

**A Feasibility Study of Possible
Regionalization Involving Pinelands
Regional School District and the
School Districts of Eagleswood,
Bass River, Little Egg Harbor, and
Tuckerton**

October 18, 2021

Scenarios

1. Formation of a PK-12 regional between Bass River, Eagleswood, Little Egg Harbor, and Tuckerton.
2. Formation of a PK-12 regional between Bass River, Eagleswood, and Little Egg Harbor. Tuckerton remains a PK-6 district and sends grades 7-12 to new regional district.

Scenarios

3. Formation of a PK-12 regional between Bass River, Tuckerton, and Little Egg Harbor. Eagleswood remains a PK-6 district and sends grades 7-12 to new regional district.
4. Formation of a PK-12 regional between Bass River and Little Egg Harbor. Eagleswood and Tuckerton remain PK-6 districts and send grades 7-12 to new regional district.



DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS AND RACIAL IMPACT

Richard S. Grip, Ed.D.

- Doctorate from Rutgers University Graduate School of Education in Educational Statistics and Measurement
- 23 years' experience as a demographic consultant
- Numerous publications on school demography and presentations nationally
- Testified as an expert witness in school demography in several administrative law hearings

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

- I. Population trends (historical and projected) of Bass River, Eagleswood, Little Egg Harbor, and Tuckerton

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

2. Relevant Demographic Characteristics in each community (e.g., race, education, income, median housing price, etc.)
 - Race is fairly similar in each community (90-95% White)
 - Median family income range (\$71,000-\$95,000, NJ= \$105,000). Tuckerton has lowest income and Eagleswood the highest.
 - Median value home price fairly similar \$224K-\$278K.
 - Education levels (Bachelor's degree or higher) are fairly similar (20-28%, NJ-41%)

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

3. Historical enrollment trends (2014-15 to 2019-20) in each school district.
 - Bass River - generally declining, 93 students in 2019-20.
 - Eagleswood - slowly declining in last 4 years. 129 students in 2019-20.
 - Little Egg Harbor -fairly stable, ranging from 1,570-1,617.
 - Tuckerton - ranged from 278-331.
 - Pinelands Regional – slowly declining, 1,512 students in 2019-20.

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

4. Birth counts in each community were used to project kindergarten students five years later.
5. New housing in each community
 - Potential for 21 SF homes in Eagleswood, 23 SF homes in Little Egg Harbor, and 27 SF homes in Tuckerton. No new homes are proposed in Bass River.

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

6. Enrollment Projections in each district from 2020-21 through 2029-30 (10 years)
 - If all districts are combined, enrollment would decline from 3,676 in 2019-20 to 3,489 in 2029-30 (-187).
7. Capacity Analysis – Can the existing buildings accommodate all of the students?
 - Districts either have small surpluses of seating or a small number of “unhoused” students.
 - As enrollments are not projected to change significantly, capacity is projected to be adequate in each district.

Topics Analyzed by Demographer

8. Economically Disadvantaged Students (Free/Reduced Lunch)
 - In 2019-20, percentages range from 29% (Eagleswood) to 48% (Little Egg Harbor).
9. Racial Impact
 - Racial percentages of each district was computed from 2014-15 to 2019-20.
 - As all students will be educated in the same schools they are currently being educated in all scenarios, there will be no negative racial impact.



EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS

David C. Hespe

- Former two-time Commissioner of Education.
- Former President and CEO of Burlington County College.
- Former Chair/Associate Professor of the Educational Leadership Department at Rowan University.
- Former Interim Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Willingboro School District.
- Former Assistant Counsel for the New Jersey Office of Legislative Services.

Education Chapter Summary

- Review of the schools has revealed that all of the schools have put in place the mandated curriculum standards as well as aligned programs and instruction. The schools have made significant investments in professional development, enrichment, co-curricular activities and technology to serve their students and families.

Education Chapter Summary

- The issue that faces the families in Eagleswood, Tuckerton, Bass River and Little Egg Harbor is the need to further expand educational opportunity and student potential through regionalization understanding that student success will be defined regionally and globally not locally.
- The question is whether regionalization will better allow the communities to provide this level of educational opportunity? **We believe that the answer to this question is yes.**

Education Chapter Summary

- Students in all of the schools will have the opportunity to receive a higher quality education in the event that regionalization is approved by the voters and implemented in a way to maximize student outcomes.
- A new regional district will be better situated to put in place best practices that will lead to successful schools and improve educational outcomes.

Educational Opportunities

The capacity to provide programmatic and instructional support can be improved through regionalization, i.e.:

1. A shared curriculum development and implementation office with the ability to do such things as unify curriculum and instruction vertically and horizontally across all schools and enhance data collection, analysis, and follow through;
2. A regionalized human capital and professional development office;
3. Expertise in the area of student and staff safety;
4. Increased enrichment opportunities and partnerships.

Educational Opportunities

Enhanced opportunity to become more effective and efficient in serving special student populations, i.e.:

1. Greater capacity and expertise is developed at the regional level to support interventions for students struggling academically including students with IEPs.
2. Improved services for students with limited English proficiency;
3. Improved services for students who are chronically absent.

Education Chapter Summary

- We have not identified any educational obstacles to regionalization.
- Recommendation: During the initial five-year period all students and staff remain in their current assignments until the new school board has conducted a needs assessment and engaged the various communities in a discussion regarding educational priorities and fiscal conditions.



FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Steven Cea, M.B.A.

- Over 25 years of experience as School Business Administrator. Specific experience with sending-receiving relationships and regional school districts.
- Possesses a Masters of Business Administration from Walter A. Haas School of Business, University of California at Berkeley,

Financial Framework

Model Development

- Actual Revenues & Expenses from 2018-19 & 2019-20 Audits
- Budgets from 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21
- Enrollment projections from demographic section

Financial Framework

Key Assumptions

- Tax levy and rate estimated.
- Estimates expressed in “2020 real dollar” terms.
- State aid for scenarios approximates funding in 2019-20.
- Educational programs equivalent to 2019-20.
- Regression analysis used to project 10 years of equalized valuations.
- Tuition costs based on state certified cost per pupil rates.
- Full implementation in year one to better capture full financial impact.
- All schools will remain operational.
- Current collective bargaining agreements will remain in force until a unified all-purpose regional agreement can be negotiated.

Financial Results Overview

- Referendum Requirement
- Available Allocation Variables
 - Equalized Property Value
 - Enrollment
- Table Conventions
 - Dollar Values in \$1,000's
 - Tax Rates per \$100 equalized property value
 - Tax Increases are Negative Numbers
 - Tax Reductions are Positive Numbers

All-Purpose Regional – All Communities

100% Equalized Value

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$2,797	\$1,224	\$4,092	\$2,618	\$1,474
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.135	\$0.497	\$1.567	\$1.003	\$0.565
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$30,086	\$453	\$29,524	\$29,200	\$324
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.135	\$0.017	\$1.014	\$1.003	\$0.011
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$5,209	\$106	\$5,203	\$5,025	\$178
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.135	\$0.023	\$1.038	\$1.003	\$0.036
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$2,019	\$585	\$2,213	\$1,820	\$393
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.135	\$0.329	\$1.219	\$1.003	\$0.216

All-Purpose Regional – All Communities

100% Equalized Value

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$2,797	\$1,224	\$4,092	\$2,618	\$1,474
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.135	\$0.497	\$1.567	\$1.003	\$0.565
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$30,086	\$453	\$29,524	\$29,200	\$324
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.135	\$0.017	\$1.014	\$1.003	\$0.011
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$5,209	\$106	\$5,203	\$5,025	\$178
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.135	\$0.023	\$1.038	\$1.003	\$0.036
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$2,019	\$585	\$2,213	\$1,820	\$393
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.135	\$0.329	\$1.219	\$1.003	\$0.216

All-Purpose Regional – All Communities

50% Equalized Value / 50% Enrollment

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$2,648	\$1,373	\$4,092	\$2,689	\$1,403
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.074	\$0.557	\$1.567	\$1.030	\$0.537
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$30,224	\$315	\$29,524	\$29,322	\$202
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.140	\$0.012	\$1.014	\$1.007	\$0.007
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$5,385	-\$70	\$5,203	\$5,070	\$133
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.173	-\$0.015	\$1.038	\$1.012	\$0.027
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$1,854	\$750	\$2,213	\$1,581	\$632
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.042	\$0.422	\$1.219	\$0.871	\$0.348

All-Purpose Regional – All Communities

100% Enrollment

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$2,498	\$1,523	\$4,092	\$2,761	\$1,331
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.014	\$0.618	\$1.567	\$1.058	\$0.510
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$30,362	\$177	\$29,524	\$29,445	\$79
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.145	\$0.007	\$1.014	\$1.011	\$0.003
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$5,561	-\$246	\$5,203	\$5,115	\$88
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.212	-\$0.054	\$1.038	\$1.021	\$0.018
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$1,690	\$914	\$2,213	\$1,342	\$871
	Rate	\$1.464	\$0.950	\$0.514	\$1.219	\$0.739	\$0.480

Cost Reductions from Regionalizing

- Methodologies
 - Comparison of Like Districts
 - Staffing Analysis
 - Academic Literature
- Shared Services
- All-Purpose Regional – All Communities
 - \$2.4 million: 2.7% of Expenditures
- Alternative Scenarios
 - One district = \$2.1 million
 - Two districts = \$1.8 million

All-Purpose Regional – No Eagleswood

100% Equalized Value

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$4,240	-\$219	\$4,092	\$4,604	-\$512
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.720	-\$0.089	\$1.567	\$1.764	-\$0.196
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$29,238	\$1,301	\$29,524	\$27,929	\$1,595
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.103	\$0.049	\$1.014	\$0.959	\$0.055
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$5,063	\$252	\$5,203	\$4,806	\$397
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.103	\$0.055	\$1.038	\$0.959	\$0.079
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$1,962	\$642	\$2,213	\$1,741	\$472
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.103	\$0.361	\$1.219	\$0.959	\$0.260

All-Purpose Regional – No Tuckerton 100% Equalized Value

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$2,749	\$1,272	\$4,092	\$2,587	\$1,505
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.115	\$0.516	\$1.567	\$0.991	\$0.577
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$29,571	\$968	\$29,524	\$28,859	\$665
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.116	\$0.037	\$1.014	\$0.991	\$0.023
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$6,337	-\$1,022	\$5,203	\$5,968	-\$765
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.381	-\$0.223	\$1.038	\$1.191	-\$0.153
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$1,984	\$620	\$2,213	\$1,799	\$414
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.115	\$0.349	\$1.219	\$0.991	\$0.228

All-Purpose Regional – No Eagleswood and No Tuckerton – 100% Equalized Value

		Five-Year Average Status Quo	Five-Year Average Unified District	Five-Year Difference	Ten-Year Average Status Quo	Ten-Year Average Unified District	Ten-Year Difference
Eagleswood	Tax Levy	\$4,021	\$4,240	-\$219	\$4,092	\$4,604	-\$512
	Rate	\$1.632	\$1.720	-\$0.089	\$1.567	\$1.764	-\$0.196
Little Egg Harbor	Tax Levy	\$30,539	\$28,541	\$1,998	\$29,524	\$27,354	\$2,170
	Rate	\$1.152	\$1.077	\$0.075	\$1.014	\$0.939	\$0.075
Tuckerton	Tax Levy	\$5,315	\$6,337	-\$1,022	\$5,203	\$5,968	-\$765
	Rate	\$1.158	\$1.381	-\$0.223	\$1.038	\$1.191	-\$0.153
Bass River	Tax Levy	\$2,604	\$1,915	\$689	\$2,213	\$1,705	\$508
	Rate	\$1.464	\$1.077	\$0.387	\$1.219	\$0.939	\$0.280

Financial Conclusions

- All constituent communities of the full 4 community all-purpose regional see reduced tax levy as compared to the status quo using the 100% Equalized Value allocation.

Financial Conclusions

- Under each of the alternative scenarios, the district(s) not participating in the all-purpose regional experience an increase in levy compared to the status quo.
- The constituent communities see a tax reduction using the 100% Equalized Value allocation.

Conclusion: Recommendation

- Formation of a four-community all-purpose PK-12 regional
- Students are expected to continue to experience educational success.
- Any district or districts that enter into a sending-receiving relationship to provide 7-12 educational services rather than join the PK-12 regional district will see an **increase** in tax levy as the tuition rates and other costs, currently part of Pinelands Regional, are higher than the respective share of the regional tax levy.

Conclusion: Recommendation

- Four-community all purpose regional saves more than \$2.3 million annually and improves both economic and logistical efficiencies.

Thank you

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