



**East Pennsboro Area School District**  
**Feasibility Study**  
**January 26, 2017 Community Meeting**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Closing West Creek Hills will eliminate the neighborhood or community school.**

Currently only 25% of West Creek Hills' student population live within the PDE defined walking distance of the school. The remaining 75% of the students are transported from areas as far away as Pine Hill Road, Country Club Road, Adams Ricci Park and the Schaeffer Field development.

**Will vacating West Creek Hills impact the property value of my home?**

The district has been advised by a local real estate agent that from an appraisal stand point it would be difficult to measure if there would be a loss of value. Individuals looking for homes typically look at the home, the neighborhood conditions and the school district as a whole. School building location does affect choice. If West Creeks Hills Elementary were to remain vacant for an extended period of time that could negatively affect home values.

**Would it be more effective to just fix all the problems at each building rather than build an all new building?**

If the district were to complete just the MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) upgrades to all the buildings it would cost a minimum of \$57.2 million. This amount would exceed our school district's borrowing capacity.

**Is it more cost effective to correct existing problems at West Creek Hills or to vacate and build a new building?**

The cost of repairing West Creek Hills would be less than building a new building if that were the limit of the construction necessary throughout the district. However, the district evaluated all facilities, including enhanced educational programming, which resulted in the need for construction, renovation, and repairs at all of the district physical properties. The Construction of a new 3-5 intermediate building will allow for grade reconfiguration, resulting in operational savings, increased security, and a state of the art facility for our students and community.

**Could this cause our school district to not have any money left in our budget in the event of an emergency?**

It is recommended that the operational savings gained from vacating West Creek Hills be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund to be used for any future repairs to the other district facilities.

**Will it cost us additional money to keep West Creek Hills Elementary operational until a potential buyer is secured?**

West Creek Hills Elementary will need to be maintained while the building is still owned by the district. The estimated annual cost is projected at \$50,000.00. However, should the district vacate the building, it would be recommended to create a steering committee comprised of district, township and community members to determine potential tenants and/or buyers.

**What communication methods have been used to get this information out to the community?**

The district recognizes our communication efforts and the clarity of the messages sent out were not effective during, or leading up to the last community meeting. In order to correct this shortcoming, the Board will be placing fliers in the community, and at the schools, an advertisement in the Patriot News, information will be included in the parent notification phone calls and emails and continue to utilize social media.

**How will the move to a K-2, 3-5 grade configurations impact the class sizes?**

A single grade level of students can be more evenly distributed in one building by grade level as compared to two different buildings. This will help guarantee class size equality. Enrollment projections estimate a slight decrease in enrollment in the next 5 years. With the recommended grade level reconfiguration the district would be better able to distribute students across grade level in the same building. The grade reconfiguration would help ensure class size equality.

**How will the educational needs of our students be met?**

As a result of the recommended grade level reconfiguration, there will be a more consistent approach to curriculum, instruction and assessment among the grade levels. Targeted grade-level and band-level (primary and intermediate) professional development will improve instructional delivery. Moving the 5th grade to the elementary school provides a more appropriate social, emotional, and academic placement for this age group.

### **What exactly does STEM mean?**

STEM is defined as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. In an effort to best prepare our students to compete in a global economy the district will be implementing and expanding our STEM offerings (i.e. pre-engineering classes). In order to effectively implement such a program the feasibility study calls for increased STEM spaces at the Middle and High Schools. The facility space will allow for increased learning opportunities and exposure to innovative technologies for students in these high-demand areas of the workforce.

### **Was West Creek Hills originally designed to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor?**

West Creek Hills may have been originally designed to have a second floor. The building codes in effect at that time are different from the current codes today. The existing structural system would not support present day building codes.

### **Why won't there be anything done at East Pennsboro Elementary?**

The district is currently working to upgrade the lower level HVAC system, which has been identified as an immediate need. The operational savings from the closing of West Creek Hills Elementary would allow for the district to make improvements to East Pennsboro Elementary.

### **What will be the locations of the athletic fields and new building?**

That is largely dependent on what the site survey indicates is the best location. We will ensure that the students will still have access to the same or better number and condition of athletic fields.

### **Has the East Pennsboro Area School District ever closed or consolidated any buildings in the past?**

Yes, the school district has closed at least four buildings in our history. They include: Adams Street School, Midway School, Summit Street School, and West Fairview School. These properties are still a functioning part of each community.

### **How can the district afford to borrow \$50 million dollars?**

The district is currently in a financial position to replace debt that is almost paid off with this new debt. The new debt payment will be almost equal to the districts existing debt payment. The effect to the budget will be minimal. It is similar to when a household replaces an older car with a newer car and maintains the same car payment. The effect to the household budget is neutral. The district is utilizing the same logic.