

APPENDIX 2: Ayer, Lunenburg Shirley Educational Program Study

In November, 2007 the Regionalization Board contracted with NESDEC to complete a fiscal study regarding the advisability of regionalization among the communities of Ayer, Lunenburg, and Shirley. A study of the educational programs of these districts was not part of the NESDEC contract. As a result, the Superintendents of the three communities recommended that they and district personnel complete the educational program study to assist the Regional Planning Board in fulfilling its specific duty “to study the fiscal and educational advisability of establishing a regional school district.” The Regionalization Board adopted the recommendations of the Superintendents and those results are contained within this report.

The Superintendents organized meetings of the following groups to discuss the issues related to the three school systems merging. The membership of each of those groups was as follows:

- Special Education – Russ Durling (A), Karen DeWitt (A), Jill Blaisdell (L), and Teri Babetski (S)
- Pre-School/Elementary – Rob Ackerman(A), Cyndy Daukantas (L), Christine Bonci (L), & Teri Babetski (S)
- Middle School – Keith Hochstein (L), Don Parker (A), Rich McGrath (S), Brian McDermott (S), Brian Hass (A), and Mac Reid (A)
- High School – Don Parker (A), Michael Barney (L), George Frost (A), & Loxi Jo Calmes (L) Department Heads from the two high schools and Karen Martin (L), Brian McDermott (S) and Brian Haas (A) also met and contributed to the high school survey.
- Facilities – John Londa (L), Ed Davis (A), & Allan Wilson (S)

Following are executive summaries written by the superintendents for each of the above areas and the survey grids completed by the participants along with the benefits and challenges, barriers or obstacles to regionalization as identified by each group.

Executive Summary: Curriculum and Instruction

Student performance in each of the districts as measured by state assessments (MCAS) indicates that in English/Language Arts the districts are rated as High to Very High. There are more differences in mathematics performance however with ratings from Moderate to High. Districts are achieving the annual yearly performance targets established within the state accountability system. The performance of students on MCAS in the early grades is fairly similar in the elementary grades. However, differences in student performance do emerge at the middle school level and continue into high school.

The three districts' improvement efforts are governed by their strategic plans. All the plans contain a goal related to curriculum and instruction. The districts generally have similar numbers of professional development days each year (Shirley does have two more full days). However, there are distinct differences in the capacities of each of the districts in organizing and supporting work in curriculum and instruction. As financial resources have diminished in Ayer and Shirley, professional development and curriculum work have been sacrificed. Lunenburg has maintained an aggressive professional development and instructional improvement effort. All three districts rely upon the administrative teams to lead this work. However, Lunenburg has a district-wide administrator (Instructional Services Director) whose responsibilities are isolated to professional development, curriculum review, and improving instructional practices within the district.

Ayer

In Ayer, there has been a major impetus around bullying prevention as the in-district approach on professional day usage for the past two school years, rather than curriculum review. Curriculum/Instruction initiatives have been school based. In light of this, Page Hilltop School has been focusing on infusing literacy based initiatives in the primary grades. The MS/HS has concentrated on the upcoming NEASC visit by completing the "self study" year. At the high school, for the 2007-2008 school year there has also been great interest in developing AP courses in the major disciplines.

From a pure curriculum/instruction perspective, the district undertook a major project in 2004-2007 which led to the development of K-12 Math and English Language Arts Outcomes. This year represents year two of the implementation of this outcomes-based approach. A Professional Development Committee was formed in the fall of 2007 to begin to plan a program which will focus on curriculum/instruction based offerings with emphasis on technology integration for this spring and next year.

Lunenburg

The Lunenburg district supports a professional learning community where collaborative teams engage in deep, substantive discussions about student learning on a regular basis through Results Teams. These teams meet one time per month during faculty meeting time. The teams use data to set goals, plan teaching strategies, and assess the results. This process ensures a regular review of student performance and effective teaching strategies.

A major professional development effort has been underway for the past six years in the district with teacher teams in each building developing units of instruction using an outcome driven design model

12/15/2009

called Understanding by Design. The district has also been developing common assessments at all levels and in all areas. The UBD units provide additional measures in non- MCAS subjects.

Lunenburg provides on-going and sustained professional development in a range of areas and strategies including Understanding by Design, mathematics, literacy, writing, Instructional Teaming, and courses for new and veteran teachers on classroom management and skillful teaching. There is a formal 10-year curriculum renewal schedule, which for each major content area includes professional development and program review.

Shirley

Summary

- ❖ Opportunities
 - An expanded talent pool of dedicated professionals who can enrich this work
- ❖ Challenges
 - Significant time and resources will be required to support professional development in all the schools to develop a common vision and language around curriculum and instructional efforts.
 - Lunenburg is vested in the framework they have developed. Much time will be required to negotiate a framework for improvement that is “the region’s framework.”

Executive Summary: Special Education

Each district provides a range of services and placements for students with disabilities as required by federal and state rules and regulations. The districts invest substantial dollars to educate students with disabilities both inside and out of district. In 2006 Ayer expended 2.4 million or 20.2 percent of its total budget for services to students with disabilities. That same year Lunenburg expended 2.3 million or 16.2 percent of its total budget, and Shirley expended 2 million or 27 percent of its total budget. The current year percent of students identified with disabilities is above the state average of 16.68 percent in Ayer (17.58) and Shirley (17.49) and below the state average in Lunenburg (13.97).

All three districts have undergone coordinated program reviews from the Massachusetts Department of Education in the past three years and received the following commendations:

AYER (Reviewed 2005)

- *Strong district-wide commitment to the concept of full inclusion*
- *Positive working environment for special education service providers*
- *Active parental participation*
- *Substantial coordination with and support for the collaborative program*

LUNENBURG (Reviewed 2007)

- *A philosophy of teaching and learning that is student centered*
- *The utilization of a variety of classroom teaching models*
- *Community involvement in the schools*
- *A community culture that is responsive to student needs*
- *The district extends itself to the maximum degree possible to meet the needs of students*
- *Strong Student Support Team and Child Study Team*
- *Strong professional development for all staff*
- *Strong district-wide administrative support for staff*
- *Positive approach to learning*
- *Recognition by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for outstanding achievement at the middle school level.*

SHIRLEY (Reviewed 2006)

- *Outstanding Title I program*
- *District-wide commitment to the concept of full inclusion*
- *Efforts to provide resources to meet the individual needs of special education students in-district*
- *A high level of substantial implementation of Special Education regulatory policies and requirements*

Each district provides integrated classrooms to meet the needs of children with disabilities ages 3-4 with similar schedules and enrollments. The districts each have a full-day, five-day, multi-age program for young children with severe to intense needs. These preschool programs are supported by the various specialists to provide appropriate related therapies. The districts also have substantially separate classrooms to serve students with autism, developmental delays, and social/emotional/behavioral

challenges. There is a difference in the philosophy among the districts as to the type and number of separate classrooms, particularly with regard to students with social/emotional/behavioral challenges.

In order to provide required services, the districts each employ special education teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and adjustment counselors. Ayer and Shirley contract for psychological testing services and Lunenburg employs one full-time psychologist district-wide. The districts all contract with FLLAC for physical therapy services. Ayer and Lunenburg employ and/or contract vision and mobility services. The three districts employ instructional tutors/aides to support student learning in general education classrooms and substantially separate programs. Certified occupational therapy assistants (COTAs) are employed by Lunenburg and Shirley. Shirley also employs a speech assistant.

Each district employs a director/coordinator responsible for ensuring compliance with special mandates and managing out-of-district placements. Administrative assistants (1.6 in Lunenburg) are employed in each district to process special education forms, reports, and IEPs and to support the director/coordinator. Ayer currently contracts with an outside consultant. The districts have different approaches in who assumes the administrative role in team meetings. In Ayer, the Director is the team chair; in Lunenburg, Principals or Assistant Principals chair the meetings in their respective buildings; Shirley employs a team leader.

The individual in the role of administrator at team meetings is indicative of one of the major differences in how students with disabilities are viewed and educated by the three districts. For the past decade, Lunenburg has focused on merging regular and special education programs. Special education teachers, aides, and tutors in Lunenburg are aligned with grade level teams K-8 and departments at the high school. Specialized services and substantially separate classrooms have been put in place to serve students with severe to intense needs. The approach has resulted in significantly few students needing placements outside the district. Currently seven students from Lunenburg are placed out-of-district at a total cost of \$425,026.

The special education administrators met with the consultant from Ayer to discuss the framework for special education in each of their respective districts. The benefits and challenges to regionalization identified by the group appear on the following page.

❖ **Benefits**

- Increased access to resources and services in-district for special education students
- Opportunities for more varied professional development

❖ **Challenges**

- Developing a shared philosophy and belief system in regard to special education and service delivery. Reaching agreement on such issues as inclusion, progress monitoring, shared responsibility, co-teaching, resource rooms, and Response to Intervention (RTI) standards will require time and effort.
- Increased financial burden to provide professional development as the districts begin to reach agreement on the critical issues above

Educational Program: Special Education

	Ayer	Lunenburg	Shirley
Structure of Programmatic Organization	<p>Full inclusion is the basis of Ayer’s special education philosophy. Given that, students are provided with everything from classroom support to full time residential placement depending upon individual needs. There is a basic belief among most teachers that the education of all students is a shared responsibility. Special educators and paraprofessionals provide small group and individual services in all academics. Flexible groups at the elementary level provide many students access to support for specific skills. Support is provided in an inclusion setting at the middle and high school levels. Specific high school classes are designated for support and tutorial classes allow for some small group instruction. There are four substantially separate classrooms designated for specific needs: Preschool-PDD, Elementary-academic support/behavior/anxiety, Middle and High-Life Skills.</p>	<p>Least restrictive to out of district programming provided with emphasis on “these are all of our children” and we provide programming here to the greatest extent possible, we provide instructional teaming at every level. We have one special education teacher and several tutors at each grade level to support students in the classroom. Philosophy- teachers have content expertise and all students should have access to this expertise, we reach more students by providing supports for students in the regular education setting, this allows for smaller flexible grouping opportunities in the classroom, more differentiation so that all students get what they need including the students in the upper third of a class.</p>	<p>The Shirley School District provides a variety of full inclusion, pull-out and substantially separate programs that are child specific. The majority of our programs can be described as inclusion. In addition we provide reading support services to children K – 8 for children with and without special needs. Teachers work in co-teaching models, pull-out services and TA classroom support. There is not a defined educational philosophy across the district although we are striving to identify and provide one philosophy. Teachers, specialists and paraprofessionals provide a combination of whole group lesson, small group and individual instruction.</p>
# Special Education Teachers	<p>Preschool Self-contained-1 PT integrated teacher/ECC Elementary One teacher each for grades</p>	<p>Primary School -6- (two preschool/ special education teachers, ½ time special education</p>	<p>Preschool Integrated (2), one three year old, one four year old (half day only) Multi-age Program</p>

	<p>K-5 Support classroom-1 Middle One teacher each for grades 6-8 One Life Skills teacher High Two teachers One Life Skills teacher</p>	<p>teacher at the Kindergarten level, one special education teacher for 1st and one for 2nd grade, one Achieve I teacher for grades K-2 Elementary School- 4- one at each grade level and an Achieve II teacher Middle School- 4- one at each grade level and one Achieve III teacher High School – 5- three special education teachers for Gr. 9-12 focus on Academic Support, Inclusion classes- all engaged in co-teaching, two Achieve IV teachers</p>	<p>(ages 3 & 4) full and half day programs Elementary One inclusion (grade 1-2), one inclusion (grade 3-4) One Kindergarten special educator One Life Skills (grades 2 – 5) One Resource room (grades 1 – 4) Various TAs (including 1:1) Middle School Three inclusion (grades 5 – 8) with 3 TAs One Behavior classroom (TLC) One PDD/Spectrum classroom</p>
<p># Specialist & Types</p>	<p>District Wide 2 Speech Therapists 1 Occupational Therapist Elementary 2 Adjustment Counselors Middle 1 Adjustment Counselor High 2 Guidance Counselors Contracted Services 1 Psychologist who is contracted for testing and initial meetings 1 FLLAC Contracted Physical Therapist who provides therapy one day per week 1 FLLAC Contracted Behavior Specialist who consults one day per week 1 FLLAC Vision Specialist who consults as needed 1 Counselor from Lipton who</p>	<p>Primary- 1.8- Speech Language therapist- 1-PK and K, .8 - 1st and 2nd grade Elementary – TVI- 12 hours week, 1- Speech Language Middle School-.6 – Speech Language High School- .2 Speech Language District Wide – School Psychologist, Counseling Services. Lipton Counseling services, We currently have a halftime Counselor/ Adjustment Counselor servicing the Primary school, full time counselor at</p>	<p>District Wide 1 School Psychologist 1 OT 1 COTA .4 PT (FLLAC contracted) 1 Speech Assistant Counseling services Herbert Lipton as needed Elementary 1.5 Speech/Language therapists 1 Guidance Counselor Middle .2 Speech-Language therapist/.8 Reading Specialist 1 Guidance Counselor</p>

	works one day per week	the Elementary school, equivalent of two counselors at the middle school, and the equivalent of three counselors at the High School- all counselors provide services for students requiring counseling services as stated on their IEP's Contracted Services - FLLAC - Physical Therapist- two days, Augmentative Speech and Language Therapist- two days, Orientation and Mobility Specialist. May Institute - Educational Consultant- ABA- Autism Specialist	
# Aides/Tutors	Ayer does not usually make a distinction between regular education and special education paraprofessionals. All paras work with all students, even those designated 1:1. Preschool 5 full time equivalents Elementary K: 4 classroom paras 1 one to one para 1-5: 1 para per grade level Three 1:1 1 FT and 1PT assigned to the inclusion support classroom 1 FT floating para does lunch/recess duty and assists where needed in second grade this year. Middle 6-8: 1 para per grade level	Beginning to blur the lines between regular and Special education we have used Special Ed tutors/aides, Title one tutors and Regular Education tutors to meet students' needs by making small timely flexible grouping opportunities in our classrooms. (mostly at the Primary and Elementary levels) - Total district wide-tutors/ aides Primary School- twelve tutors/nine aides- PK- four (two 1-1); Achieve I- six	The only 'regular' ed TAs are in Kindergarten, there are three full day classes with 1 teacher and 1 TA each. All other TAs are special education TAs. Preschool 6 FTE Elementary 8 FTE 4 FTE (1:1) Middle School 4 FTE 2 FTE Reading 1 FTE (1:1)

	<p>High 9-12: One academic para and one who does behavior monitoring/in house</p>	<p>(five 1-1) Home tutors-four K- five (3 teacher assistants, one 1-1), Gr.1- three, all 1-1, Gr.2-two (one 1-1) We also have one and a half Title one teachers at the Primary School Elementary- eight tutors/three aides Achieve II-three (one 1-1), Gr. 3- three (one 1-1, one 2-1), Gr. 4- three (one 1-1), Gr. 5- two (one 1-1) Middle School-nine tutors/two aides Achieve- three (one 1-1), Gr. 6- two, Gr. 7- four (two 1-1), Gr. 8 one and one half. High School- eight tutors/six aides/ one job coach- Achieve IV –seven (six 1-1), ACE-one job coach, one aide. Gr. 9-12 – five (three 1-1) – provide inclusion support and support in the Academic. Support Center</p>	
# Occupational Therapists	One full time Occupational Therapist serving the district	Servicing the District- one full time OT and 1 full time equivalent of a COTA	Stated above
# Central Office Staff & Type/Duty	<p>One Director of Special Education/Student Services/504 Coordinator</p> <p>One .6 Special Education Consultant</p> <p>One PT Early Childhd. Coor.</p>	<p>Student Services Coordinator- Coordination and Organization of Special Education Services in the district, monitor and coordinate</p>	<p>One Director of Special Education/Early Childhood & Grants Coordinator (responsible for high school and Out-of-districts)</p>

	<p>One Administrative Secretary who also processes Special Education paperwork and assists with scheduling meetings.</p>	<p>programming for out of district students (currently at seven students), Early Childhood Coordinator, Homeless Coordinator, 504 Coordinator; Special Education grants and CB funding- full time Administrative Secretary, .6 Secretary in charge of Processing Special Education paperwork.</p>	<p>One Administrative Assistant</p>
<p>Team Chairs</p>	<p>The Director is the team chair for all initials, reevaluations, and many annuals. The Director also attends all out-of-district meetings. The elementary building principal and assistant principal chair some annuals. Specific special education teachers chair some annuals.</p>	<p>Principals and Vice Principals are team chairs at all Special Education meetings for students in their buildings. –Principals also chair Student Support team meetings. Each building has a paid stipend position for a Process Coordinator. –the duty of the position is to schedule meetings with in the building.</p>	<p>One 1.0 FTE ETL (Pre K – 8)</p> <p>Chairs all meetings, coordinates testing, collects reports, coordinates liaisons, etc.</p>
<p>Specialized Programs & Descriptions</p>	<p>We have a full day preschool originally designed for students with PDD but now servicing a variety of students with severe needs.</p> <p>There is an inclusion support classroom at the elementary level that services students with behavior, anxiety, and stress related issues. At present the students are in grades 2 and 3.</p>	<p>We have services not programs Teams develop individual educational plans for students, no two look alike and are based on the individual educational, social, behavioral needs, Achieve I, II, II, IV- These programs were initially developed to assist with moving students back into the</p>	<p>Preschool- 2 integrated half day classrooms delineated by age 1 full (and half) day multi-age program – geared toward working parents</p> <p>Three full day Kindergartens (all children attend full day)</p> <p>Inclusion at LAW and</p>

	<p>At the middle level there is a classroom designated as Life Skills but it offers academic curriculum designed to meet the individual needs of the three seventh and one sixth grade boys.</p> <p>At the high school level there is a class that was designed this year for Life Skills but has an added component of providing academic support class for students having significant academic difficulties.</p>	<p>district from out of district programs. They are designed to provide intensive programming for students with significant special needs; this is not to say that students who receive services from these programs have the same services. Plans are individualized and students have varied inclusion opportunities – ACE. For students with significant needs who need vocational and life skills opportunities, it is unique in the fact that jobs are found for students in their local communities and the student keep those jobs when they age out at 22 Home Programming for Students on the Spectrum or who are exhibiting behavioral needs</p>	<p>SMS. Life Skills classroom at LAW. Resource Room at LAW. TLC room at SMS (behavioral focus) PDD/Spectrum at SMS All of our students choose to attend Lunenburg or Ayer High School. Also eligible to attend Nashoba Tech. Member of FLLAC</p>
<p>Preschool Program Number and Description</p>	<p>1 full day preschool class providing services to students with severe needs. One 5-day, one 3-day, and one 2-day integrated preschool classes. Each class meets for three hours in the morning.</p>	<p>Integrated and Intensive services provided - currently servicing 27 students.</p>	<p>State above serving 58 children- this number will increase as children age in from EI Tuesday – Friday , AM and PM sessions Mondays are for prep, testing, IEP meetings, home visits, screening, etc.</p>

12/15/2009

SPECIAL SERVICES – TOTAL ENROLLED

		PK	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+	Total	%
Ayer	# Students w/Disabilities	14	7	19	26	27	19	15	15	20	13	13	11	12	11	2	224	18
	# All Students	67	74	112	89	95	93	82	81	87	96	89	98	112	97	2	1,274	
Lunenburg	# Students w/Disabilities	30	13	15	17	19	24	16	22	18	15	13	15	15	17	3	252	14
	# All Students	68	97	112	131	120	128	123	138	138	138	144	146	161	159		1,803	
Shirley	# Students w/Disabilities	13	10	11	10	11	10	12	10	11	11	LHS & AHS have figures					109	17
	# All Students	59	62	69	68	55	66	54	67	67	56						623	

SPECIAL SERVICES – IN-DISTRICT

		1-Oct-07																
		PK	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+	Subtotal	Total
Ayer	Totally Included	6	5	19	19	13	15	10	10	11	11	4	8	9	9		149	
	Partially Included				3	7	1	4	3	4		2	2	2			28	
	Substantially Separate Classroom	6	1		2	3					4		2	1			19	196
Lunenburg	Totally Included	17	10	11	12	14	18	11	19	9	8	7	10	10	7	0	163	
	Partially Included	3	1	3	4	5	2	1	1	7	5	4	5	5	4	1	51	
	Substantially Separate Classroom	2			1	1	3	2			1	3		2	4	3	22	236
Shirley	Totally Included	3	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	4	4						33	
	Partially Included																0	
	Substantially Separate Classroom																0	33

Across grade levels:

- LAW Elementary School
 - 1 Life Skills class grades 2-5
 - 1 Resource room grades 1-4
- Shirley Middle School
 - 1 TLC (Behavior) class grades 5-8
 - 1 PDD/Spectrum class grades 5-8
- Lunenburg
 - 1 Substantially Separate Class

12/15/2009

at each building Primary-High School

SPECIAL SERVICES – DAY PROGRAMS

		28-Jan-08																
		PK	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+	subtotal	total
Ayer	Private Day School							1	2	1	1	1		1	1		8	
	Private Day Cost							\$53,807	\$104,158	\$61,725	\$49,984	\$31,919		\$0	\$49,984		\$351,576	
	Collaborative Day	2	1		2	4	3				1	4		1	1		19	27
	Collaborative Cost	\$34,879	\$35,412		\$69,758	\$125,839	\$105,170				\$34,879	\$147,994		\$52,883	\$38,000		\$644,814	\$996,390
Lunenburg	Private Day School									1	1		1	1	1		5	
	Private Day Cost									\$96,379	\$31,958		\$47,608	\$40,002	\$47,719		\$263,666	
	Collaborative Day											1					1	6
	Collaborative Cost											\$19,762					\$19,762	\$283,428
Shirley	Private Day School										1			1			2	
	Private Day Cost										\$31,658			\$49,984			\$81,642	
	Collaborative Day	1		1	1		1					2	1		2		9	11
	Collaborative Cost	\$32,318		\$45,892	\$125,936		\$34,876					\$66,178	\$17,438		\$86,760		\$409,398	\$491,040

12/15/2009

SPECIAL SERVICES – RESIDENTIAL

28-Jan-08

		PK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+	Total
Ayer	Residential School														2	2
	Residential Cost														\$478,129	\$478,129
Lunenburg	Residential School														1	1
	Residential Cost														\$141,598	\$141,598
Shirley	Residential School									1			1		1	3
	Residential Cost									\$115,880		\$76,853		\$ 62,265	254998	

12/15/2009

Executive Summary: Early Childhood & Elementary

Each of the three districts are organized a little differently: Ayer has pre-k to grade 5 located in one double elementary school; Lunenburg has a pre-k to grade 2 building and a grades 3 – 5 building; Shirley has pre-k programs at the Devens School and a grades K – 4 building. Class sizes range from under 20 in Shirley to low 20's in Ayer and the Primary School in Lunenburg to the mid-20's at the Lunenburg upper elementary level. Ayer and Shirley have free all-day kindergarten for all students. Lunenburg currently operates three full-day kindergarten classrooms (out of five classrooms) on a tuition basis at this time.

Curriculum materials and presentation varies:

- ELA
 - Reading - Ayer and Shirley appear to have more of a basal reading program, and Lunenburg utilizes guided reading strategy with leveled trade books including Junior Great Books; all have Wilson instruction and utilize Foundations, although this is being less used with a new Scott-Foresman literacy program.
 - Writing – Ayer does quarterly writing assessments, Shirley utilizes an integrated literacy program from Scott Foresman. Reading, writing, spelling and grammar are all components of the program. And Lunenburg bases instruction on the Six Traits Writing Program and is developing word study program which integrates vocabulary and spelling skill.
- Math – Ayer and Lunenburg use Everyday Math and Shirley uses Scott-Foresman; all have regular assessments.
- Science – Ayer and Shirley science curriculum is based upon teacher developed units up through grade 3 in Shirley and Grade 4 in Ayer. Lunenburg utilizes various STC kits in all grades.
- Social Studies – No K – 2 texts in Lunenburg. Standards and instruction are integrated with ELA instruction through commonly developed Understanding by Design units; all other systems and elementary schools use texts.

All systems utilize the Responsive Classroom to varying degrees. Shirley also uses the Second Step Program to support the social-emotional needs of students; all schools have a form of a child study team. Lunenburg also supports students through their GEMS curriculum. Each system has Guidance, Nursing, and Psychological services.

For Special Education services, Ayer and Shirley have a combination of inclusion and pull-out programs; Lunenburg is more oriented to the inclusion model, but has in each of its schools a substantially separate program for students with severe to intense needs. All systems pull out students for OT, PT and Speech/Language skills.

Average daily attendance figures for each system are in the mid-90's percent.

Students in each system have Music, Art and Physical Education (& Health) and Library every week; Ayer and Lunenburg also provide specific Technology instruction.

All schools have a full-time Principal. Ayer also has an Assistant Principal. Each school has an Administrative Assistant and Ayer has two. The number of general education classroom teachers is

12/15/2009

dependent on the number of students – Ayer (29), Lunenburg (32) and Shirley (18). Average class-size for elementary students ranges from 18-23 in Ayer, 18-25 in Lunenburg and 17-22 in Shirley. Numbers of other support staff are relative based on the total number of students served.

The Pre-school/Elementary staff concluded the following benefits to regionalization:

- [Enhanced] programs for special education students
- PD district-wide for those singletons for which it is hard to provide a PD program (OT, S/L) because there are so few of them
- Being able to offer a more diversified program at the elementary level

The challenges, barriers, and obstacles to regionalization that they noted:

- Union/other contracts
- Educational philosophies – aligning them
- Bus contracts
- Parents (losing control)

Educational Program: Early Childhood & Elementary

	Ayer	Lunenburg Primary	Lunenburg Elementary	Shirley
Grades Served	Preschool-Gr 5	Pre-K – grade 2	3,4 and 5	K-4
Total Enrollment	609	Total 426	374	335
Class Size	K- 18 Gr 1- 22-23 Gr 2- 22 Gr 3- 22-23 Gr 4- 23 Gr 5- 20-21	Kdg - 18-20 (kdg does have 1 aide per classroom) Gr. 1 – 19-20 Gr. 2 - 22-23 Nothing in teachers' contract that speaks to specific class sizes	Gr 3 – 24 total 120 (5 sections) Gr 4 – 22 total 128 (6 sections) Gr 5 – 25 total 124 (5 sections)	Kdg -62 Gr 1 - 69 Gr 2 - 68 Gr 3 - 55 Gr 4 - 66
ELA Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used	Open Court Quarterly Writing Assessment Wilson Foundations (K-1)	Trade books using guided reading strategies Gr. 2 does use HM anthology for <u>some</u> units Junior Great Books Six Traits Writing Program/Lucy Calkins (combined for grade 1) Integrated Soc. Studies into ELA UBD units Wilson for identified students Foundations – Gr. 1 Title I	Guided Reading Junior Great Books Six Traits Writing Word Study Novel Study Integrated Novels (Science/social Studies) UbD units Results Driven Decision Making	Guided Reading Foundations Scott Foresman Rdg. Program (new) DIBELS Writing Prompts (3) STARS (Steps too Achieve. Reading Success)
Math Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Everyday Math Common Quarterly Assessments	Everyday Math Program Common Quarterly math assessments – teacher developed based upon standards UBD units	Everyday Math Common Assessments UbD units Results Driven Decision Making	Scott Foresman Accelerated Math (new)
Science Instruction Methodology	Minimal Resources except Gr. 5	STC kits –Gr. 2 Gr. 1 doesn't do much beyond	UbD units Gr 3 Rocks and Minerals and	Teacher – made units Gr. 4 Scott Foresman

and Programs Used		weather No textbooks	Plants Gr 4 Electricity- Magnets-Habitats Gr 5 Micro- organisms-small machines-weather	
Social Studies Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Old Textbooks Gr 3&4	No textbooks Integrated into ELA	UbD units Gr 3 Mass:Colonial times:Revolution Gr 4 Regions of the US Immigration Gr 5 Mayans, Aztecs, Incas: Westward Expansion (History Alive)	Gr 3 Mass text Gr 4 US Regions
Social-Emotional Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Some responsive classrooms	Pyramid of Success Gems Curriculum Responsive Classroom Child Study Process	Pyramid of Success GEMS curriculum Responsive Classroom Child Study Process	Second Step (guide) Responsive Classroom Student Study Team
Inclusion Practices	Both inclusion and pullout	Children are integrated for what they can handle. Sp/Ig and OT/PT are totally pull-out Instructional teaming at grade 1 and 2 only	Total inclusion except for sp/lang and OT/PT Instructional Teams/Co-teaching differentiation	Resource Room Life Skills
Attendance Rate for December, 2007	94%	95%	96%	
# General Education Teachers	29	16 - Kdg - 4 teachers; grade 1 - 6 teachers; grade 2 - 6 teachers	16	18
# Special Education Teachers	6 inclusion 1 behavior specialist	5.5 - Pre-K - 2 teachers; Kdg - .5; grade 1 - 1 ; grade 2 - 1 Achieve (intense) - 1	3 Inclusion teachers 1 achieve teacher Sp/lang therapist .25 FTE OT PT contracted	3 inclusion Teachers

		teacher	.5 Vision Specialist Vision Specialist contr.	
# Special Area Teachers & Types	Art Music PE Health Technology Library	Music - .5 Art - .5 (shared w/ TCP) PE & Health – 1 Library – tutor (15 hr/wk)	PE 1 FTE (2TPW – 35 min) Music - .6FTE (shared staff) Gr 3&4 1TPW – 50 min Art - .9FTE (shared staff) Gr 3&4 1 TPW 50min Gr 5 -1/2 yr. 35 min Technology - .3 FTE Gr 3&4 ½ yr 1TPW 35 min Gr 5 1 TPW 35 min Health - .3 FTE Gr 3&4 ½ yr 1TPW 35 min Gr 5 1TPW 35 min Latin - .1 FTE Gr 5 ½ yr 1TPW 35 min	PE 1 x 45/week Music .5 FTE (shared) Art .5 FTE Technology – no Health – no Latin - no
# Aides/Tutors	Preschool 7 Kdg 4 1:1 7 1 SpEd aide per grade level	9.5 - 1:1 - 4 FTE Kdg – 4 aides (1 for each room) spec. ed - 1 @ grade 2 only title I - .5 (grade 1 only)	Aides – 3 FTE Tutors – 8.5 FTE	
Other Specialists – Number, Type, & FTE (Guidance .5, Nurse 1.0, Psychologist .25)	2 guidance 2 sp/lang 1 OT 2 Reading 1 Nurse PT contracted .5 psychologist district wide	.5 guidance counselor (shared with high school) 2 sp/language therapist .25 psychologist (district-wide) .5 reading teacher –	1 Guidance 1 Nurse .25 Psychologist	

		gr. 1 only .25 OT therapist .25 COTA 1 nurse		
# Building Administrators	1 Principal 1 Asst. Principal	1 Principal	1 Principal	
Administrative Assistant(s)	2	1	1	

At the building level, what benefits could result from regionalization?

- Programs for special education students
- PD district-wide for those singletons that it's hard to provide a PD program for (OT, Sp/lg) because there are so few of them.
- Being able to offer more diversified program at the elementary level.

Are there any challenges, barriers, and obstacles to regionalization?

- Union / other contracts
- Educational philosophies – aligning them
- Bus contracts
- Parents (losing control)

Other programs not mentioned above: three full-day, tuition-based kindergarten programs (we're trying to put the three programs in the budget for next year).

Executive Summary: Middle School

The Middle Schools in Ayer (260 students), Lunenburg (415 students) and Shirley (250 students) all contain grades 6 – 8. Shirley’s Middle School also contains grade 5. Ayer and Shirley schools have one student/teacher team at each grade level. Lunenburg has three teams of two teachers at the 6th grade and two teams of three teachers at the 7th and 8th grades. Average class sizes are in the high teens and mid-twenties.

Curriculum:

- ELA – Lunenburg and Shirley include novels and various writing curricula; Shirley uses a basal program.
- Math – Ayer and Shirley use Prentice Hall and Lunenburg uses McDougall/Littell. One-third of Ayer students and two-thirds of Shirley students take algebra.
- Science – Shirley uses Prentice Hall; ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO BE ADDED.
- Social Studies – Lunenburg uses Holt Rinehart (People, Places, Changes) and Shirley uses Prentice Hall (World Explorer) and Houghton Mifflin (Across the Centuries).

All three schools share a middle school philosophy. Shirley incorporates “Steps to Respect” and “Doing the Right Thing” to address social/emotional issues.

For Special Education services, all three districts believe in the inclusion model although it appears that Lunenburg is further on that continuum than the other two districts.

Average daily attendance at all three schools is in the mid-90’s percent. All systems have a full-time Principal and at least one Guidance Counselor, Nurse and Administrative Assistant.

The Middle School work group completing the survey included the J/SHS Principal and Middle School Assistant Principal from Ayer, the Principal and Curriculum Coordinator from Lunenburg and the Middle School Principal and Interim Superintendent from Shirley. Their summary of the benefits and challenges, barriers, and obstacles to regionalization follow:

Benefits of Regionalization

- It always has helped us to collegially discuss curricula, pedagogy, and philosophy.
- Bigger will be better in terms of programs and offerings. All towns believe in MCAS and preparing students for them.
- All towns have a common educational philosophy and hope regionalization would “de-politicize” school spending.

Challenges, Barriers, and Obstacles to Regionalization

- There would be a challenge to develop consistency of expectations for three different towns.
- Perceptions in the form of the following: army town, excessive numbers of free/reduced lunch students, rental community.
- Salary and benefits schedules.
- Multicultural diversities and differences.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – MIDDLE SCHOOLS

	Ayer	Lunenburg	Shirley
Grades Served	6, 7, 8	6, 7, 8	5, 6, 7, 8
Total Enrollment	260	415	250
Class Size	one team per grade (4 teachers) 21-22 students/teacher	Teaching Teams, 23-24 students/teacher	
ELA Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used		Junior Great Books, Vocabulary for Achievement, Writing Craft, 6 Traits of Writing, Selected novels and units	Prentice Hall, various novels
Math Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used	Prentice Hall 1/3 Algebra Math	McDougal/Littell	Prentice Hall
Science Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used		Currently under review	Prentice Hall
Social Studies Instruction- Methodology and Programs Used		Holt Reinhardt People, Places Changes	Prentice Hall World Explorer Houghton Mifflin Across the Centuries
Social-Emotional Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used		as per middle school philosophy	Steps to Respect Doing the Right Thing
Inclusion Practices	Total; 1 SS teacher per grade	Total; 1 SS teacher per grade	Total
Attendance Rates for December 2007		95-96%	96%
# General Education Teachers		18	13
# Special Area Teachers & Types		2 PE/Health, 1 Music, 1 Art	7
# Special Education Teachers	3	4: 1 per grade level & 1 Substantially Separate	6
# Aides/Tutors		8	6
Other Specialists - Number, Type, & FTE (Guidance.5, Nurse 1.0, Psychologist .25)		1.0 and .5 Guidance Counselors and 1.0 Nurse	1.0 Guidance, 1.0 Nurse
# Building Administrators	0.5	2	1
Administrative Assistants		1	2

At the building level, what benefits could result from regionalization?

- It always has helped us to collegially discuss curriculum, pedagogy, philosophy.
- Bigger will be better in terms of programs and offerings.
- All towns believe in MCAS and preparing students for them.

12/15/2009

- All towns have a common education philosophy and hope regionalization would "de-politicize" school spending.

Are there any challenges, barriers, and obstacles ?

- There would be a challenge to develop consistency of expectation for three different towns.
- Perceptions in the form of the following: army town, excessive numbers of free/reduced lunch students, rental community.
- Salary and benefits schedules.
- Multicultural diversities and differences.

Executive Summary: High School

While there are distinctions when comparing Ayer and Lunenburg High Schools, none of them appear to be insurmountable obstacles. For example, there are differences in academic graduation requirements:

- Ayer requires four years of science and Lunenburg requires three years; Lunenburg has a one-year language requirement while Ayer has none.

There are also some differences in how programs are organized.

- In grades 9 and 10, Ayer combines social studies and English into "humanities," while Lunenburg has separated the two disciplines.
- Lunenburg currently has a number of AP offerings while Ayer offers students a connection with Mt. Wachusett to give students an opportunity to obtain college credits (Ayer will begin a limited number, 4-5 courses, of AP offerings in '08-'09).
- Ayer runs a "resource room" model in Special Education, while Lunenburg aligns Special Education with disciplines.
- Science sequencing is different at the starting point. (earth science versus physical science)

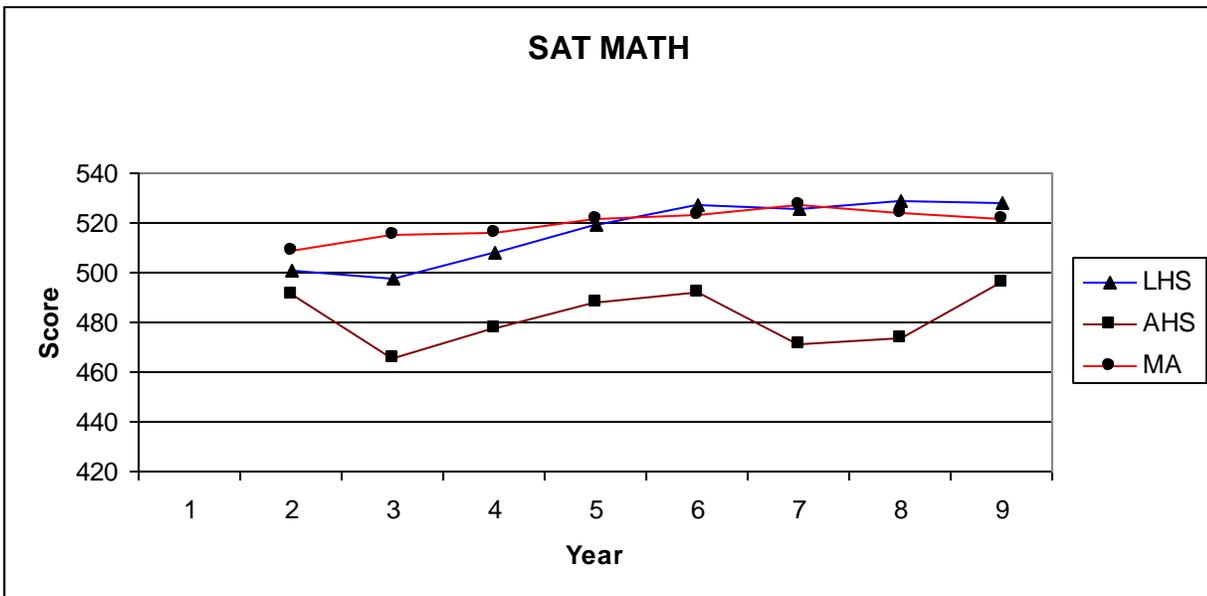
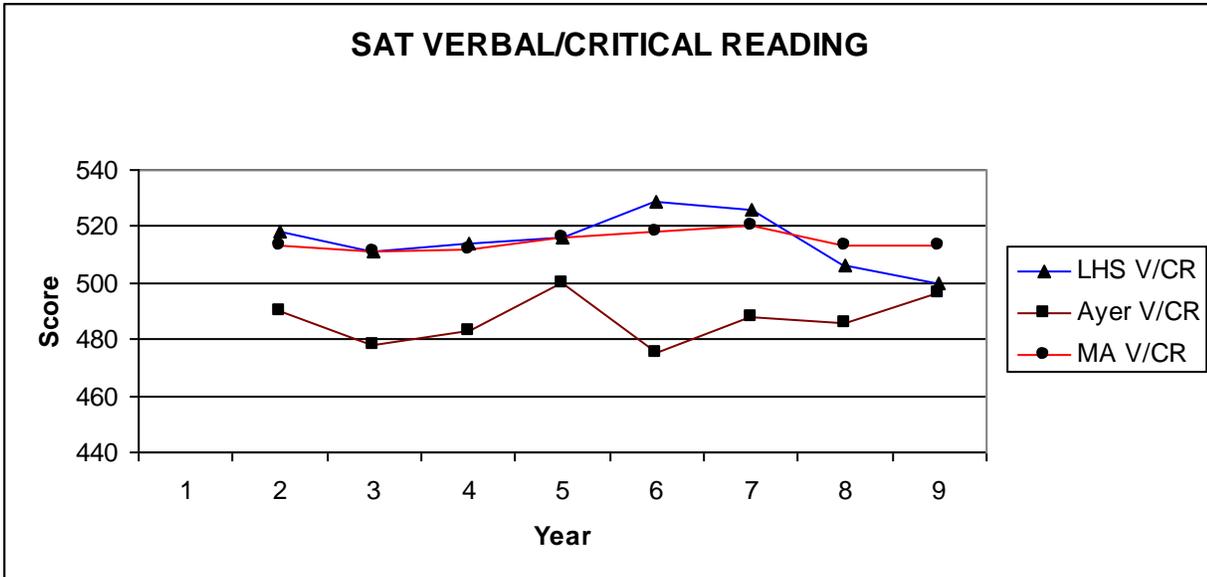
The merging of the two high schools will likely provide an increased critical mass of students for a wider range of academic offerings (this would extend beyond AP courses) and leveling to better meet student needs. It is also likely that increased numbers will allow for expanded extra and co-curricular opportunities (both in arts/music/drama and athletics). The opportunity for other activities (intramurals, academic teams, etc.) will also likely increase.

There are a number of concerns which will need to be addressed. Ayer's total commitment to a full block scheduling model will have to be carefully reviewed (Ayer is willing to do so). Issues around moving away from a more comfortable "small" school experience will have to be actively engaged. Similarly, issues around change items (curriculum, graduation requirements, scope and sequencing of courses, etc.) will need to be confronted. At the end of day, there is no "killer" road block on the path to regionalization.

Educational Program: High Schools

	Ayer High School	Lunenburg High School
Grades Served	6-12	9-12
Total Enrollment	278 (6-8) 376 (9-12)	605
2006-2007 Student/Teacher Ratio	12.6 to 1	14.9 to 1
Class Size	Varies- 4x4 influences can be small or big (no more than 30)	Varies- type of class Range 10-28 Usually 20's
ELA Instruction - Methodology and Programs Used	Humanities program for 9 th and 10 th Novel driven No anthology Lots of electives No AP- planned for next year	Novel driven No anthology Two electives- Film and Writing Workshop AP
Math Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Have pre-algebra No AP	Do not have pre-algebra AP Calculus
Science Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	No AP No earth science Physical science entry course	freshman course earth science for most students/bio course MCAS test for most students in Grade 10 AP Chem. offered 3 year requirement
Social Studies Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Humanities program for 9 th and 10 th Lots of electives MCAS 10 th grade No AP- planned for next year Relationship with the Mount teaches and credit	Several electives for seniors MCAS 11 th grade AP
Foreign Language Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Latin, French and Spanish No language lab Combination classes for levels and different language No middle school foreign language program AP in Latin No language requirement	Latin, French and Spanish No language lab Combination classes for levels 3 language in middle school AP in Latin and Spanish; French varies One year language required

	Ayer High School	Lunenburg High School
Social-Emotional Instruction Methodology and Programs Used	Advisory	No formal advisory
Inclusion Practices	SPED Special Educators responsible for a range of disciplines Small substantially separate program	Students with disabilities Tutors in classrooms Special Educators aligned with disciplines 2 Substantially Separate Programs
Attendance Rate for December, 2007		93.43
# General Education Teachers		30
# Special Education Teachers		5- 3 Inclusion & 2 Substantially Separate
# Special Area Teachers & Types		2 PE 2 Art 1 Music 1 Tech Ed 1 Library 1 Health 1 Internship-college career
# Aides/Tutors		6 aides/9.4 tutors for inclusion and substantially separate classrooms
Other Specialists – Number, Type, & FTE (Guidance .5, Nurse 1.0, Psychologist .25)	2 guidance	2.5 guidance .5 adjustment counselor 1.0 nurse
# Building Administrators	2	2
MCAS Competency Determination 2007	All juniors and seniors with competency	All ELA junior and seniors with competency
Graduation Rates 2007	84.0	88.7



At the building level, what benefits could result from regionalization?

- Numbers of courses offered, variety and electives; increased AP offerings
- Financial savings, particularly around transportation
- Numbers and levels of athletic programs (however, varsity slots on some teams would become more selective i.e. basketball); more opportunity for intramurals
- Support for a range of learners- students with disabilities and G&T
- Teachers would not have to be experts in all areas- band, choral and drama

12/15/2009

Are there any challenges, barriers, and obstacles to regionalization?

- # 1 issue: Perceptions and misinformation
- Different schedules (Ayer is willing and open to changing)
- Is bigger better? Knowing the kids and families
- Fear (loss of jobs)
- Integrating the curriculum (not seen as a big concern, just would need to be accomplished-maintaining results philosophy/UBD curriculum work)
- Graduation requirements need to be merged
- No STEP in Ayer
- Standardizing inclusion philosophy and practices

Executive Summary: Facilities

Facilities and capital needs are often sacrificed in the short run by schools while managing tight budgets. Ayer, Shirley, and Lunenburg are no different in this regard. There are certainly issues and challenges when looking at facility needs within the three towns. Highlights of these issues are:

- A need for more staffing in both custodial and maintenance areas (the Lunenburg organization model may be the preferred).
- A need for greater commitment of resources (financial).
- A real need for space utilization analysis as well as a collected capital needs survey in all three towns (develop a master plan).
- Ongoing short/medium timeframe needs to address Capital projects (HVAC, roof, etc.).
- The likely longer term need for major building projects, particularly at the high school level.
- The overall challenge of funding Capital projects.

While the issues are significant (they would exist separately or as a region), there is no significant facilities issue that exists to prevent regionalization.

Regionalization: Opportunities and Obstacles for Facilities

On January 31, 2008, the Facilities Directors of the three school departments (John Londa, Allan Wilson, Ed Davis) met to discuss the opportunities and obstacles that regionalization presents in the management and care of school facilities. While regionalization will present some challenges in merging and developing an effective facilities management team, it also offers some opportunities.

Opportunities

The consensus was that regionalization would offer the opportunity to build a facilities management structure with improved organization and more support. Regionalization was viewed as an opportunity to merge best practices of the three current organizations.

While all directors felt that current staff was below what was optimum to run high quality facility care programs, Ayer and Shirley both reported a substantial shortfall in in-house maintenance capability. Ayer and Shirley reported that they relied heavily on contract maintenance for building maintenance, while Lunenburg relied extensively on in-house maintenance and uses contract maintenance for specialized skills (HVAC/refrigeration/boiler maintenance/elevators, etc.). Lunenburg operates with four district-level maintenance workers for both buildings and grounds. Ayer has its custodial staff responsible for in-house maintenance as well as cleaning. Shirley has one part-time maintenance person.

Preventative maintenance programs were reported as problem areas at both Shirley and Ayer. Lunenburg reported that its preventative maintenance program was operating but that quality control was inadequate. Work order procedures were reported as a problem area for Shirley. Ayer reported that work order procedures by e-mail were working effectively. Lunenburg reported that it was transitioning from a paper-based work order system to an Internet-based work order system in the next 30 days.

A regionalized school facilities management structure might include several licensed trades persons (plumbing/ electrical/ HVAC) and general maintenance/grounds workers under a facilities management section and a custodial section focused on the cleaning and support of operations. Current assets, both personnel and financial, do not meet the needs for this type of facilities support concept and would require increases to both. Regionalization would likely require increased budget support for facilities.

Ayer reported that vacant space in its buildings could be better utilized in a regional structure. If a region is formed, a space utilization survey would be required with an eye toward achieving greater efficiency, possibly, by closing some facilities. Shirley is concerned about the condition of the aging Lura White Elementary School, which exhibits a variety of significant facility issues. Also, although not listed in the Regionalization report, it is unclear as to the future of the currently unoccupied Shirley Center School.

Ayer and Lunenburg both realize requirements for capital renovations or replacement of high school buildings in the short- to mid-term. Regionalization would very likely require the construction of a new regional high school to meet the educational requirements of the district.

12/15/2009

Obstacles

In addition to major capital projects such as renovation or replacement of buildings, Lunenburg and Ayer both reported requirements for capital maintenance items such as HVAC and roof replacements in the mid-term. Funding for capital projects will need to continue, as all current districts have capital maintenance projects that will need to be addressed in the next five to ten year period. There are no significant facilities issues that prevent regionalization; however, the current conditions of facilities will require the region to complete a master plan, prioritize its need for building projects, and act upon those priorities in its early years.

Merged District Long-Range Educational Plan

Academic curricular offerings and enhancement plans

Note: All curricula offerings will be aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks

Primary/Elementary:

Academic Curricular Offerings PreK-5

- English/Language Arts
- Math
- Science/Engineering/Technology
- Social Studies/History
- Music
- Art
- Integrated Physical Education/Health
- Academic Support- Computer Assisted Instruction
- Library/Media Literacy
- All-Day Kindergarten (non-tuition)

Enhancement Plans

- Extra- and co-curricular activities for students
- Cultural and foreign language opportunities
- Developmental guidance program including personal counseling
- Specialized services for students with and without disabilities (i.e. ELL, Reading)
- Comprehensive early childhood program
- School-wide positive behavioral support system

Organizational Structures

- Common planning time for teachers – grade level and curriculum based
- Integrated/interdisciplinary curriculum with classroom teachers and special areas
- School-wide positive behavioral support system

Middle School:

Academic Curricular Offerings 6-8

- English/Language Arts
- Social Studies/History
- Science/Engineering/Technology
- Mathematics- 8th grade includes Algebra
- Integrated Physical Education/Health
- Modern and Classical Foreign Languages (one full year for Level 1 proficiency by end of Grade 8)
- Music
- Art

Choices

- Band
- Chorus
- Exploratory opportunities
- Community Service Learning

Enhancement Plans

- Multiple foreign language offerings (modern and classical) at the middle school level
- Increased number of students in algebra as 8th graders and expand pre-advanced placement opportunities in all subjects
- Extra- & co-curricular activities
- Comprehensive community service learning
- Developmental guidance program including personal and career counseling
- School-wide positive behavioral support system
- Specialized services for students with and without disabilities (i.e. ell, Reading, etc.)

Organizational Structures

- Grade level teams
- Common planning time for teachers – grade level and curriculum based
- Integrated/interdisciplinary curriculum with classroom teachers and special areas

High School:

Current and Proposed High School Offerings

Lunenburg High School	Ayer High School
College Courses- Dual enrollment available at neighboring colleges	College Courses- Mt. Wachusett Community College classes offered on-site
Honors/AP Courses	Honors/AP Courses
College Level Courses	College Level Courses
	Academic Courses

Graduation Requirements

Lunenburg High School (based on class of 2012)	Ayer High School
Total Credits 23	Total Credits
English 4	English (20) 4
<i>Science 3- Biology and 2 Electives</i>	<i>Science (20) 4</i>
Math 3	Math (15) 3
<i>Social Studies- World History and US History I and II</i>	<i>Social Studies (20) 4</i>
<i>Health .5</i>	<i>Health (5) 1</i>
<i>Unified Art 2 (Computer tech, Performing Arts, Tech. Ed, STEP and Visual Arts</i>	<i>Fine Arts (5) 1</i> <i>Computer Education (10) 2</i>
<i>Foreign Language 1</i>	
<i>Physical Education 1.5</i>	<i>Physical Education (5) 1</i>

Italics represent current differences in graduation requirements for the two high schools.

Massachusetts Core Curriculum (Suggested)	
English	4 credits
Math	4 credits with at least Algebra II and Math in senior year
Science	3 credits of lab sciences
Social Studies/US History	3 credits including US History & World History
Foreign Language	2 credits in a single language
Health/PE	2 credits
Other	6 credits of electives

Enhancement Plans

- Increased number and types of advanced placement courses
- International baccalaureate program
- Increased number and types of foreign language (modern and classical) courses
- More elective choices to personalize student learning including on-line options
- Develop internship program
- Expand community service learning
- Alternative scheduling to accommodate needs to learners (before/after school and evening courses)
- Developmental guidance program including career counseling
- School-wide positive behavioral support system
- Enhanced learning opportunities through the use of various technologies including on-line education

Organizational Structures

- Common planning time for teachers
- Integrated/interdisciplinary curriculum with classroom teachers and special areas
- Curriculum Coordinators/Supervisors

Operations Merger- Steps to a common curriculum/assessment experiences for all PreK-12 students:

1. Determine curriculum documents currently in place PreK-12 in each subject area.
2. Establish which curricula/curriculum is most current and fully developed. Identify parts of each document that should be included in a newly merged document.
3. Identify current assessments and the schedule for use.
4. Identify the common assessment experiences for all students PreK-12.
5. Inventory current curriculum resources/programs and textbooks.

Current or proposed collaborative efforts

Currently, high school students from Shirley attend Ayer and Lunenburg High Schools. Ayer and Lunenburg have a joint hockey team. All three communities are members of the FLLAC special education collaborative. Ayer and Shirley have several joint youth activities such as athletics and scouting programs.

During the school year 2008-2009 the three districts will investigate with the goal of implementing mentoring/support of new administrators. Plans are also being developed for the three districts to share food service management and professional development opportunities. The three districts also participate in energy collaborative bidding for energy and are considering a collaborative transportation bidding.

Objectives to address the needs of at-risk students and low incidence populations:

- Provide in-class and supplementary supports to students achieving below grade level based upon state, district, school, and grade/course assessments.
- Develop Academic Support Centers to serve students with and without disabilities during the school day.
- Integrate academic and/or homework support with school and community programs.
- Provide English language development (ELD) instruction delivered by a teacher with an ESL or ELL license to qualified students identified by state assessment.
- Provide alternative scheduling options for students at the high school level to complete their education during non-traditional hours.
- Provide a range of services to students with behavioral challenges by implementing a positive behavioral support system in every school.
- Provide counseling services in conjunction with community agencies for students with emotional/mental health needs.

Objectives to address the needs of students with special needs:

The regional district will provide a full range of special education and related services to enable students with disabilities to develop to their full potential. Services will be provided in the least restrictive environment including full-inclusion, partial inclusion, and substantially separate classrooms. In addition to special education services a full-range of related services will be provided based upon individual student plans. These services include, but are not limited to occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, physical therapy, and vision, and hearing. Opportunities will exist to provide in-district services for several students currently placed outside local districts.

An integrated preschool program will provide a full range of services to students with and without disabilities. Additionally, specialized classrooms will be provided for students requiring a substantially-separate intensive preschool program. Pre-school programs will focus on communication, pre-academic, social and self-help skills.

Regional district programs will serve the needs of students developmental and autism spectrum disabilities that require applied behavioral analysis (ABA) services. The regional district should employ ABA trained professional and para-professionals who are supervised by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst with ESE licensure. Both before and after school and home programs will be provided based upon students' Individual Educational Plan(s).

Specialized services will also be provided within the regional district to serve students with multiple disabilities and/or complex medical needs. The services will be provided across all placements including in-class, inclusion-model settings in conjunction with classroom accommodations, modifications, and/or supplementary materials.

Specialized services including a substantially separate classroom at the high school level will provide students (up to age 22) with the supports they require to transition to work, independent or supported living settings post-high school. The services will be both school and community based and provide for job exploration and on-the-job coaching.

Review of prior or potential non-compliance issues:

Each of the three districts have recently undergone coordinated program reviews. Corrective action plans for the three districts have been approved and all areas of non-compliance have been or are being addressed.

Non-academic offerings: plan for integration, including changes or enhancements:

Current offerings include:

- Extended-Day Programs
- Pre-Kindergarten Programs
- After-School Programs
- Athletic Programs at Middle and High School
- A variety of K-12 special interest clubs i.e. crafts, student council, art, SADD, Mock Trial, yearbook, etc.

Enhancements:

- Additional K-12 extracurricular program offerings such as theatre, Model United Nations, Earth/Green Club, etc.

Plan for integrated professional development to implement program and operational merger:

Guiding Principles

- Equity
- Engagement in learning and achievement
- Collaboration
- Personalization of learning

Professional Development Overview

Level	Connection	Structures	Optional
Individual	Individualized Professional Development Plan	Yearly review of IPDP/Evaluation/Certification	Graduate level courses-in and out of district Conferences/workshops
Grade/Team New Teacher Cohort	Continuous improvement model	Common Planning Time/Department meetings New Teacher Induction/Mentoring 1 st three years in the district	Shared Leadership roles Additional graduate level courses
School-Wide	Professional development tied to School Improvement Plan.	Faculty meetings	Task forces Committees School Improvement Council
District-Wide All Teachers/staff	Professional development tied to District Improvement Plan.	Professional Development Days- job-alike training as needed District celebration of professional learning Civil Rights Training Universal Health Precautions Restraint Training	District Improvement Council District Curriculum Renewal Council District Curriculum Task Forces

Operation Merger:

1. Open professional development activities across the districts in June, 2008
2. Pool professional development budgets/grant monies to address professional development needs as the result of regionalization.
3. Establish a professional learning task force.
4. Identify best practices in each district for use across the region.
5. Identify discrepant practices across the region and set-up a process for merging.
6. Align contract language for graduate course reimbursement, conferences, professional days, professional development substitutes.

Funding Sources for professional development:

- Operational Budget
- NCLB Consolidated Grant
- State Grants- STEM Pipeline, Grant 274: Special Education

How vocational education will be provided for any student requesting or requiring such a program:

Students in each of the three communities will continue to access vocational/technical educational programs offered by regional vocational high schools. Lunenburg is a member of the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School and Shirley is a member of the Nashoba Regional Vocational Technical School. Students from Ayer attend regional vocational/technical schools via non-member tuition agreements.

In addition to students attending regional vocational high schools, the newly formed regional district will continue to provide a range of offerings for students attending the regional high school(s). Vocational interests and training will be provided via career planning, internship opportunities, and articulated agreements with state and regional colleges and universities.

A career plan is a comprehensive, formal written plan (that learners use alone or with the help of others) that relates learning to career goals. Designed to facilitate transition from high school to future learning and employment the plan organizes and records progress related to personal, educational, and career and labor market information.

The new region will develop course opportunities in areas such as robotics, architectural engineering, construction, horticulture, and video and audio production.

ADDENDUM: Courses available at Ayer High School and Lunenburg High School

Lunenburg High School	Ayer High School
<p>English <i>Honors English I</i> <i>College English I</i> <i>Honors English II</i> <i>College English II</i> <i>Honors English III</i> <i>College English III (AP Languages starting 2009-10)</i> <i>AP Literature</i> <i>College English IV</i> <i>Writing Workshop (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Film Literacy</i></p>	<p>English <i>Honors Humanities I (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Humanities (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Study Skills</i> <i>Honors Humanities II (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Humanities II (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>American Literature</i> <i>World Literature/Mt. Wachusett English Composition Course</i> <i>Honors World Literature II</i> <i>World Literature</i> <i>Shakespeare (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Creative Arts Workshop (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Creative Writing (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Classic and Contemporary Films (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Children's Literature/Reading Partnerships (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Public Speaking and Communications (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Other Voices (1/2 year course)</i> <i>The World of Ideas (1/2 year course)</i> <i>Journalism(1/2 year course)</i> <i>MCAS English (1/2 year course)</i></p>
<p>Social Studies World History Honors World History U.S. History I Honors U.S History I U.S. History II <i>AP U.S. History</i> <i>Psychology (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Sociology (1/2 Year)</i> <i>A History of the American West</i> Global Issues American Government and Politics</p>	<p>Social Studies <i>Honors Humanities I (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Humanities (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Study Skills</i> <i>Honors Humanities II (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Humanities II (full year 2 credits)</i> <i>Honors Modern World History</i> <i>Modern World History</i> United States Government (1/2 Year) <i>Women's Study (1/2 Year)</i> Contemporary Social Problems (1/2 Year) America Since 1950 (1/2 Year) Social Psychology (1/2 Year) <i>Honors Sociology and Current Issues (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Capitalisms and Democracy (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Introduction to Law (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Consumer Economics (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Understanding Media (1/2 Year)</i></p>
<p>World Languages* <i>Conversational French</i> French I French II French III French IV <i>French V</i> <i>AP French</i> Latin I Latin II <i>Latin III</i> <i>Latin IV</i> <i>AP Latin</i> Spanish I Spanish II Honors Spanish III</p>	<p>World Languages* French I French II Honors French III Latin I Latin II Honors Latin III Honors Latin IV Spanish I Spanish II Honors Spanish III Honors Spanish IV</p>

<p>Honors Spanish IV <i>Spanish V</i> <i>AP Spanish</i></p> <p>* Please note classes may be combined based on enrollment and or not offered based on enrollment</p>	<p>* Please note classes may be combined based on enrollment and or not offered based on enrollment</p>
<p>Mathematics Algebra IA Algebra IB Algebra I Geometry Honors Geometry Algebra II Honors Algebra II <i>Analysis</i> Trigonometry/Algebra III Topics in Pre-Calculus <i>Analysis H</i> AP Calculus</p>	<p>Mathematics <i>Pre-Algebra</i> Algebra IA Algebra IB Algebra I Geometry Honors Geometry Algebra II Honors Algebra II <i>Honors Trigonometry</i> Pre-Calculus Calculus <i>MCAS Math (1/2 year)</i></p>
<p>Science Earth Science Engineering the Future Biology Honors Biology Chemistry Honors Chemistry Physics <i>Horticulture I (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Horticulture II (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Horticulture</i> <i>Consumer Chemistry (1/2 Year)</i> Conceptual Physics (1/2 Year) Anatomy and Physiology <i>Environmental Science (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Astronomy (1/2 Year)</i> <i>AP Chemistry (2 credits)</i></p>	<p>Science <i>Honors Physical Science IPS</i> <i>Physical Science IPS</i> Biology Honors Biology Chemistry Honors Chemistry <i>Honors Physical Science IPS</i> <i>Honor Physics</i> Physics Applied Physics Technology 9 <i>Technology 10</i> <i>Honors Anatomy and Physiology</i> Anatomy and Physiology Chemistry in the Community Environmental Science (1/2 Year) Astronomy (1/2 Year) AP Chemistry (2 credits) Senior Science- Special Topics</p>
<p>Health Health Education (1/2 Year) <i>Thresholds to Adulthood</i></p>	<p>Health Heath Education 9 (1/2 year) <i>Health Education 10 (1/2 year course)</i></p>
<p>Physical Education - All (1/2 Year)</p> <p>Physical Education 9 Physical Education Credit for Varsity Sports Participation <i>Elective Courses- Fall</i> <i>Team Sports</i> <i>Team Sports with a Plus</i> <i>Team Sports (Competitive)</i> <i>Fitness Focus</i> <i>Bigger, Faster, Stronger</i> <i>Individual Sports</i> <i>General Physical Education</i></p> <p><i>Elective Courses- Spring</i> <i>Team Sports (Beginner)</i> <i>Team Sports</i></p>	<p>Physical Education - All (1/2 Year)</p> <p>Physical Education 9/10 Physical Education 11/12 <i>Project Adventure</i></p>

<p><i>Individual Sports with a Plus</i> <i>Team Sport (Competitive)</i> <i>Bigger, Faster Stronger</i> <i>Individual Sports</i> <i>Team Sports (Beginner)</i></p>	
<p>Unified Arts Technology Education Wood Technology I Wood Technology II Engineering the Future Construction Technology Power and Energy Technology Manufacturing Technology</p> <p>Visual Arts Studio Art I ½ year Studio Art II ½ year Advanced Studio <i>AP Studio Art</i> Drawing and Painting ½ year Ceramics ½ year Yearbook Computer Aided Design and Product Development ½ year Intro to Hand Drawn Illustration ½ year <i>Global Treasures</i> ½ year Printmaking</p> <p>Performing Arts Instrumental Music (Concert and Marching Band) Vocal Music (Chorus) <i>Music Theory I (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Music Theory II (1/2 Year)</i> Theater Arts I (1/2 Year) Theater Arts II (1/2 Year) <i>Basic Piano (1/2 Year)</i> <i>Piano 2 (1/2 Year)</i> <i>World Music (1/2 Year)</i></p> <p>Computer Technology Digital Communications</p>	<p>Unified Arts</p> <p>Art Computer Illustration (quarter) ½ year Painting (quarter) ½ year Ceramics (quarter) ½ year Advanced Ceramics(quarter) ½ year Drawing(quarter) ½ year Art History Yearbook/Graphic Design Graphic Design Art Portfolio</p> <p>Performing Arts <i>Honors Band</i> Band <i>Honors Chorus</i> Chorus <i>Music Appreciation (1/2 year)</i> <i>Introduction to Writing Music (1/2 year)</i> <i>Music Composition</i> Theater Arts I (1/2 Year) Theater Arts II (1/2 Year)</p> <p>Computer Education Introduction to Multi-media (quarter) ½ year <i>Publishing on the Internet (quarter) ½ year</i> <i>Computer Applications</i> <i>Computer Languages</i> <i>Advanced Programming</i> Computer-Aided Design and Drafting <i>Desktop Publishing</i></p>
<p>Special Services Communications Study Skills Achieve IV Project A.C.E.</p>	
<p>Additional Opportunities Dual enrollment <i>Independent Study</i> Senior Transition Experience Program (STEP)</p>	<p>Additional Opportunities Dual enrollment <i>Leadership</i> Senior Internship</p>

Italics represent differences in course offerings for the two high schools.