

**New Milford Board of Education
Public Hearing Minutes
January 5, 2022
Virtual via Zoom**

MHP

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach Mr. Eric Hansell Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mr. Tom O'Brien Mrs. Olga I. Rella Mr. Keith A. Swanhall Jr	RECEIVED TOWN CLERK 2022 JAN - 7 A 9 31
Absent:	Mr. Pete Helmus Mrs. Leslie Sarich	

NEW MILFORD, CT

Also Present:	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Operations and Fiscal Services Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Matthew Cunningham, Facilities Director Ms. Jamie Terry, Interim Technology Director Mr. Jeffrey Turner, Technology Director Mrs. Anne Bilko, Sarah Noble Intermediate School Principal Mrs. Gwen Gallagher, Northville Elementary School Principal Mr. Raymond Manka, New Milford High School Principal Ms. Linda Scoralick, Schaghticoke Middle School Interim Principal Mr. Eric Williams, Hill and Plain Elementary School Principal
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1.	Presentation A. 2022-23 Budget Topics 1. SPED Out of District Tuition and Transportation 2. Enrollment and Staffing • Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo started the hearing at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was recorded and the powerpoint presentations are attached to these minutes. • Mrs. Olson spoke about Special Education Out of District Tuition and Transportation draft budget proposals and reviewed historicals.	Presentation A. 2022-23 Budget Topics 1. SPED Out of District Tuition and Transportation 2. Enrollment and Staffing
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ms. DiCorpo said this is a large budget item and very volatile so it is important to drill down as much as possible for the budget process.● Mrs. Olson also spoke about Excess Cost and how it is determined.● Mr. Giovannone said the reimbursement rate from the state has been on a downward trend the last few years and they are forecasting at 62% for this budget.● Mrs. McInerney noted that New Milford's out of district placement rate is below the state average and asked Mrs. Olson why that is.● Mrs. Olson said there are a number of factors including the strong PPT process and the significant services New Milford offers in district for students.● Mrs. McInerney said the presentation references four students returning from out of district placement. She asked what triggers that.● Mrs. Olson said there is no one answer. Sometimes the placement school or parent suggests the transition back as needs change. The district also monitors progress and goals.● Mrs. McInerney asked for a breakdown of intellectually disabled versus emotionally disabled. Mrs. Olson said she will get that for the budget presentation. She said mental health numbers are increasing.● Mrs. Rella asked if address checks are done on the DCF placements. Mrs. Olson said they are; certified letters are sent.● Mr. Hansell asked if ESSER funds can be used to offset out of district placements. Mrs. Olson said no, but they can be used for evaluations, consultations and professional development.● Mrs. Faulenbach noted the October 1st number of 28 placements and asked what the number is currently. Mrs. Olson said she believes it is 31 or 32 but will confirm that.	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Mrs. Faulenbach said she knows that numbers fluctuate and that there is a large dollar amount attached to each one. She noted that the projected budgeted amount has increased to \$80,000.● Ms. DiCorpo said the increase is a result of looking at the actual costs being expended currently and realizing the placeholder amount needed to be higher.● Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there is a separate legal line for special education. Mr. Giovannone said there is not; it is embedded in the overall legal services line.● Ms. DiCorpo spoke to enrollment and staffing draft budget proposals. The powerpoint is attached to these minutes. This year involved a deep dive into current enrollment numbers as of October 1, 2021 and the recent SLR Enrollment Study projections. Enrollment is a significant budget driver with a large scope that impacts all major budget areas. Ms. DiCorpo reviewed projections and recommendations by school. She said the goal is to align enrollment projections with budget planning to efficiently use funds, balance space utilization and provide learning conducive class sizes.● Mrs. Faulenbach said this is great data and she appreciates the work to bring consistency to class sizes. She asked for confirmation that the overall staffing recommendation is to reduce one teacher overall and add two paraeducators.● Ms. DiCorpo said that is correct.● Mr. Giovannone noted that this piece is staffing that is directly tied to enrollment. There may be other support staff shifts and recommendations with the full budget presentation.● Mr. McCauley said he is concerned with the increasing enrollment PK-2, along with the	
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	<p>learning loss due to the pandemic, and asked that a close eye be kept on this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ms. DiCorpo said even after the budget is complete, they continue to review enrollment and class sizes throughout the summer so that they can make adjustments prior to schools opening if the actual enrollment numbers call for that.● Mrs. Rella said she has the same concern as Mr. McCauley, especially with the grade 2 class sizes proposed, in light of pandemic learning loss.● Ms. DiCorpo said she is aware of pandemic effects and showed the Board what adding a teacher back in would look like. She noted that the base salary used for hiring purposes is also increasing as a result of the new teacher contract.● Ms. DiCorpo said she wanted to thank the Cabinet and principals for all their input leading to the presentation of these Superintendent's draft proposals. It is the result of many collaborative discussions. <p>● The meeting ended at 6:53 p.m.</p>	
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Respectfully submitted:



Olga I. Rella
Secretary
New Milford Board of Education

Department of Pupil Personnel and Special Services



BOE Special Workshop
January 5, 2022
Mrs. Laura Olson, PPS Director

Out-of-District Placements Tuition and Transportation



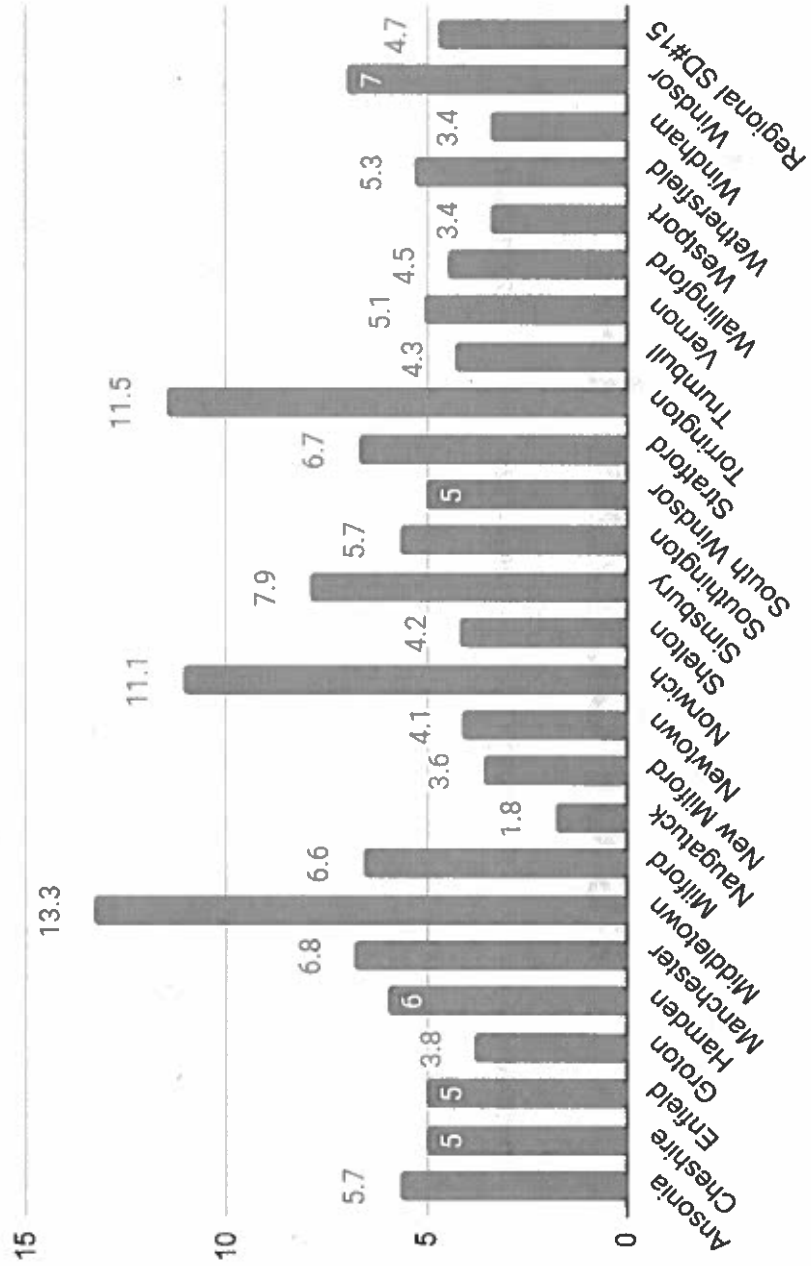


Why are students placed out-of-district?

- The district has exhausted all options of supports, services, and specialized instruction and the student is not making appropriate progress: academically and/or behaviorally.
- The parents have unilaterally placed their child in an out-of-district school.
- The parents request an out-of-district placement and have filed for a mediation/due process hearing.
- A family moves into New Milford and the student is already placed in a ODP therapeutic school.
- Expulsion and/or DCF placements by court system.

**2016-2017
K-12 Out-of-District Comparison
State Ave: 5.2 %, New Milford: 3.6%**

New Milford Comparison by percentages with other towns



Number of Students in ODP as of October 1st

2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023 (projected)
26	34	29	35	28 Returned 4 students to district after budget adoption 4 DCF placed students moved to another LEA after budget adoption 1 student moved to NM after budget adoption Potential for 2 students to be placed ODP 2 students have recently placed in ODP 1 student is moving to NM and is already placed ODP, 2022	31 + 2 Public Placeholders @ \$80k each +4 Private Placeholders @ \$80k each

Out-of-District Tuition

Year-to-Year Comparison

FISCAL YEAR	Budget Request	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Revised Budget	Actual June 30th	Left at end of Year	Percent Used
2022-2023	\$3,477,020	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
2021-2022	\$3,364,606	\$0	\$0	\$3,364,606	TBD	TBD	TBD
2020-2021	\$2,517,875	\$177,137	\$0	\$2,695,012	\$2,629,280	\$65,732	97.56
2019-2020	\$2,337,338	\$0	(\$56,000)	\$2,281,338	\$1,926,314	\$355,024	84.44
2018-2019	\$2,602,694	\$0	(\$100,000)	\$2,502,694	\$1,914,714	\$587,980	76.51

- In 20/21 the transfer in was due exceeding the number of placeholders that were reduced during the budget approval process. The funds came from ODP transportation in this instance.
- In 18/19 and 19/20 the transfer out was due exceeding the budget number allocated to out of district transportation. The funds came from ODP tuition in this instance.

Any required fund transfers across Major Object Code (MOC) like those described above were presented to and approved by the Board of Education. These three (3) in particular were all done within the Special Education budget and did not require pulling funds from other area(s).

Increase to ODP Tuition and Transportation

Tuition

- Adding 6 placeholders at an increased tuition cost
- 3-5% increase for most ODP tuitions
- Pandemic related mental health needs resulting in more services and specialized placements
- Students with severe autism requiring more services and specialized placements
- Increased residential placements
- Increase to the # of ODP placements requiring 1:1 support

Transportation

- Increase to transportation costs due to statewide vendor shortages, fuel costs, and additional runs due to COVID distancing restrictions in vans
- Increased 1:1 van aides to address safety needs while in transport

Out-of-District Transportation

Year-to-Year Historical

Year	BOE Budget Request	Actual
2019-2020	\$641,890	\$465,282
2020-2021	\$657,853	\$542,311
2021-2022	\$839,564	TBD
2022-2023	\$909,674	TBD

Transportation money unspent in the chart above during 20/21 was required to fund transfers to cover Tuition lines within the Special Education budget.

Excess Cost

26 Grant reimbursements: the state reimburses school districts for the reasonable cost of sp education services for a student who lives in the district that exceeds the districts average per pupil expenditures for the preceding school year.

Reimbursable costs: instructional personnel, equipment, materials transportation, tuition, consultation services, outside evaluations.

Excess Cost DCF Placed

For placements initiated by a **state agency**, e.g., the Department of Children and Families, the basic contribution (or local share) is equal to the prior year's Per Pupil Expenditure x 1.0.

Example 1:

A student is placed by DCF in a private state approved school with an annual costs (tuition & transportation) of **\$104,500**.

The School Districts Per Pupil Expenditure is **\$16,592**

Basic contribution: **1 x \$16,592. = \$16,592.**

Sp Ed costs (**\$104,500.**) minus basic contribution (**\$16,592.**) = **\$87,908.**

The state reimburses approximately **62%** of the excess cost to the school district.
 $\$87,908. \times .62 = \$54,502.$

Excess Cost Reimbursement = \$54,502.

Excess Cost BOE Placed

For **BOE placements or students educated within the district** the basic contribution is equal to the prior year's per pupil expenditure x 4.5.

Example 2:

A student is placed by the BOE in a private state approved school with annual cost (tuition and transportation) of **\$104,500**.

The School Districts Per Pupil Expenditure is **\$16,592**.

Basic contribution: **4.5 x \$16,592. = \$74,664.**

Tuition (**\$104,500**. minus basic contribution of **\$74,664.**) = **\$29,836.**

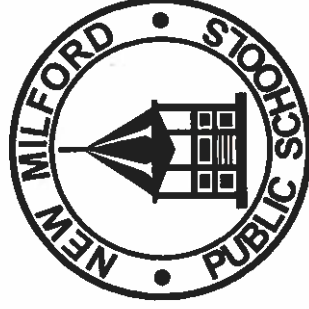
The state reimburses approximately 62% of the excess cost to the school district.

\$29,839 X .62 = \$18,500.

Excess cost reimbursement = Approx. **\$18,500.**

Questions?

2022-2023 Budget Workshop
Enrollment Projection & Staffing



January 5, 2022

Developing Enrollment Projections - Internal

- Enrollment is always a significant budget driver with a very large scope.
- From staffing (and benefits) to professional/property services, student supports, supplies and curriculum materials; all major areas of the budget across the district are impacted.
- Last year due to the pandemic, March 1st actual enrollment numbers were used to inform the enrollment projection for the current year; 21/22.
- For 22/23 the October 1 actual enrollment numbers as reported to the State is our starting point. This is past practice with the exception of the 21/22 enrollment projection build.
- Any staffing additions, reductions or re-alignments shown are still draft at this time.

Developing Enrollment Projections – External Refresh

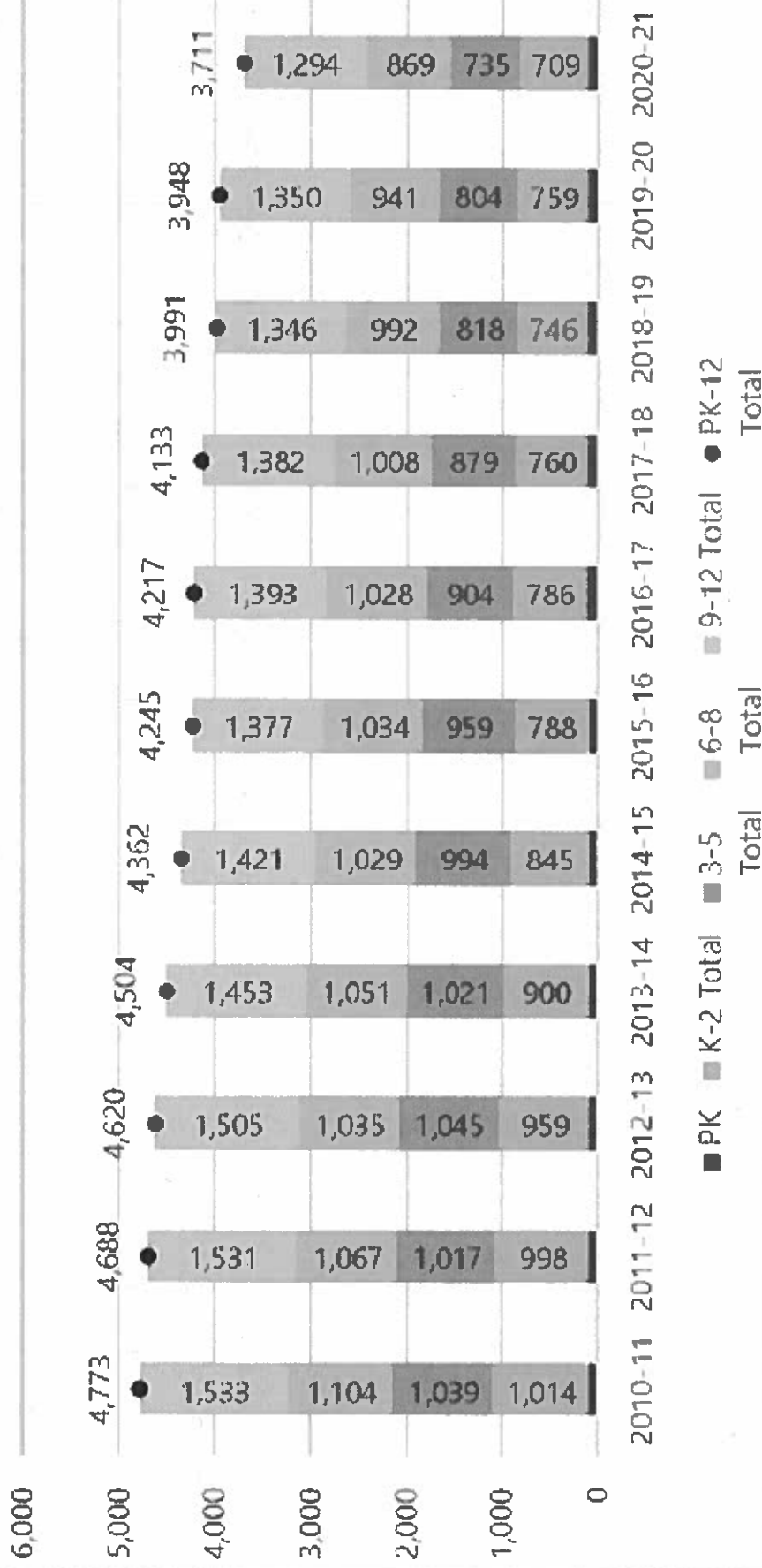
- This Town funded study replaced the prior Milone and MacBroom study from 2014 and analyzes data from the 2020-21 school year, looking ahead to 2030-31 & was presented on September 28, 2021 by SLR.
- Census, employment, births, home sales and permits for future developments were just were some of the metrics used to inform the study.
- Where NMPS had more current and reliable individual grade level projections, the SLR number was considered but not relied upon 100%.

SLR District Projections

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	PK	K-2 Total	3-5 Total	6-8 Total	9-12 Total	K-12 Total	PK-12 Total
2020-21	223	238	248	219	258	258	266	283	320	323	342	293	104	709	735	869	1,294	3,607	3,711
2021-22	268	271	257	248	219	269	284	290	320	334	345	332	117	796	736	894	1,342	3,768	3,885
2022-23	271	273	273	260	251	219	274	283	292	331	321	313	117	817	730	849	1,296	3,692	3,809
2023-24	242	276	275	277	263	251	223	273	285	302	318	313	117	793	791	781	1,241	3,606	3,723
2024-25	261	248	279	280	282	264	257	223	276	296	291	293	117	788	826	756	1,186	3,556	3,673
2025-26	213	266	250	283	284	282	269	256	225	285	284	290	117	729	849	750	1,138	3,466	3,583
2026-27	264	218	269	254	288	285	289	269	259	234	275	265	117	751	827	817	1,048	3,443	3,560
2027-28	231	269	220	272	257	288	291	288	271	268	225	260	117	720	817	850	1,017	3,404	3,521
2028-29	265	238	272	225	278	258	296	292	291	281	259	250	117	775	761	879	1,007	3,422	3,539
2029-30	246	270	239	276	228	277	264	295	293	301	270	205	117	755	781	852	1,025	3,413	3,530
2030-31	266	252	272	244	281	228	284	264	297	304	290	236	117	790	753	845	1,090	3,478	3,595

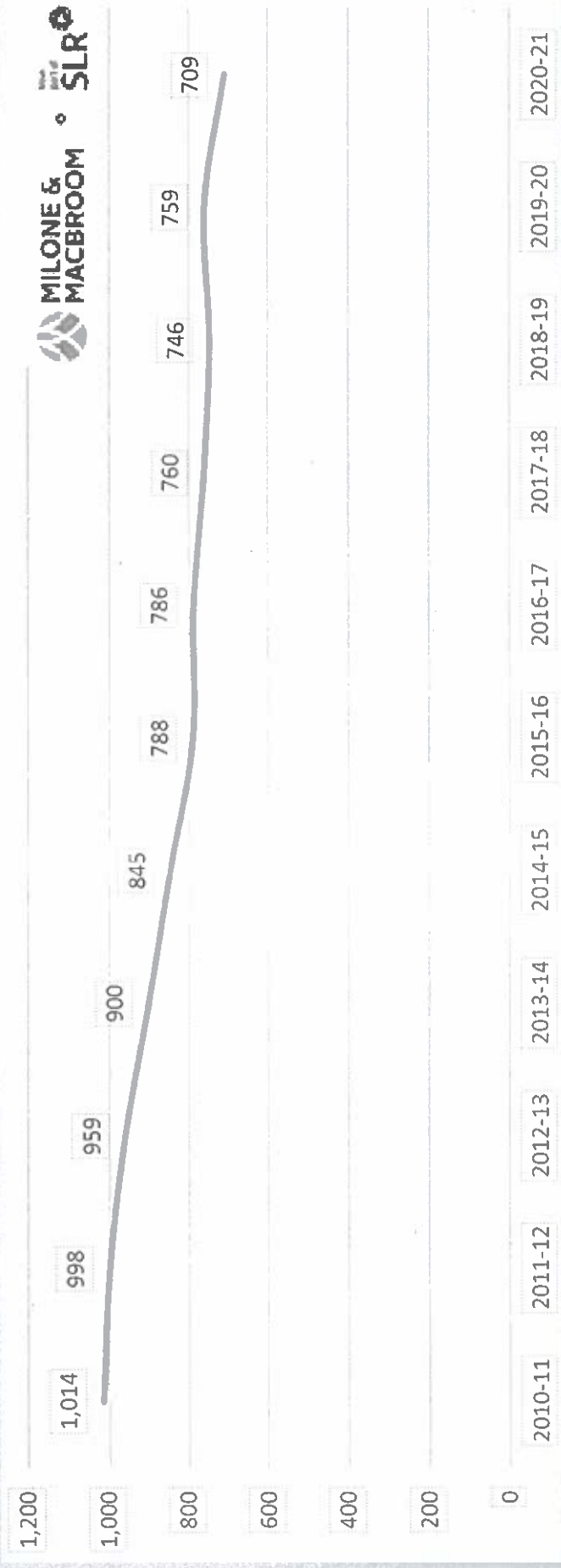
SLR District Enrollment Trends

Historic PK-12 Enrollment



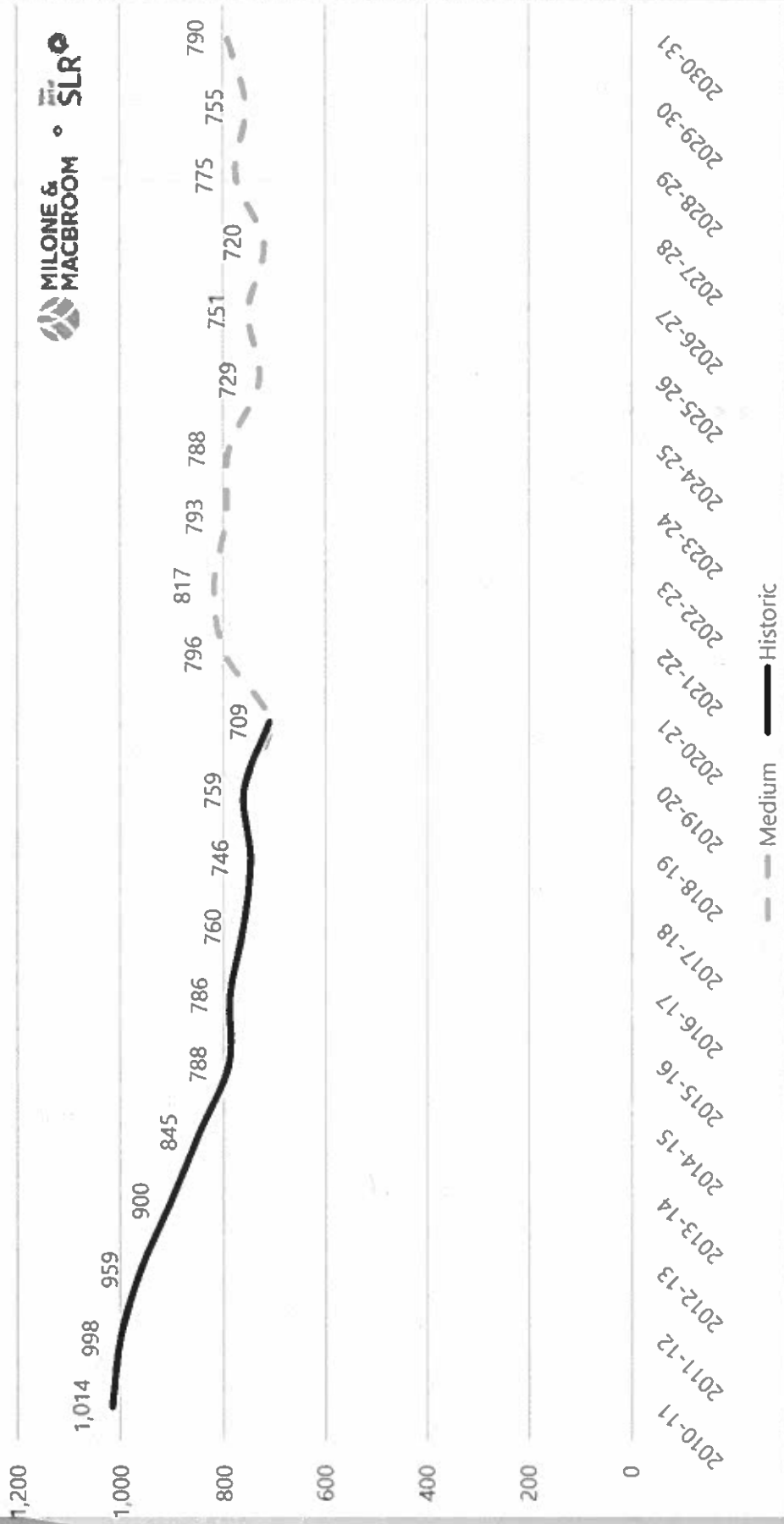
- Overall, NMPS enrollment has declined 22% over the last decade.
- Last year had a drop across all grade groupings, which can be attributed to COVID-19.
- Since 2015-16, elementary enrollment has remained generally stable except for 2020-21.
- Enrollment at the intermediate, middle, and high school grade levels have decreased consistently over the last 5 years.

Elementary SLR Enrollment Trends



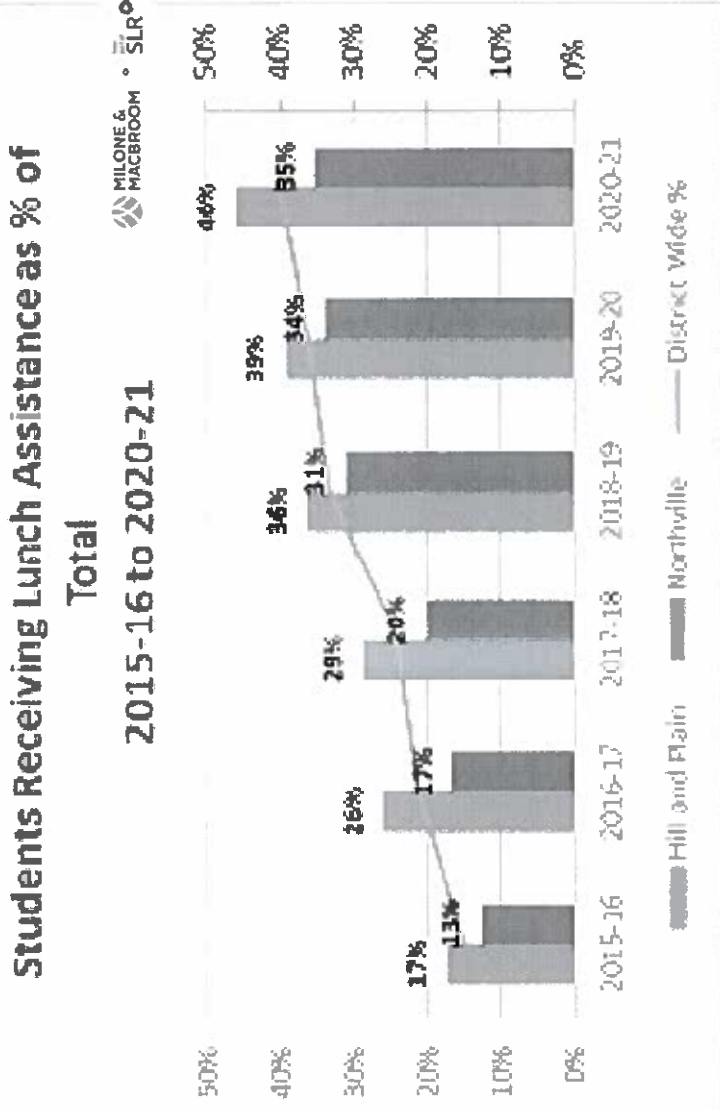
- Elementary (K-2) enrollment appears to have been slowly declining before the 2020 pandemic dip.
- Enrollment from 2015-16 to 2019-20 remained stable ranging by about 42 students over the five-year period.
- Kindergarten enrollment dropped in 2020-21, which is consistent with trends seen throughout the State.

Elementary SLR Enrollment Projections



- Enrollment is rebounding as homeschool students, delayed entry students, and private school students return to NMPS.
- Projections show a peak in 2022-23 and relative stability in the first 5 years.
- Enrollment is then projected to fall in 2025-26 before gradually increasing to 790 in 2030-31
- Northville averages about 55% of total K-2 student share, Hill and Plain with the remaining 45% and are projected to increase by 10.2% each by the end of the projection horizon.

Lunch Assistance SLR Trends



- The percentage of students receiving lunch assistance has increased steadily.
- The need at Hill & Plain has increased more rapidly than at Northville, resulting in an 11% disparity between schools.
- In 2020-21 40% of New Milford elementary students received lunch assistance, enabling the district to qualify for Title 1 funding eligibility.
- The Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), offered by the Connecticut State Department of Education allows school districts to serve meals free of charge currently. It is anticipated that once/if this program is discontinued in the future our free/reduced numbers may increase.

Northville Elementary School

Using both NMPS internal data as well as the SLR data

22/23 Projected Enrollment with DRAFT STAFFING CHANGES YOU MAY SEE IN THE SUPERINTENDENTS PROPOSED BUDGET

	Grade					TOTAL
	PK	K	1	2		
October 1, 2021	61	127	123	138		449
FY 22-23 Projected	53	145	127	123		448
Enrollment Change	-8	18	4	-15		-1
Current # of Teachers	2.5 (5 sec)		7	8		
Current Class Size	12.2	18.1	17.6	17.3		
22/23 # of Teachers	2.5 (5 sec)		7	6		
22/23 Class Size	10.6	18.1	18.1	20.5		
Class Size Change	-1.6	0.0	0.6	3.3		

Year to year changes above are as follows:

- Reduction of 1.0 FTE from Grade 2
- Movement of 1.0 FTE from Grade 2 to Kindergarten

Hill & Plain Elementary School

Using both NMPS internal data as well as the SLR data

22/23 Projected Enrollment with DRAFT STAFFING CHANGES YOU MAY SEE IN
THE SUPERINTENDENTS PROPOSED BUDGET

	Grade				TOTAL
	PK	K	1	2	
October 1, 2021	39	111	101	104	355
FY 22-23 Projected	64	126	111	101	402
Enrollment Change	25	15	10	-3	47
Current # of Teachers	2.5 (5 sec)	6	6	6	
Current Class Size	7.8	18.5	16.8	17.3	
22/23 # of Teachers	2.5 (5 sec)	7	6	5	
22/23 Class Size	12.8	18.0	18.5	20.2	
Class Size Change	5.0	-0.5	1.7	2.9	

Year to year changes above are as follows:

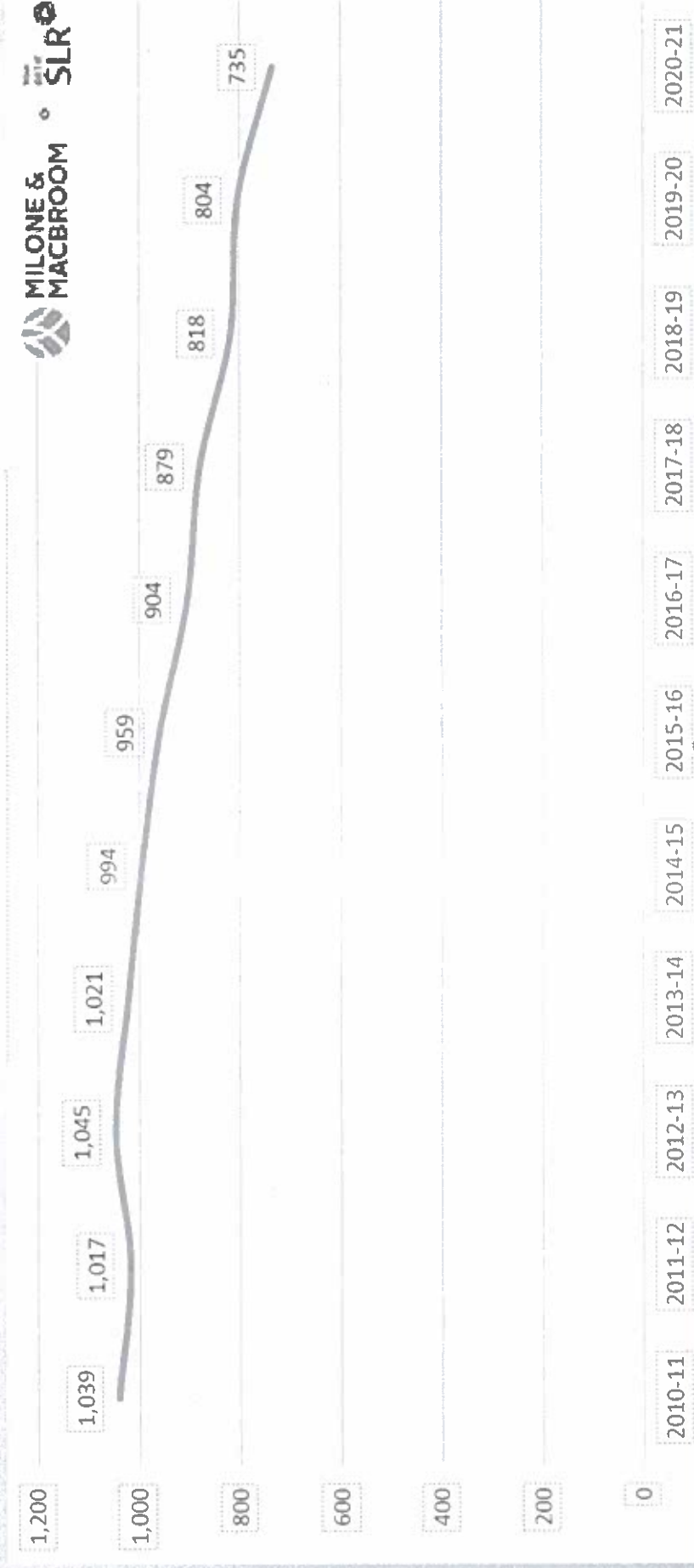
- Movement of 1.0 FTE from Grade 2 to Kindergarten

K-2 Class Size Compare

	K	1	2	Average
Current Class Size	NES	18.1	17.6	17.3
	HPS	18.5	16.8	17.3
	Variance	+ or - 0.4 + or - 0.8 + or - 0.0		
	K	1	2	Average
22.23 Projected Class Size	NES	18.1	18.1	20.5
	HPS	18.0	18.5	20.2
	Variance	+ or - 0.1 + or - 0.4 + or - 0.3		

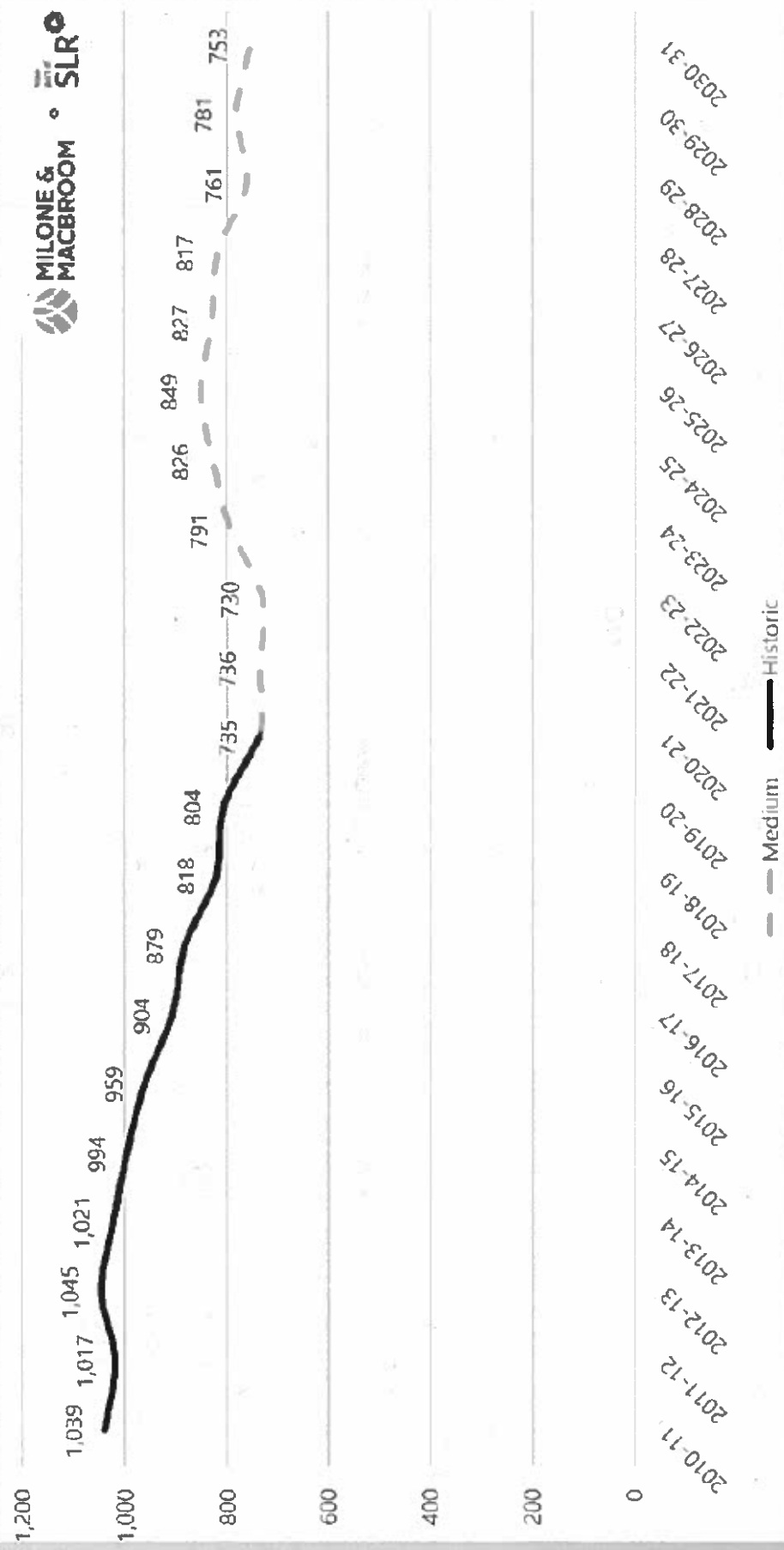
The projected data above demonstrates that with the movement of 2.0 FTE's from Grade 2 to Kindergarten we will still maintain an equitable class size in total (K-2) across both locations with minimal variances within individual grades when comparing the two buildings and still be able to realize a reduction of 1.0 FTE.

Sarah Noble Intermediate School SLR Enrollment Trends



- Intermediate (3-5) enrollment appears to have been slowly declining before the 2020-21 pandemic dip, beginning in 2012-13.
- Over the last 5 years Intermediate enrollment has decreased 18.7%.
- As mentioned on slide #4 the 10 year district wide enrollment has decreased by 22.0%.

Saran Nobie Intermediate School SLR Projections



- Larger K-2 classes matriculating upward.
- Intermediate School enrollment projected to increase over the next ten years, reaching and then settle to 753 students by 2030-31.
- Intermediate enrollments are projected to peak in 2025-26 with 849 students.

Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Using both NMPS internal data as well as the SLR data

22/23 Projected Enrollment with DRAFT STAFFING CHANGES YOU MAY SEE IN
THE SUPERINTENDENTS PROPOSED BUDGET

	Grade				TOTAL
	3	4	5	6	
October 1, 2021	242	236	273		751
FY 22-23 Projected	224	242	236		702
Enrollment Change	-18	6	-37	6	-49
Current # of Teachers	12	10	12		
Current Class Size	20.2	23.6	22.8		
22/23 # of Teachers	12	11	11		
22/23 Class Size	18.7	22.0	21.5		
Class Size Change	-1.5	-1.6	-1.3		

Year to year changes above are as follows:

- Movement of 1.0 FTE from Grade 5 to Grade 4

Schaghticoke Middle School

Using both NMPS internal data as well as the SLR data

22/23 Projected Enrollment

	Grade		
	6	7	8
October 1, 2021	253	279	280
FY 22/23 Projected	285	253	279
Enrollment Change	32	-26	-1
TOTAL	812	817	5

Zero (0) year to year changes to Teaching staff are currently anticipated for 22/23 at this location.

Future years starting in 23/24 may require Teaching staff adjustments as the current SNIS population moves up combined with the refreshed data provided by SLR if the actuals trend close to the projection.

Grade by grade notes for SMS

- Grade 6 - Added 12 to account for kids coming out of Magnet School as well as move-in's for this grade from out of country, historically after the October 1 . Same adjustment was used for current year.
- Grades 7 and 8 were informed by pure roll overs.

New Milford High School

Using both NMPS internal data as well as the SLR data

22/23 Projected Enrollment

	Grade				
	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
October 1, 2021	358	325	346	280	1309
FY 22/23 Projected	292	358	325	342	1317
Enrollment Change	-66	33	-21	62	8

Zero (0) year to year changes to Teaching staff are currently anticipated for 22/23 at this location.

Future years starting in 23/24 may require Teaching staff adjustments as indicated by the refreshed data provided by SLR if the actuals trend close to the projection.

Grade by grade notes for NMHS

- Grade 9 - Added 12 to Grade 9 from Sherman (versus 15 last year) due to Sherman decline in incoming freshman. Other adjustments account for the other options families have – Agri-Science, Henry Abbott Tech and possibly private schooling.
- Grade 10 and 11, 12 were informed by pure roll overs.
- Grade 12 – includes removal of 4 due to Adult-Ed matriculation, pure drops and pure transfers out based on historical data.

Litchfield Hills Transition Center

Ages 18-22*

Using NMPS internal data

22/23 Projected Enrollment

	TOTAL
October 1, 2021	14
FY 22/23 Projected	22
Enrollment Change	8

Year to year draft staffing changes for this location are as follows:

- Movement of 1.0 Teacher FTE to LHTC from a location to be determined.
- A request for an additional 2.0 FTE's of Para Educators are currently anticipated for 22/23 at this location.

* This program was extended 1 year to now include students up to their 22nd birthday.

Total District Projected Enrollment for 22/23

October 1, 2021	3690
FY 22/23 Projected	3708
Enrollment Change	18

The projected district wide, 18 student change year to year, represents a 0.49% change.

Any draft staffing changes based upon these projections included in this presentation are for efficiency and parity. The summary of the draft changes listed throughout this presentation are as follows:

- NES - Reduction of 1.0 Teacher FTE from Grade 2.
- NES - Movement of 1.0 Teacher FTE from Grade 2 to Kindergarten.
- HPS - Movement of 1.0 Teacher FTE from Grade 2 to Kindergarten.
- SNIS - Movement of 1.0 Teacher FTE from Grade 5 to Grade 4.
- LHTC - Movement of 1.0 Teacher FTE to LHTC from a location TBD.
- LHTC – A request for an additional 2.0 FTE’s of Para Educators.

The goal is to align enrollment projections with budget planning to efficiently use funds, balance space utilization and provide learning conducive class sizes.