

**SCHOOL:** *Mountain View School, Easthampton, MA*

**Can you please share any and all studies, sources, comparable data collected from other schools where combining schools to create one large school has had a positive impact on the students?**

- 1. What is your current enrollment?** *1200 students*
- 2. How many schools did you consolidate?** *3 elementary schools and a middle school*
- 3. What led you to the decision to consolidate?**
  - a. Inequitable educational experiences. One school didn't have a gymnasium, other schools did. Delivery of curriculum and services was hard in three separate buildings. Everyone deserves the same level of services.*
- 4. Since you've made the move from smaller elementary schools to one large consolidated school, have you found any positive or negative impacts on students and teachers?**
  - a. Huge challenge bringing people together to create one community*
- 5. What about impacts on...**
  - a. Community and sense of belonging within staffing and the student body**
    - i. Staff build a sense of belonging among grade levels by collaborating with team. But it's challenging to look for opportunities to collaborate with others outside of their grade level neighborhood. This is not any different than being in a smaller school and feeling the same way.*
    - ii. Last year it took students some getting used to. We worked a lot on routines and procedures (how to come into school, where to wait for the bus).*
    - iii. "Small school feel, large school pride."*
    - iv. Within grade level neighborhoods, there are large group spaces for PD/gathering; other spaces throughout school. Adaptive gym has a performance space for classroom performances. Community room has play space in it.*
    - v. Building set up as PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8. Each span has an administrator and school adjustment counselor. SPED teacher assigned to each grade level team.*
    - vi. ES has specialists that are shared K-5 with same level of staffing. MS have their own specialists due to blocking. STEAM was added as a special at ES and Grade 8. Health was added as a special in Grade 5.*
  - b. Social-emotional wellness**
    - i. We hired someone who oversees SEL wellness and collects data about students. We did this to think proactively. There is such a range of students in the building. In a large building you have all the services you need including programming to support SEL needs.*
    - ii. We use Second Step and Caring School Community during Morning Meeting.*
  - c. Student safety**
    - i. We have spent PD time exploring ways to maintain school safety.*
  - d. Test scores**

- i. *Not enough information at this time.*

**e. Traffic**

- i. *Indoor or outdoor? No, there isn't anything the designer didn't think of in terms of indoor traffic. One challenge is planning for a special event like a concert during the school day. The school needs to account for parking. No place for the entire school population to park outside. Accommodate this by holding functions by grade level sections.*

**f. Parents**

- i. *Toughest challenge parents didn't want K and 1 students to be mixed with middle schoolers.*
- ii. *Protocols for creating a sense of belonging; frontload a lot of community events; school tours; Zoom meetings to find out how it would go.*
- iii. *Grand Opening event with food trucks; PTO sold ice cream. Get PTO and school counsels involved as they are going to support the talk to others.*

**6. How would you change the design or organization of your building to better support a small school feel?**

**7. If you could, would you return to smaller community schools?**

- a. *I have no preference. Our school separate entrances and exits, separate cafeterias, separate nurse offices, separate arrival and dismissal times, different bus loops. All those things were thought of ahead of time; if they were not, I might have a different response.*
- b. *Necessity PD: school safety, how to use new technology*

**8. Other?**

- a. *Outdoor spaces: excellent opportunities for outdoor learning spaces; connects to a park for hiking trails; connection to nature*
- b. *In each classroom and hallways, writable walls which eliminates the need for lots of bulletin boards*
- c. *Teacher work spaces – work space within own neighborhood; teacher work spaces outside of neighborhood for collaboration*