offsets for telecommunications (e.g., landline phones and cell phones). Working with E-Rate Exchange, it was determined that East Granby Public Schools did not need to modify its E-Rate filings significantly based on these USF changes.

East Granby is currently participating in a regional discussion through CREC regarding potential stop loss insurance savings through a captive insurance pool.

Recommendations:

We recommend that the Board of education investigate shared human resources services either in cooperation with the Town of East Granby or neighboring school districts.

Communication

Finding:

While not strictly speaking an area of analysis in an efficiency study, it is prudent for us to comment on the subject matter of communication in the district and among the stakeholders in the community. In the data gathering phase of our project, the individuals interviewed and individuals from whom we requested data were all cooperative and provided the information as requested. Timely responses to requests for information is vital. Additionally, some information that is provided to the public is in a format that is not easily digested by the average citizen. For example, the monthly financial report presented by the administration to the Board of Education and Board of Finance is quite detailed and excellent in our opinion. However, if this level of detail is required in the future, we recommend that a cover memo be added highlighting only the significant changes from the previous month, the budget implications, and the transfer of funds(if necessary) to manage the change.

Trust is at the heart of the success of any organization. With trust, success comes quicker, better, and at a lower transition cost. In order to build a trusting relationship within the community between boards and the school district administration, we recommend that a budget planning session be scheduled in late summer/early fall with representatives from all three major boards and the school district administration. All parties should be prepared to present the budget drivers for the upcoming fiscal year (i.e. changes in enrollment, legislative changes, changes in grant revenue, collective bargaining agreements, capital improvement projects etc.). Projected dollar increases in rough terms and budget impact statements should be provided for planning purposes. The community should be advised early on of the forecasting work through media or written communications. Any variations from these initial forecasts should be communicated promptly so there are no surprises.

To assist the school district in forecasting the number of elementary classrooms that will be required in the future, we recommend that East Granby households are contacted through a mailing or using Edline to obtain realtime elementary student enrollment projections. See Appendix for an example.

We also recommend that all schools have telephone services full time in the months of June, July and August.

East Granby Public Schools community has much to offer, of which they are and should be justifiably proud. Communicating the accomplishments and highlighting the joint obstacles the community is facing early on will help to build the trust that is so vital. We believe there is a significant opportunity to upgrade the school district and town websites in a cooperative manner delegating the responsibility of generating articles/reports/updating data and assigning responsibility of oversight to a web master. An investment in this area of shared resources would significantly enhance the necessary communications throughout the district and the community at large.

Appendix

CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies

- **Cooperative Purchasing** – CREC offers municipalities cost-saving opportunities through three bidding programs to leverage the benefit of local support and the strength of national purchasing volume. Each year, communities saved money using cooperative purchasing programs on products and services ranging from multipurpose paper to roofing products. Bid requests are initiated through CREC districts or through programs such as the CT Consortium, PEPPM Technology and the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies (AEPA).

Contact: Cara Hart chart@crec.org 860.524.4021

- **Program Assessment Services**- CREC works with school and town officials to assess non-educational functions in order to facilitate discussions and agreements to share services and save money in key areas such as financial services, construction project oversight, energy management and conservation, facilities management, safety and security and transportation management.

Contact: Mary Glassman mglassman@crec.org 860.240.6619

- **Town Visits** – CREC staff will meet with key municipal staff to discuss areas of opportunities to achieve cost savings while providing high quality services as a one-stop place to go for assistance.

Contact: Christine Ruman cruman@crec.org 860.509.3612

- **Grant and Development Assistance** – CREC’s expertise in grant writing and development opportunities can assist communities identify additional resources for programs and services.

Contact: Kathy Randall krandall@crec.org 860.509.3655

CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies (con't)

- **Strategic Planning and Facilitation Assistance** – CREC staff can assist in strategic planning and data analysis to assist in operation reviews and provides nationally certified facilitators to assist in meetings, newly elected official orientations and staff retreats

Contact: Tricia Silva

tsilva@crec.org

860-524.4085

- **Collaborative Partnerships** – CREC can assist in the formation of a multi-town voluntary collaborative in order to build partnerships for the delivery of non-educational services, to share transportation services or to purchase equipment.

Contact: Mary Glassman

mglassman@crec.org

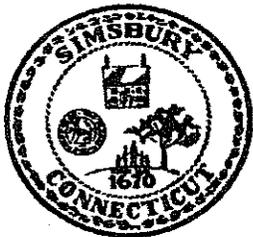
860-240.6619

- **CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies Advisory Committee** – CREC 's Advisory Committee is designed for superintendents, chief elected officials, school business managers and finance directors in order to identify areas of opportunities for regional collaboration or sharing and to identify barriers to cooperation.

Contact: Mary Glassman

mglassman@crec.org

860-240-6619



Simsbury Public Schools

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

*Susan Caccamo, Transportation and Enrollment Coordinator
Simsbury Board of Education*

November, 2008

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Each year the Simsbury Public Schools conduct a census of all children residing in Simsbury who are of pre-school age. With this information, we can more accurately estimate the number of children who will enter kindergarten from each area of our community. This data is important to the school department in determining the number of classrooms that will be required in the future.

Therefore, if a pre-school age child or children reside in your home, your assistance in completing and returning the brief survey below by **December 15, 2008** would be greatly appreciated. A postage-paid return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

NOTE: PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ONLY IF A PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILD OR CHILDREN RESIDE IN YOUR HOME, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR KINDERGARTEN IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2009/2010. Children are eligible for Kindergarten in 2009/10 if they were born on or before January 1, 2005. Information on kindergarten registration will be sent home in January to anyone with an age-eligible child who is not yet attending school.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Susan Caccamo
Student Data, Transportation and Enrollment Coordinator

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cut and return lower portion ✂

Family Last Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Father: _____ Mother: _____

Street #/Name: _____ Apt: _____ Zip: _____

Children residing in your home **born in 2003 or later and not currently enrolled** in kindergarten.

Last Name	First Name	Middle In	Birthdate (mm/dd/yy)	Male	Female
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee

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STUDY SCOPE

Regional Cooperation Between Local Boards of Education

Focus

Regional cooperation between local boards of education can vary widely, from two school districts developing a cooperative arrangement to provide adult education together, to the creation of a regional school district serving children in grades K-12. This study will examine the prevalence, advantages, and disadvantages of such efforts and identify factors related to implementing, replicating, or expanding potentially beneficial regional cooperative efforts.

Background

Regional cooperation for educational purposes is authorized in a number of different statutes, including:

- Two or more local boards of education may enter into a cooperative arrangement to share programs and services “to enable such boards to carry out the duties specified in the general statutes.” (C.G.S. Sec. 10-158a)
- Two or more local or regional boards of education may enter into an agreement to establish a regional agricultural and technology center. (C.G.S. Sec. 10-64)
- A board of education that does not have a high school may send its students to a designated high school located in another school district per an agreement between the two boards. (C.G.S. Secs. 10-33 and 10-35)
- Regional educational service centers (RESCs) may be established at the request of four or more school boards with CSDE approval. (C.G.S. Sec. 10-166a)
- Two or more towns are permitted to establish a regional school district (C.G.S. Sec. 10-39).

Currently, more than a dozen high schools have regional agricultural science and technology centers that provide training for students planning a career in agriculture. There are 17 regional school districts in the state, with the most recent established in 1987 (Regional District #19, providing grades 9-12 for students in the towns of Ashford, Mansfield, and Willington). Six Regional Education Service Centers help boards of education communicate and collaborate in such areas as professional and curriculum development, special education, and human service programs.

Regional cooperation between local boards of education has been part of the efforts of the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), regional planning organizations, and 2002 program review committee study of regional school district governance. The recent Municipal Opportunities & Regional Efficiencies (MORE) Commission also studied various aspects of regional cooperation between local boards of education, and the proposed PRI study is seen as complementing rather than duplicating these efforts. In 2015, proposed bill no. 778 required PRI to “study regional cooperative agreements between local boards of education.”

Areas of Analysis

1. Identify existing cooperative efforts between two or more local boards of education including:
 - a. Regional school districts
 - b. Regional Education Service Centers
 - c. Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Centers
 - d. Shared operational arrangements (e.g., administrative services, assistive technology equipment, procurement, transportation)
 - e. Shared instructional arrangements (e.g., shared staff, special education programs)
2. Describe selected cooperative efforts including:
 - a. Number of school boards of education involved per agreement
 - b. Relative proximity of the schools involved
 - c. Grade level of educational services involved
 - d. Duration of the agreement
 - e. Purpose of the agreement
3. Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of certain regional cooperative efforts
 - a. Assess the impact of the agreement on costs, service offerings, or other outcomes
4. If examples are available, examine reasons why attempts to establish cooperative arrangements or regional school districts were not completed
5. Identify cooperative arrangements between local boards of education in other states
 - a. Determine if and under what circumstances any advantageous efforts may be replicated in Connecticut
6. Describe barriers to replicating and expanding advantageous regional cooperative efforts in Connecticut
 - a. Recommend methods and practices to overcome or minimize these barriers

PRI Staff Contacts

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Eric Michael Gray: Eric.Gray@cga.ct.gov

Susan M. Phillips: Susan.Phillips@cga.ct.gov

East Granby High School

Assistant Principal Job Responsibilities

The East Granby high school assistant principal's job description includes working directly with students, parents and staff. In addition, the assistant principal has the following responsibilities:

- Chairs the districts school safety committee
- Serves as district truant officer
- Serves as district test coordinator
- Serves the district representative on the juvenile review board
- Serves as the district transportation coordinator and is responsible for handling disciplinary issues related to student behavior on the bus in the district.
- Serves as district asbestos program manager
- District representative to the state emergency and security planning committee
- Coordinates school facility usage and supervises evening events
- Serves as district contact for facility maintenance emergencies
- Substitute teacher coordinator.