

May 23, 2023

Dear NSD Families and Staff,

I am writing to follow up the meeting last night, at which the redistricting consultant presented the [results of his study](#) to the Nashua Board of Education.

The consultant cited multiple data points, including very unaffordable housing, declining birth rate, declining enrollment, and increasing private school enrollment as reasons for redistricting.

Before making a final decision on redistricting and/or closing a school, the Nashua Board of Education is reviewing not only recommendations from the consultant, but also feedback from administrators and from several redistricting committees, and points of view from members of school communities through community forums and redistricting feedback forms.

The Board is looking to decide in June on a redistricting plan for school attendance boundary lines, including the possibility of a school closing. The approved redistricting plan would not go into effect until August 2024, when the school district closes Elm Street Middle School and opens the Brian S. McCarthy Middle School.

Jennifer Bishop, President of the Nashua Board of Education, would like to take this opportunity to share her thoughts on the redistricting process:

*“This redistricting decision is one of the most difficult decisions a board of education could possibly make, particularly when it involves possibly closing a school,”* said Ms. Bishop. *“Our school district and the city are at a crossroads that we have not had to consider for more than 20 years when we opened two high schools for the first time in Nashua. Back in the spring of 2004 we had to redistrict, splitting the city into two segments to accommodate going from a single Nashua senior high to two high schools, Nashua North and Nashua South. Opening two comprehensive high schools with rich, generous course offerings, which ranks among the most challenging curriculum in the state, has served our students and their families exceedingly well over the years. I just want to be sure our decision this time with redistricting assures us that our students will continue to have the best available to them. We want to be sure we are leveraging financial and material resources to keep teaching and learning moving forward across all our schools.”*

The current redistricting work started in earnest in December 2022 and was about redistricting school boundary lines for our middle schools, as part of the middle school renovation and construction project. The focus then turned to elementary schools to address inequities in boundary lines with the drop in enrollment over the last 10 years and because of the uneven class sizes across our elementary schools.

- The redistricting committee for the elementary schools was asked to develop redistricting plans for two scenarios, with one including all 12 elementary schools and one for 11 elementary schools with the possible closing of Mount Pleasant Elementary School.
- The redistricting committee for the middle schools developed a plan that shifts boundary lines to recognize the closing of Elm Street Middle School and the opening of McCarthy Middle School.
- The redistricting committee for the high schools recommended maintaining current attendance boundary lines, without any changes.

We have much work ahead of us. If you have not already, please consider sharing your thoughts on redistricting with us, by filing a [feedback form](#) found on the nashua.edu website.

I will be back to you again as we prepare to further develop a redistricting plan.

Thank you.

Mario Andrade, Superintendent of Schools