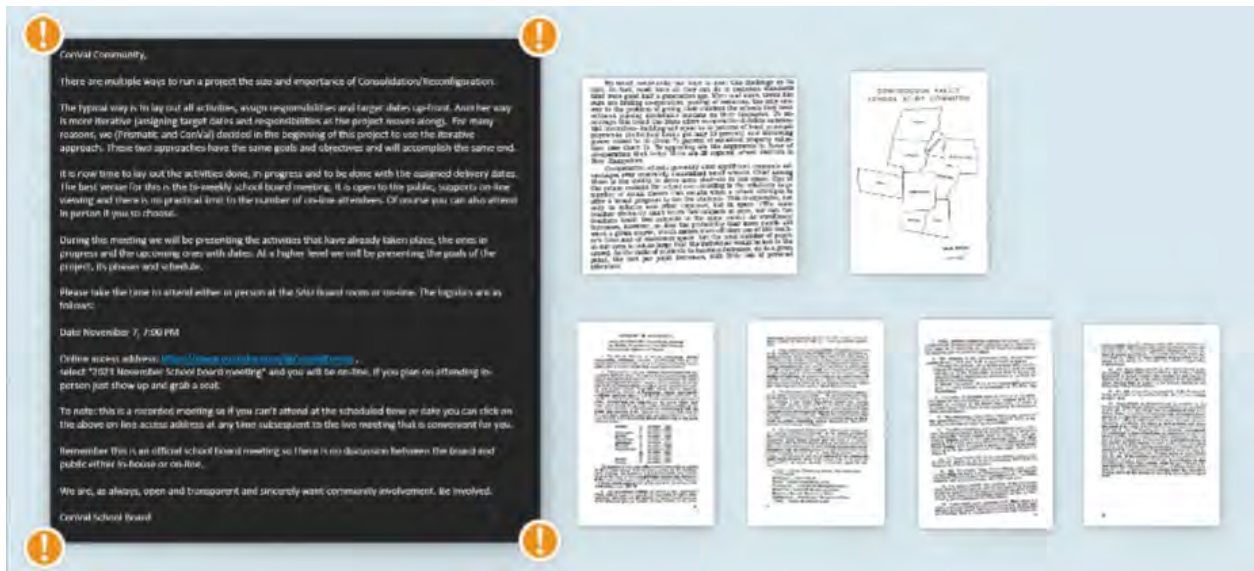


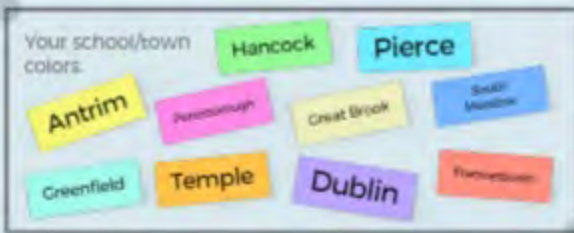
Appendix D

Screenshots of IdeaFlip



Simply start typing while on this page and a window will appear that will let you choose your post it note color and the message you would like for your post it note. After typing your message and hitting enter it will add it to a stack, allowing you to make multiple notes. Then just simply click "add" for the note to appear on the board.

Clicking the stationary tab to the right will also let you pick your notes then just double click the note you added to edit its text and color.



(#number of students in tested grade)	Reading	Math
Antrim ES (29)	40%	42%
Pierce ES (26)	68%	32%
Dublin CS (24)	97%	40%
Francestown ES (16)	87%	87%
Greenfield ES (29)	56%	54%
Hancock ES (29)	48%	56%
Peterborough ES (91)	82%	88%
Temple ES (14)	42%	57%
Lionheart Classical (55)	42%	59%
State	48%	51%

The New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System is typically administered March through June. (end of Year)



GES - Pierce/Derrington Elementary

2022-23	
School	Enrollment
Temple	33
Francestown	45
Dublin	61
Pierce	68
Hancock	70
Greenfield	93
Antrim	130
GBS	227
PES	262
SMS	344
ConVal HS	666



Questions For Consultants

Q1. Will the audit be subject to audit or it is an open alternative of your findings with the school board will be a common finding. However, there will be public to be able to have your presentation?
 A: School board meeting on public meeting.

Q2. What is the main focus for you as an individual and also understanding? My understanding is the board is going to have a meeting on March 7th and will be able to gather everything we need in such a short amount of time?
 A: The project began in June 2022. Financial Dept collecting data from the district and other sources in July 2022. The final report will be presented to the school board in December 2022. They will provide the audit with the report for March 2023. It is a recommendation to audit that requires a vote.

Q3. Who designs and builds the business plan for the school board? I am not sure because they did not have any update and they are looking for a quality spectrum of educational gathering.
 A: Financials developed the business plan after an analysis of background data, then presented them with district staff prior to review.

Q4. Schools need funding and you're looking for the local communities in the smaller towns. That is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing.
 A: Schools need funding and you're looking for the local communities in the smaller towns. That is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing. It is not a realistic thing.

Q5. If a school were to be added to the budget, what would be the impact on the other schools? It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact.
 A: If a school were to be added to the budget, what would be the impact on the other schools? It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact. It would be a positive impact.

Q6. If you're a teacher, how do you feel about the audit? It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing.
 A: If you're a teacher, how do you feel about the audit? It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a good thing.

Q7. Can you give some financial data on how different scenarios would affect the total cost for Custer? For example, would doubling schools do? What would doubling schools do for one day? It's really hard to say. It's really hard to say. It's really hard to say. It's really hard to say. It's really hard to say.
 A: Financials is currently working on those pieces, including assessing the costs (and savings) from possible changes in facilities, transportation, food services, and staffing. We do not have those data ready yet.

Q8. What has PLS said? They take lots of field trips and have art and music and wellness and a great music and general community engagement activities with the school. They also have small class sizes. What do they have before that they don't have now?
 A: In general, Northampton Elementary School has larger class sizes than the other Central elementary schools.

Q9. Can the school board guarantee a minimum student teacher ratio? How will parents be sure that neither students nor teachers will be more burdened than in the current configuration?
 A: The school board could choose to adjust student teacher ratio guidelines.

Q10. What is the value to a town, parents, children, teachers? We tried not to assign a dollar value to the things that are worth.
 A: Through the Central RVF, Financials has been charged with answering the question, "What is best for the Central Students and Teachers?" Answering that part of that question requires assessing things outside of school.

Q11. The school board goal is to save money. Will this translate to tax payer savings? Probably not.
 A: According to the Central RVF, the school board goal on this project is to "bring a viable solution to the question, 'What is best for the Central Students and Teachers?'"
 A: A recommendation is developed and approved on the basis of this project that reduces the Central district budget, that could translate to taxpayer savings.

Q12. If the goal is to investigate the why not adjust curriculum areas and add students to smaller schools to save money?
 A: The 2022-23 assessment across the 8 elementary schools was 742, including third students May 2022 data included in Central board meeting. Depending on how you calculate the capacity of the 8 schools, the district design plan included this year, there are approximately 1000 empty seats across the 8 schools, the student capacity of the 8 elementary schools is 1,200. The projections for the next 5 years are that the enrollment will only increase slightly, and the long-term projections include the same, being any disruptions, such as the construction of a massive new addition that brings 200 more families to the area.
 A: The district simply spreads the elementary students across the 8 schools, each school will still be only slightly more than half full. Having a facility built for the second unit has a cost. Having classes with fewer students is a cost. Running half empty buses has a cost.

The 2022-23 student assessment data (right) do not seem to indicate a relationship between smaller schools and better student achievement. What are your thoughts?

There is more to a quality education than test scores than we're measuring.

Small schools can provide a more personalized learning experience for students.

Smaller schools often have lower teacher-student ratios, which can lead to better student outcomes.

Smaller schools are often more flexible in their curriculum and can tailor their instruction to meet the needs of individual students.

Smaller schools can provide a more supportive environment for students who are struggling.

Smaller schools can provide a more diverse and inclusive learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more safe and secure learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more cost-effective learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more sustainable learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more equitable learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more resilient learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more innovative learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more collaborative learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more community-oriented learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more health-focused learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more environmentally conscious learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more socially responsible learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more civically engaged learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more globally minded learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more technologically advanced learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more research-oriented learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more data-driven learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more evidence-based learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more best-practices learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more continuous learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more comprehensive learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more balanced learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more well-rounded learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more holistic learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more humanistic learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more human-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more student-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more teacher-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more parent-centered learning environment.

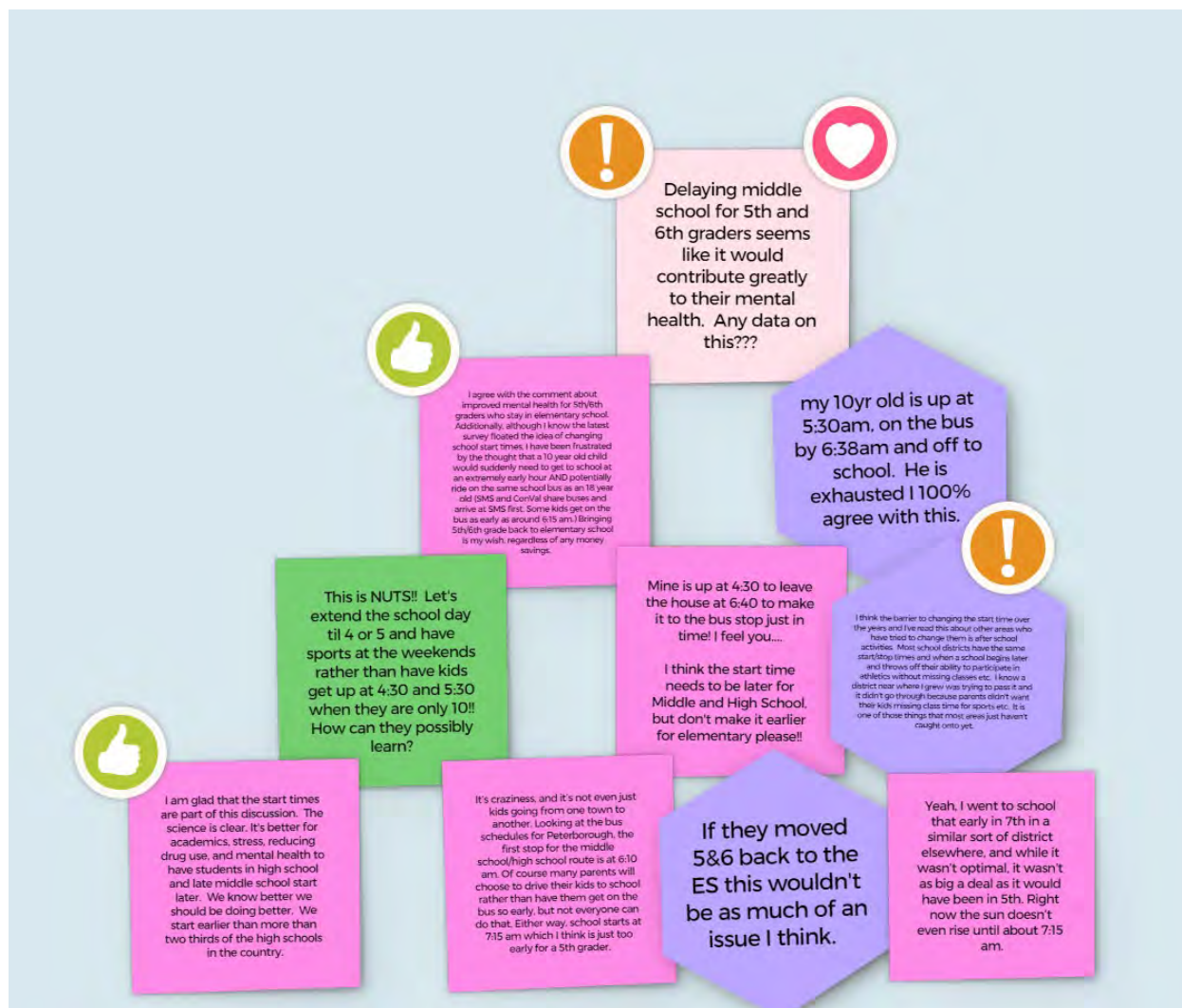
Smaller schools can provide a more community-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more society-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more world-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more universe-centered learning environment.

Smaller schools can provide a more everything-centered learning environment.



Q&A

Q: What is the goal of reconfiguration? Is it lower cost? Is it better test scores? More programs? There are a lot of great ideas in the survey but understanding the intended goal of the School Board would be helpful in analyzing their effectiveness and relevance.

A: As stated in the ConVal RFP, which governs the work that Prismatic is doing:

The Contoocook Valley Regional School District School Board was charged, by a petition warrant article, to evaluate the consolidation of district schools. The purpose is to evaluate the pros' and cons' of this request, as well as a recommendation on that request. The evaluation should include the impact that the closing/not closing has on the educational, safety, financial, social, organizational control, community, and the future of the district.

We are requesting an outside company to evaluate this matter, in order to be as neutral in this evaluation as can be accomplished. There have been many considerations of this request in the past, but none have led to a complete answer to the overall concerns. We are looking for a complete overview

that can be presented to the tax payers of the school district. We are also looking for community involvement, along with school district personnel.

When the report is completed, we are then looking for a plan on the recommendations that can be presented to the Contoocook Valley Regional School District. We want to bring a viable conclusion to the question, **“What is Best For the ConVal Students and Taxpayers?”**

Q: What is the school boards end goal? Is it to close elementary schools, combine middle schools? and remodel SMS and/or the high school?

A: Please see the response to the question “What is the goal of reconfiguration?”

Q: Have there been studies analyzing the cost of building modifications if we were to combine schools? i.e. can we fit everyone into PES and AES with no changes if we were to go to 2 elementary schools? Would the MS or HS need to be expanded or modified with any of the proposed combinations? The K-8 suggestion in particular sounded like a large infrastructure project!

A: The district has previously studied various options over the years. As part of its work, Prismatic is considering costs of any needed building modifications.

Q: Everything is about fixed costs. It costs the same to open a building for 10 students as it does for 100 students (slightly overstated). The data show that cost per student does not result in superior performance. Those students are cheated. Also, the costs of delivering special education services are increased due to the geographic distances. And the best time to intervene is in the very early years. There are very real educational outcomes that are degraded by the current setup. Also, it would be important to know the staffing issues faced by the smaller ES's. Is performance a reflection of too many substitutes/temporary/new teachers without good support? (Admin, assistants, more experienced teachers to talk with)

A: Prismatic does not see a question in there to be answered, but thanks you for your input. One additional consideration might be the opportunity cost of choosing to spend in the current manner. What does the district give up in order to fund the current system?

Q: Regarding the number of affirmative votes needed to close a school - is the percentage based on just the votes cast in the affected town, or in the overall district?

A: The overall district. The Articles of Agreement require two-thirds of the voters of the district to approve a change. It does not require a majority or more of each affected town to vote to approve a potential change.

Q: Can you show us the break down for the cost of each building, repairs, upkeep, maintenance etc.? Included in this also, staffing, janitorial staff, food services, IT staff having to work at each location, specials teachers going from school to school etc.

A: Prismatic is looking at all of these cost components and will be including them in its report.

Q: Even though the census appears lower in some of the elementary schools, a class with over 15 students makes it real difficult to get 1:1 time with a student to help learn their needs and participate in facilitating learning.

A: The State of New Hampshire allows class sizes up to 25 students for grades K-2 but encourages classes of not more than 20. The state allows class sizes up to 30 students for grades 3-5 but encourages classes of not more than 25 (Ed 306.17). The average class size for grades 1 and 2 in 2021-22 in NH was 15.4, with a median of 15.9. Only 7 schools statewide reported grade 1-2 class sizes greater than 20 (as reported by NHDOE).

While class size may have an impact, other factors such as collective teacher efficacy, instructional strategies, and curriculum alignment have been shown to have a greater impact on student achievement.

Q: Why are there so few educators at your company? While you boast a "team that has been there," most of you are experienced in busing and food service, with as many corrections officers as educators. There seems to be a real bias within your company, and our kids should NOT suffer from that!

A: Prismatic does have safety and security consultants with backgrounds in K-12 on its roster. None are "corrections officers." Moreover, none of our safety/security consultants were assigned to this project. Our team on this project included 8 education consulting professionals with many decades of experience in administering, researching, assessing, coalition building, and implementing audits in a variety of K-12 environments. Our team has "been there, done that" in large and small districts as former teachers, principals, administrators, and superintendents. Specifically, our ConVal Reconfiguration team included:

- ◆ Prismatic's president, who has managed the majority of Prismatic's 300+ projects since its founding in 2007.
- ◆ A former superintendent of a mid-sized school district (~19,000 students) and special education expert who has been a Prismatic consultant since 2010.
- ◆ A former teacher, principal, and district administrator in a mid-sized school district (~21,000 students) who has been Prismatic's primary regular education expert since 2022.
- ◆ An architect with 50+ years of experience who has worked on Prismatic projects in 15+ states, including facilities master planning for Lebanon School District (NH).
- ◆ A school transportation expert who has been a transportation director in multiple New York school districts, managing operations in large, urban and small, rural environments, as well as a Prismatic consultant since 2020.

- ◆ A school nutrition expert who is the past president of the national School Nutrition Association, the former director of student nutrition in Denver Public Schools (CO), the recipient of numerous industry awards, and a Prismatic consultant since 2013.
- ◆ A CPA who previously served the Texas Legislature as a manager of that state’s School Performance Review program and who has been a Prismatic consultant since 2010.

All have worked on Prismatic projects for districts of similar size to ConVal. The consulting team is supported by a team of analysts.

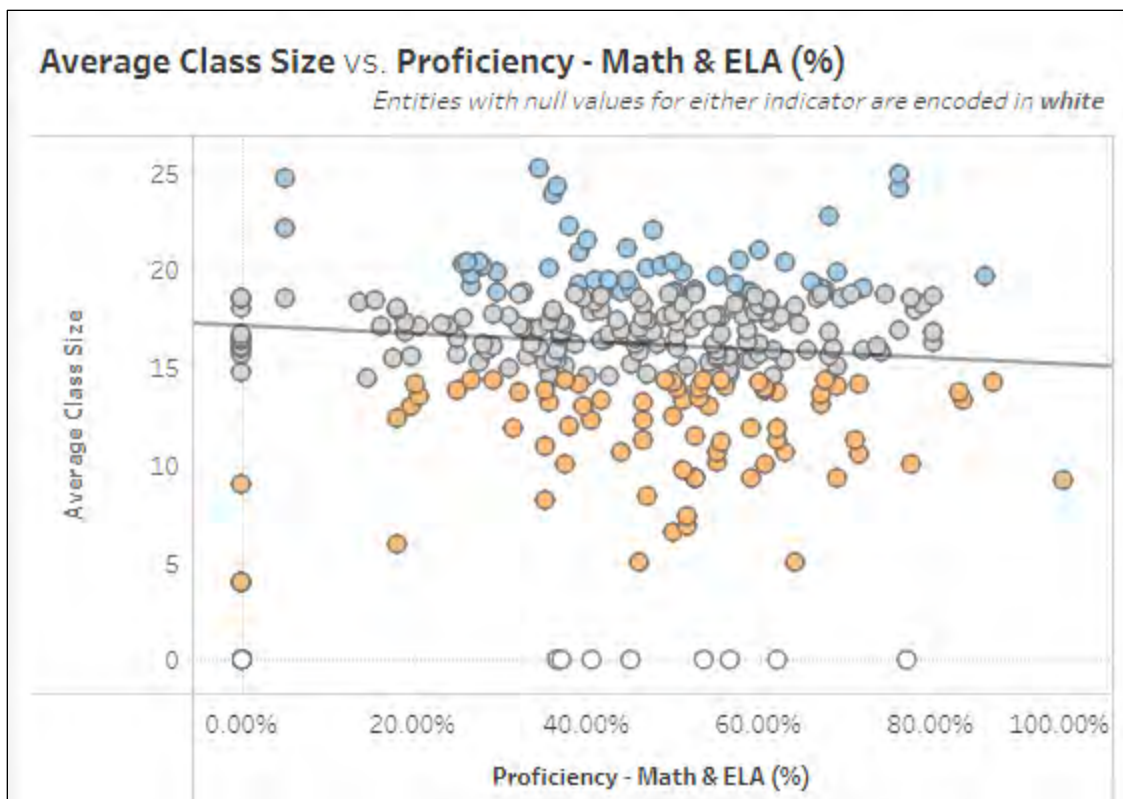
As for “bias”, that is not a Prismatic value.

Q: Both Peterborough and Frankestown have much better scores than the other schools. What are teachers doing there that is not happening in the rest of the district?

A: At Peterborough, one piece of the answer may be the ability for teachers to talk with other teachers regularly and in a structured way. When there are multiple teachers at the same grade level, teachers can collaborate with same grade colleagues to align the curriculum and practices vertically and horizontally. Collaboration via professional learning communities allow gaps in learning to be identified and instructional adjustments made. Teachers can also share instructional, behavioral, and management strategies and resources on an as needed basis when in the same building. Real-time mentoring for new staff is also much more accessible in schools with multiple classrooms per grade level. Teachers in smaller schools tend to be more isolated and without the same kinds of interaction opportunities.

Q: I feel like we end up in the same conflict with this discussion. What does the academic data show? For a district that combined, what are the academic and social outcomes? For a school with 40 kids, what are they missing? I'm curious what the best practices can offer since there is a lot of emotion in these decisions (losing a school building is hard, having your kid's academics suffer to keep a building open is hard).

A: Prismatic absolutely agrees that just about any change is hard and emotions tend to run high when change is being discussed. Prismatic’s experience has been that changes in a district are typically more difficult for the adults in the community than the students. As to questions about academics, NHDOE has some great tools. Here is a chart of elementary class size and the results of 2021-22 math and ELA proficiency rates. Note how there are high levels of performance among elementary school students with lower and higher class sizes. The reverse is also true: Low levels of performance among elementary school students with lower and higher class sizes.



Source: <https://dashboard.nh.gov/t/DOE/views/iExplore/Explore-Dashboard?%3Aembed=y&%3Aiid=2&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Atabs=no&%3Atoolbar=no>

Q: What is the point of displaying Lionheart proficiency levels?

A: Prismatic included those results because several residents who participated in the Town Meetings expressed a desire for the ConVal district to be more like Lionheart, so we dug up the recent academic results for that school while gathering the same for the district. They are presented here as a point of peer comparison. Prismatic will provide other peer comparisons in its report.

Q: Is it possible to close any schools without modifying the articles of agreement?

A: It is not possible to close any ConVal elementary school without a vote to modify the Articles of Agreement. This is true even if the enrollment of a particular elementary school drops to zero – the Articles of Agreement would require ConVal to keep an empty school open.

Q: Do you believe test scores are the only way to measure a "quality education"?

A: Of course not, but they are a decent yardstick by which to compare the results of efforts by various entities (schools, districts) in a way that is generally “apples to apples”. Test scores allow comparison of how ConVal students are performing against students in NH as a whole. It is important to ensure

students in ConVal are as prepared as other NH students since they will be competing with them for college admissions and jobs in the future. As part of this project, Prismatic has had both a regular education expert and a special education expert review ConVal documents, interview district leaders and principals, hold focus groups with teachers, and make classroom observations. Those pieces help us to understand how ConVal is getting the student academic results it is getting.

Q: How many families from outside of Peterborough choose to send their students to PES? Is there any data on why those families chose PES (ex: special education services, nursing services, etc...?) Are there requests to send kids to PES that are currently being denied? Also curious in reverse- how many families from Peterborough (or Antrim) get permission to send their students to a "small(er)" school?

A: Prismatic does not have this information.

Q: Will the public be invited to watch or sit in on your presentation of your findings with the school board or will this be a closed meeting. Even over Zoom will the public be allowed to hear your presentation?

A: School board meetings are public meetings.

Q: What is the time frame for your data collection and information gathering? My understanding is the board is hoping to have something to vote on by March, how is it even possible to gather everything you need in such a short amount of time?

A: This project began in June 2023. Prismatic began collecting data from the district and other sources in July 2023. The final report will be delivered to the school board in December 2023. That will provide the district with time to prepare for March 2024, if a recommendation is made that requires a vote.

Q: Who designs and creates the questions on the surveys? Is it you or the School Board? I ask this because they feel like they have one agenda and aren't covering a greater spectrum of information gathering.

A: Prismatic developed the survey questions after initial review of background data, then reviewed them with district staff prior to launch.

Q: Schools need funding and are the back-bone of the local communities in the smaller towns. I see no mention of funding data or options to increasing funds, only adjustments suggested based on funding levels decreasing. The result is both the previous meetings in each town and this survey present very limited options because they do not address the whole issue. This is especially true in the ranking options which could falsely make unfavorable options appear popular. When will the financial

considerations that are crucial to the options suggested be presented? Why is this consulting group not presenting these crucial data to share a comprehensive picture?

A: Prismatic is analyzing the financial (and other) implications of a variety of potential options. We do not have those data ready yet. Finding ways to increase funding for the district was not within the scope of this project.

Q: How do you get your data? where did it come from?

A: Data have been gathered from a variety of sources, including the school district, the state department of education, and peer districts. Data have been gathered via extant document collection, interview, focus group, survey, and observation.

Q: Your enrollment numbers are not accurate DCS had 57 students and the school board meeting minutes reflect this. Will this data be updated?

A: The School Board minutes of May 2, 2023, show 61 as the enrollment for DCS.

Q: Do you look at the charter schools in the area and the impact that they have on our district number? What are they offering that we are not?

A: Based on input from the Town Meetings, Prismatic has pulled some performance data for one of the area charter schools. Some of that has been provided here.

Q: Besides test scores, enrollment, and cost per student what else are you taking into account?

A: Education quality, equity across schools, bus ride times, social-emotional development impacts, availability of support services (nurses, counselors, Special Education services), access to special classes (art, music, PE, library).

Q: Who is supplying you with the data you are using? How was the data collected?

A: Data have been gathered from a variety of sources, including the school district, the state department of education, and peer districts. Data have been gathered via extant document collection, interview, focus group, survey, and observation.

Q: Is the development of our children’s sense of community important? Is it being reflected in this study?

A: This component was not included in the scope of work for this project, perhaps because assessing that would be difficult, as would defining “sense of community.”

Q: Is the apportionment formula being looked at?

A: If you are referring to the state funding process, no, that is outside the scope of this project. If you are referring to how individual ConVal schools are budgeted, yes.

Q: Do you compare our school district to surrounding districts in the state? Such as looking at similar demographics, geographical layout, population, and numbers?

A: Yes.

Q: Does enrollment include preschool programs according to the school board meeting on May 2, 2023, Hancock had 70 students 13 of which were preschoolers. That brings Hancock down to 57 students by the end of the year DCS had 61 students without a preschool according to the May 2, 2023, numbers. are any of those numbers being taken into account when looking at which schools to consolidate or are you only looking at the first day of school numbers? And with preschools not being in every school is it really fair to include them when some of those students will not remain in those schools

A: The enrollment figures shown in the Online Forum include PreK students. Yes, Prismatic has the grade-level data.

Q: Do you look at each towns demographics such as aging population, real estate and housing, education level of residents, socio economic status etc.? I ask this because for example when we focus on student enrollment Dublin is a town where many homes are seasonal and the population is older therefore by default would have less school age children than a town that has a younger population. Also in towns that would be considered more affluent some families may choose to send their children to private schools such as the Well School, Mountain Shadows, High Mowing, Dublin School, Dublin Christian Academy. Does your team take into consideration that there are several alternative schooling options for such a small area? Do you look at why so many residents choose to send their children to these schools over the public school? What are they offering that ConVal is not? Is consolidation the answer and would that really attract more families to this area, and would parents want to send their child on a bus further away to a public school when they could choose to drive them and send them to a private school or charter school.

A: Local demographics are part of the data collected. Determining why families might choose alternative schooling arrangements is not within the scope of this project.

Q: If students were to be shifted to other buildings what would be involved in getting those spaces up and running to accommodate those students? for example teachers would have to be moved around, class sizes would increase causing a possible need for renovations to the building. Our taxes would not go down if renovations of any building regardless of consolidation or not because between construction costs, materials, time and displacement during that process the school district budget would be increased. The ES have had modifications, and work done over the past 6 years what were those costs compared to what it would cost to close schools and move students into other buildings.

A: To the first question, those impacts are being analyzed as options are being considered. To the second question, the costs of closing and mothballing facilities are being analyzed as options are being considered. Any previous expenditures to maintain or renovate facilities are sunk costs.

Q: If you have a few outliers, that data should be excluded from the final numbers to give you an accurate picture of the majority of the population. You can manipulate data to persuade people one way or another, it is all about how you interpret the results. Is this being done or are those outliers being included in the final numbers? And if they are not being excluded why not?

A: Prismatic does not manipulate data.

**Q: Can you give some financial data on how different scenarios would affect the total cost for ConVal?
EX: What would closing 2 schools do? What would consolidating Middle School to one do? It's really hard to "vote" or even express opinions on the matter without more concrete information on the outcome.**

A: Prismatic is currently working on those pieces, including assessing the costs (and savings) from possible changes in facilities, transportation, food services, and staffing. We do not have those data ready yet.

Q: What has PES cut? They take lots of field trips and have art and music and wellness and a great library, and several community organizations partner with the school... they also have small class sizes. What did they have before that they don't have now?

A: In general, Peterborough Elementary School has larger class sizes than the other ConVal elementary schools.

Q: Can the school board guarantee a maximum student-teacher ratio? How will parents be sure that neither students nor teachers will be more burdened than in the current configuration?

A: The school board could choose to adopt student-teacher ratio guidelines.

Q: What is the value to a town, parents, children, teachers? We tend not to assign a dollar value to the things that really matter.

A: Through the ConVal RFP, Prismatic has been charged with answering the question, “What is Best For the ConVal Students and Taxpayers?” Answering the first part of that question requires assessing things outside of dollars.

Q: The school boards goal is to save money. Will this translate to tax payer savings? Probably not.

A: According to the ConVal RFP, the school board’s goal on this project is to “bring a viable conclusion to the question, ‘What is Best For the ConVal Students and Taxpayers?’”

If a recommendation is developed (and adopted) on the basis of this project that reduces the ConVal district budget, that could translate to taxpayer savings.

Q: If the goal is truly reconfiguration the why not adjust catchment areas and add students to smaller schools for more equal distribution?

A: The 2022-23 enrollment across the 8 elementary schools was 762, including PreK students (May 2023 data included in ConVal board minutes). Depending on how you calculate the capacity of the 8 schools (architectural design, state-mandated class sizes, state-encouraged class sizes, average peer class sizes, etc.), the student capacity of the 8 elementary schools exceeds 1,300. The projections for the next 5 years are that the enrollment will only increase slightly, and the longer-term projections indicate the same, barring any disruptions, such as the construction of a massive new subdivision that brings 200 new families to the area.

If the district simply spreads the elementary students across the 1,300+ seats, each school will still be only slightly more than half full. Running a facility twice the needed size has a cost. Running classes with fewer students has a cost. Running half-empty buses has a cost.

Q: Students just so many widgets to be shifted around to get better numbers on a spreadsheet?

A: Absolutely not.

Q: What exactly would be the impact of consolidating a few elementary schools on \$54 million budget?

A: Prismatic is still working to assess the potential savings (and costs) of multiple options. We do not have those data ready yet.

Q: What would happen to the empty buildings? if the towns do not want them back and a buyer is not found the district will have to continue to maintain the building correct? If the town wanted the building and did agree to take it back how would this lower taxes when the money would only be redirected to cover the building and maintenance costs.

A: Determining the future of any buildings that might no longer be needed is beyond the scope of Prismatic’s work. Prismatic has determined that all of the ConVal elementary buildings are generally in good repair and have been maintained, so they do have potential to continue to serve their communities in other capacities, if desired.

The potential cost savings from the district no longer having to maintain a building is only one potential cost savings.

Q: Where can we find the results of this study?

A: Prismatic’s work will not be completed until December 20th.

Input from Constituents

The 2022-23 student assessment data (right) do not seem to indicate a relationship between smaller schools and better student achievement. What are your thoughts?

- ◆ *I agree that there is no clear relationship between smaller schools and better student achievement. It would be helpful, also, to see average class sizes. I know that in Peterborough, the town with the largest elementary school, class sizes still remain relatively small. My child, for instance, is in a kindergarten class which has only 11 students. Small class size is important. I don't believe that extremely small school sizes are beneficial. There is a sweet spot in which a school is small enough for a student to feel known and not lost in the shuffle, but large enough to provide a vibrant school community with many opportunities. I think that PES, even as the largest elementary school, falls into that sweet spot.*
- ◆ *How can you compare school scores with varying classes with the same test? Just the class size alone would be comparing apples to oranges. How is the data gathered and compared as even the mean score would not be accurate.*
- ◆ *We should combine as many of the elementary schools as we can. No grade level should have fewer than 15 students in it.*
- ◆ *There are more layers than are listed here when it comes to student achievement. For example, what is the percentage of students with IEPs at each school? What percentage of students qualify for free and reduced lunch? I would imagine we'd see more correlation with those numbers than class size.*
- ◆ *There is more to a quality education than test scores can show or represent*
- ◆ *We are losing quality educators because of the demands of increase in class size along with many other demands. Teacher burnout is at an all time high. Not looking at the bigger picture of the education field in general is a mistake.*
- ◆ *Class sizes in the ConVal elementary schools have strict caps. If we were to look at the education field in general we would find that ConVal elementary schools have tiny class sizes in the grand scheme of things. Even the largest elementary school is also tiny in the grand scheme of things.*

Large class sizes are not causing ConVal elementary school teachers to burn out. An absurd obsession with assessments and corporatized curricula certainly contribute to burnout.

- ◆ *I left the profession as a "highly qualified educator" (Masters degree, 10 plus years experience, Teacher of the Year award winner, etc) and I agree that an obsession with assessments contributes to teacher burnout and corporatized curricula. It appears however this is the only tool being used to show school performance.*
- ◆ *You can't say that because one of the small schools has relatively high test scores that there is a clear relationship between smaller schools and better student achievement. Consider the low scores at some of the other small schools, and, importantly, consider the fact that Frankestown tested 16 children and Peterborough tested 91. Such a small number is easily affected by a small number of high- or low-performers. We also need to know a lot more about the population of students tested, and, frankly, about these assessments.*
- ◆ *How is that possible, when one of the smaller schools, Frankestown, has the best score. Seems there is a direct relationship between size and results.*
- ◆ *Nonsense! Most educational research shows that smaller elementary schools produce better educational results throughout school! And Frankestown (2nd smallest school) has the highest scores in Conval district!*
- ◆ *What are the top measures for student achievement? I recall parent participation as a big factor, but what else?*
- ◆ *No doubt, but let's define "larger." There are caps and some classes are very small. I believe all Kindergarten classes this year are in the 10/11 range.*

The 2022-23 financial data (left) show a wide variation in the cost per student at the school level. What are your thoughts?

- ◆ *I think we can try to close this gap but I think this is just a reality and things are never going to be entirely equitable. We are in Peterborough, the town with the smallest per-pupil cost, but I really feel for parents in the smaller towns who do not want their children to leave town to go to elementary school. That is a very valid concern. Concerns over somewhat larger schools are, I think, often rooted in lack of experience with a larger school. Larger schools can offer a lot of opportunities and a vibrant culture. Still, I was pretty shocked at some of the proposed reconfigurations in the survey. I do NOT want to destroy the elementary school experience by reducing the number of schools to 2 or even 2-4 and I don't believe most voters would go for that.*
- ◆ *Don't really get the colors thing, but I am a Peterborough resident. Look, we can't go on as 9 towns paying ever-increasing costs for what we're not using. At the same time, having a local elementary in each of 8 towns clearly benefits the towns as well as the students. Sure, there are educational advantages to be gained by scale, but they can also be lost in scale. I happen to think that bringing together kids from 9 towns later rather than sooner is a good thing, as it provides for diversity of thought and experience as the middle and high school stages. To me—although it would be complicated and expensive to have an outside party figure out—the answer is to have taxpayers in towns with longtime under-used schools be given the option of paying a little more, on a town by town basis, to keep their school open. Not 100% of the difference but, say, 50%, inasmuch as there is indeed benefit to the school district and region derived from having local schools. So, every year, a new 3-year lookback is done to determine average occupancy rate. Then the rates for the various scenarios are calculated: If the difference between full consolidation and keeping school A open is \$X, are the voters of town A willing to pay this*

extra. Same thing for school/town B. Etc. Of course, this gets complicated, since towns A, B, and C may want to stay open and the rest may vote to close. But there should be some way that the voters in each town can be presented with a choice: Are you willing to pay between \$X1 and \$X2 more than other district taxpayers to keep your school open? If this is illegal, then get our reps to introduce a special bill. Education is the real world, and in the real world, if you expect extra benefit, you expect to pay extra for it. Challenge solved! You're welcome! :)

- ◆ *The proposed restructuring plan of elementary schools is not one I would support in any way. If the change to 2 or even 4 schools were to happen I would move all 3 of my children out of district. An elementary school within a town is an attraction.*
- ◆ *That's a lot of money for Peterborough to pay out to other towns . . .*
- ◆ *I think that as a whole people don't like change. I also think that it's pretty eyeopening to see how much more per student it costs for several of the smaller schools. It's a higher cost for an equivalent education (I won't say equal because that's not my experience with the district). Smaller schools don't necessarily mean more academic, social, or emotional supports.*
- ◆ *Aren't there many more issues then financial when dealing with closure? What about safety, social aspects, community wants, control etc?*
- ◆ *I would rather combine elementary schools and keep vibrant enrichment in all grades then pay for buildings - all the building maintenance and upkeep means that there is less money for staff and programs.*
- ◆ *Cost/student should be uniform across grade levels.*
- ◆ *33K per student at Temple is outrageous!, particularly when you look at their test scores. Time to merge Temple with another school. Those students would do well to go to Peterborough or Greenfield*
- ◆ *Lets combine tiny towns before we ask PES to absorb more students from out of town. Sharon students already attend PES.*
- ◆ *The chart displayed is for a point in time. Is it possible to show historical trends in this data (past 5-10 years) as compared to student enrollment over this same timeframe?*
- ◆ *The rate difference in Temple is concerning, that is significant. Aside from that I think it would be helpful to see spending comparisons across several years and how spending is broken down. In some of these schools there are high rates of poverty and greater student needs, thus the spending per student is greater. You also may have a building with younger newer staff that will inherently cost less than a building with a majority of teachers with 20 years of experience. There is also the flip side of the cost of losing a town's elementary school. What does that do to property values, etc...?*
- ◆ *When I compare PES and TES that's approx \$10,000 more per student, and while that isn't insignificant it's not clear to me how significant the saving of closing that school would be? We're talking roughly \$400,000 dollars. What's the cost of bussing these students elsewhere? Maintaining the building. What's the cost to the community if they lose their school?*
- ◆ *Perfect should not be the enemy of the good. Fixed costs are the problem. Plus the geographic distribution makes it costly to provide support to younger or temporary teachers, deliver special ed services and resource teachers. I suspect this lies at the heart of the performance issues in the smaller schools and that would mean those students are cheated. I am retired and this has nothing to do with my taxes. I am a strong supporter of Public Education and am willing to pay whatever it takes for the community to provide the BEST educational opportunities for our children. Someone else paid for MY education. It is part of being a member of a community. As is looking realistically at how many ES's we can afford without depriving ALL students of the education they desire!*

- ◆ *How much of those costs are fixed and how much related to student costs. Has the district looked at reducing costs at all schools, increasing class size, sharing with otehr district schools, adapting expenses for those smaller schools to reduce costs. Just because the cost is less does not mean the education is better!*
- ◆ *The overall tax rates you cite combine municipal, county, state education, and local education tax rates. The rates are based on the amount of money needed to be raised for all of those things, and on the valuation of properties in town. Valuation differs widely and different towns are on different revaluation cycles. With respect, this is not a meaningful comparison.*
- ◆ *Interesting that residents of Francestown (a small school) pays the same property tax rate (\$25.89) as those in Peterborough (\$25.86), a much larger elementary school with more resources for its students. And Francestown students test higher. Small schools work AND save money in the long run (requiring less remediation in later grades)!*
- ◆ *I dont think you can expect the cost to ever be equal across sites, but it could be closer between buildings if that is a goal. Is closer at a lower number the goal? A quick google shows ~\$19K is the current NH average per pupil but is that ideal or is that too low?*
- ◆ *How does the preschools play into this? I know there is a huge demand for childcare in the area. I feel this would fill a void and could produce an income source.*
- ◆ *I'm curious to know if anyone has done any modeling with respect to potential school closures and subsequent population shifts. If there is data, can that be shared?*
- ◆ *I don't think the schools will even reach full equity. I think each school offers its students something different that another does not. If we consider extras only one school in the district offers a ski program, while others have after school programs. Some schools offer field trips and presentors are able to come in more frequently. Specialty programs that the smaller schools get the larger schools cannot just due to size such as the circus. So while equity is great in theory it will never fully be achieved. I think it is unrealistic to expect that and instead we should be looking at what our students are being offered. Those enrichment opporutnities only add to their education and by consolidating I believe you will be causing even less of these opportunities.*
- ◆ *This comment about pre-school (and general childcare) is an excellent idea that seems not to have been explored*
- ◆ *Why is there such a discrepancy in cost per student?*
- ◆ *What are some advantages of larger schools and what benefits can we expect for our students. I am less concerned with test scores and more interested in student enrichment and social emotional wellness.*