

*Dennis K-8 School District Assessment
Review Committee Final Report*

Presentation to Dennis Board of
Selectmen

12 April 2011

Agenda

- **History: How Did We Get Here?**
- **Dennis K-8 School District Assessment Review Committee**
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- **Defining Superintendency Unions**
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- **Dennis K-8 Dedicated Administration Staffing – Possible Scenario**
- **Dennis K-8 In-school Staffing – EHB Possible Scenario (Base Case, Enhanced Case)**
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- **Summary**

History: How Did We Get Here?

In response to growing concern that continued significant school budget reductions have a detrimental effect on education, Dennis voters approved a request seeking the terms and conditions for withdrawal of Grades K-8 from the DY region. The Board of Selectmen established the K-8 Committee to study the issues and financial implications.

- **The Towns of Dennis and Yarmouth have shared schools since the 1950's and have been member communities of the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District for decades.**
- **The regional agreement divides the cost of educating students**
 - In 2007, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) formulated a new methodology for the calculation which blended the prior property value basis with a community's aggregate wealth (the assessment calculation as provided by Chapter 70)
- **Dennis has long paid >92% of foundation while Yarmouth was paying <80%. The state has been increasing Yarmouth's contribution and lowering Dennis' closer to the mandated 82.5%**
- **Concern has been growing among some Dennis residents that Yarmouth's financial challenges are having a detrimental effect on the type and scope of educational programs and services that Dennis believes is appropriate for its students**
 - As a result of this concern, an article at the May 4, 2010 Annual Town Meeting instructed the DY School Committee to prepare an article setting forth the terms and conditions by which Dennis may withdraw grades Kindergarten through Eighth grade from the Regional District; the vote passed by more than 60%
 - The Dennis Board of Selectmen created a special committee to develop an issues inventory with financial impacts and possible outcomes for creating a separate school system in Dennis for grades K-8

Dennis K-8 School District Assessment Review Committee

With the input and expertise of an extensive team, the K-8 Committee spent nearly eight months compiling the inventory of issues and assessing the educational and financial implications of withdrawing Grades K-8 from the DY region.

– Who

- Sheryl McMahon (BoS), Chair; Bob Prall (FinCom), Richard Colby, Brian Carey, Kim Crowell (community members)
- Mark Abrahams and associates (The Abrahams Group)
- Kevin Depin and Carole Eichner (principals of Ezra H Baker and Nathaniel H Wixon), Carol Woodbury (superintendent of D-Y), various staff members of D-Y district and administrative offices
- Steve Hemman (Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools)
- Christine Lynch (Center for School Finance, Planning, Research & Evaluation, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Nicholas Young, Superintendent Hadley Schools, *The Effectiveness, Value and Importance of Small School Districts*

– What

- The Committee was charged with developing an issues inventory with financial impacts and possible outcomes for the creation of a separate K-8 school system in Dennis

– When

- May 4, 2010: The article at the Dennis Annual Town Meeting initiating discussion about withdrawal from the DY region (instructing the DY School Committee to draw up terms and conditions)
- August 2010: The K-8 Committee was established
- March 31, 2011: Deadline for the K-8 Committee to report their findings to the Board of Selectmen
- The K-8 Committee met 21 times

Possible District Scenarios

Even if the two towns were to stay regionalized, there are different possible scenarios that the communities have discussed.

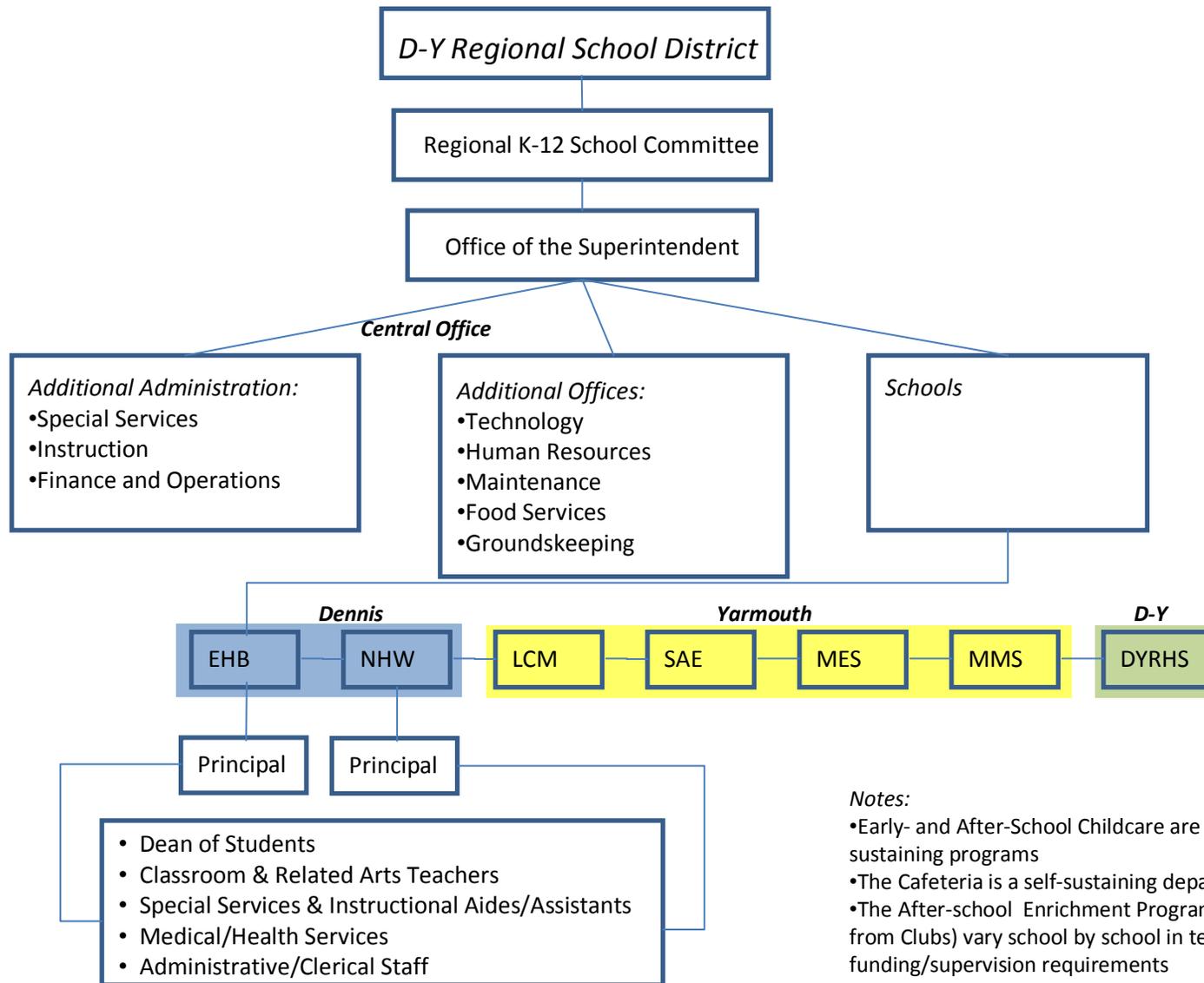
Remaining Regionalized		
<p><i>Status quo</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Stay a region –No economic or contractual changes 	<p><i>Regional agreement amended</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Agree with Yarmouth to discuss options for changes in economic contributions (e.g., grants) to meet desired educational needs in Dennis 	<p><i>Regionalizing further</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Downward regionalization –Grades 4-8, such that Grade 8 could fully move into DYRHS and Grades 4/5 and 6/7 could be united across town lines

Possible District Scenarios

However, the K-8 Committee was charged with identifying the issues and possible outcomes of creating a separate school system for Dennis children attending grades K-8. If this should occur, Yarmouth will also have a de-regionalized K-8 system.

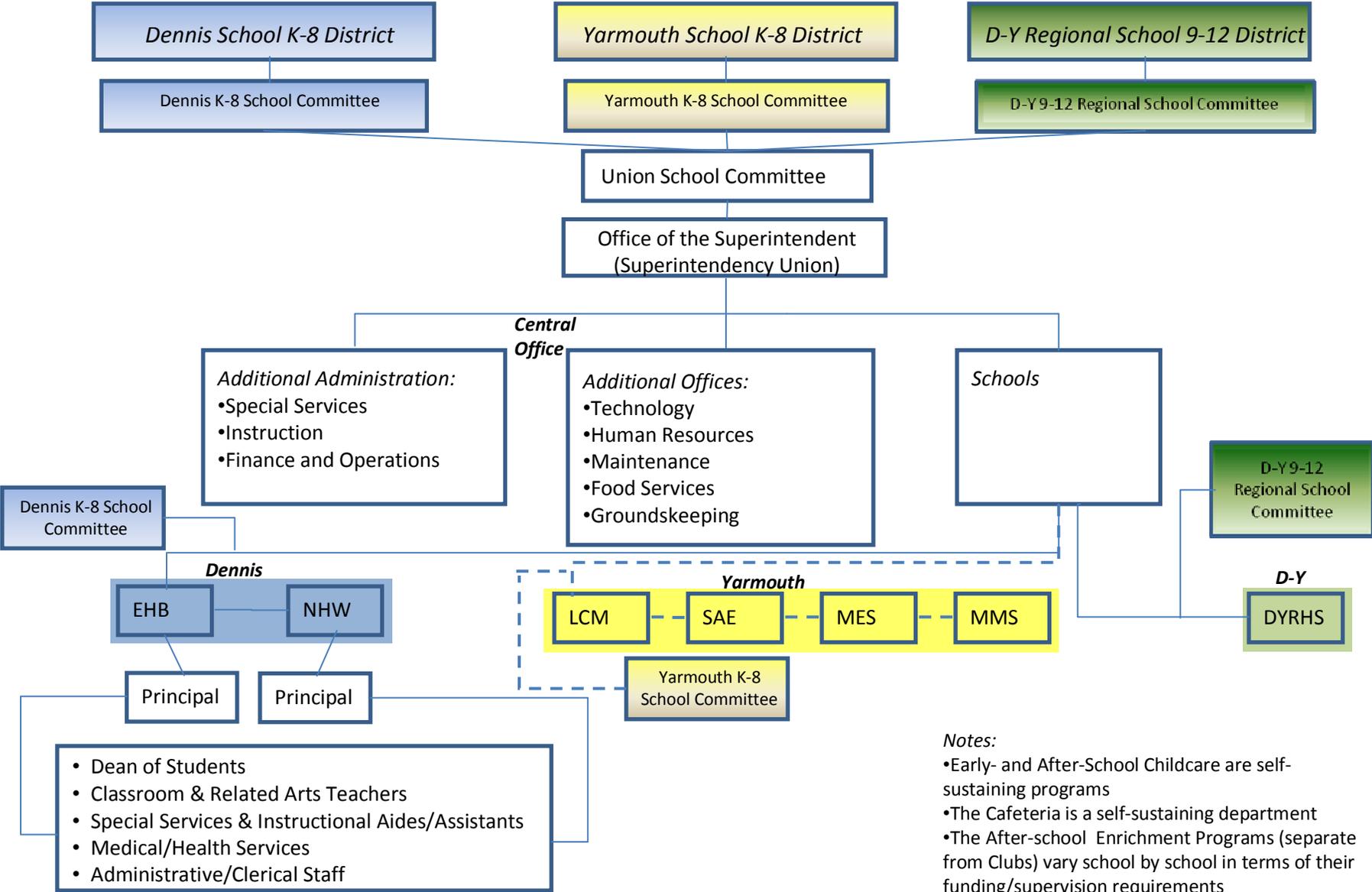
De-regionalizing K-8			
<i>Separate Dennis K-8 from D-Y Regional Agreement – Base Case Scenario</i>		<i>Separate Dennis K-8 from D-Y Regional Agreement – Enhanced Case Scenario</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased autonomy – <u>No</u> programmatic changes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased autonomy – <u>Enriched</u> programmatic offerings 	
<i>Possible Administrative Structure</i>		<i>Possible Administrative Structure</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Superintendency union shared with Yarmouth – K-8 Dennis School Committee – 9-12 regional School Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8) – K-8 Dennis School Committee – 9-12 regional School Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Superintendency union shared with Yarmouth – K-8 Dennis School Committee – 9-12 regional School Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8) – K-8 Dennis School Committee – 9-12 regional School Committee

DY Regional School District Organizational Chart - Current



- Notes:*
- Early- and After-School Childcare are self-sustaining programs
 - The Cafeteria is a self-sustaining department
 - The After-school Enrichment Programs (separate from Clubs) vary school by school in terms of their funding/supervision requirements

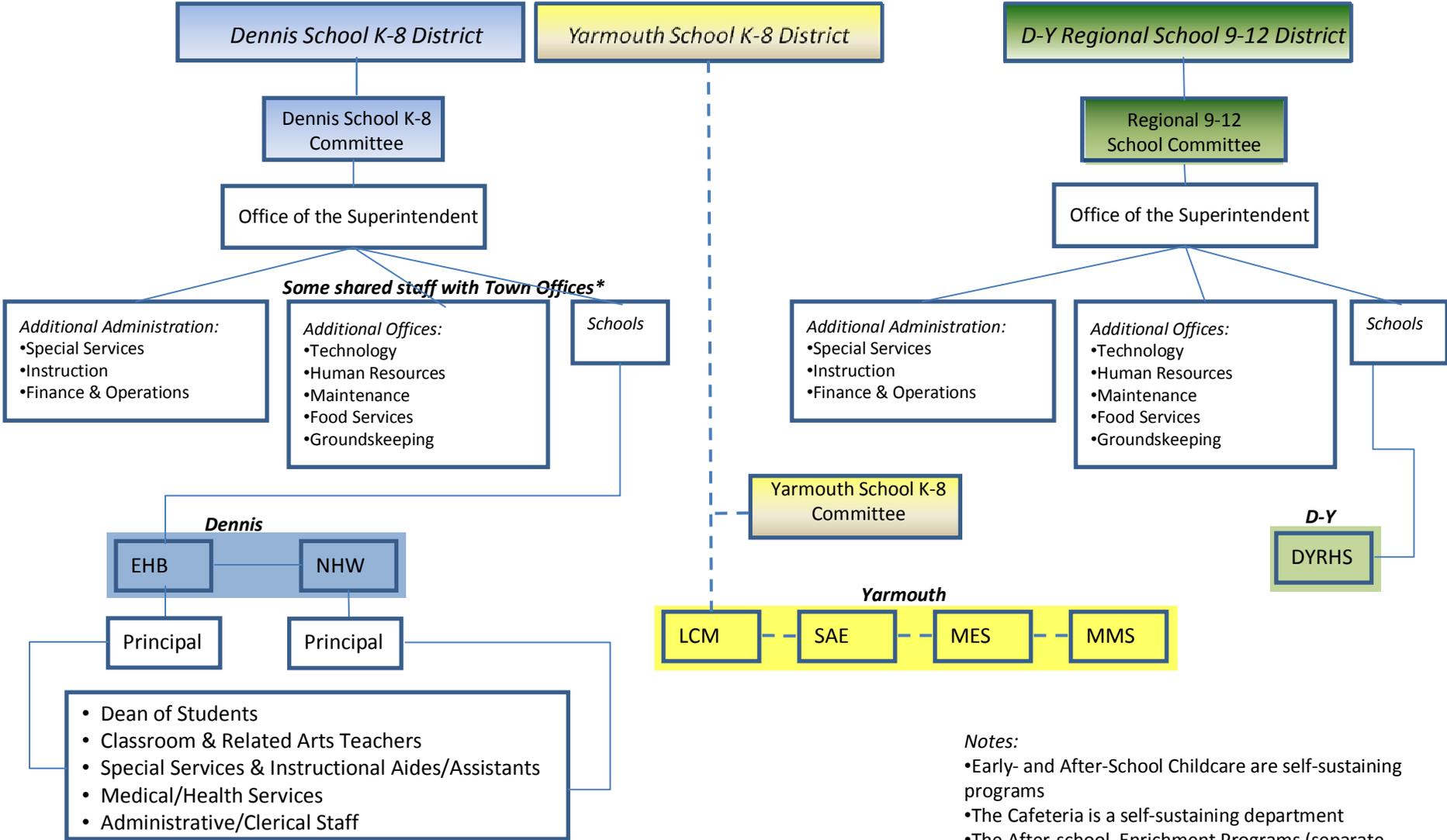
Dennis-Yarmouth School District Organizational Chart – Possible Scenario #1



Notes:

- Early- and After-School Childcare are self-sustaining programs
- The Cafeteria is a self-sustaining department
- The After-school Enrichment Programs (separate from Clubs) vary school by school in terms of their funding/supervision requirements

Dennis-Yarmouth School District Organizational Chart – Possible Scenario #2



Notes:

- Early- and After-School Childcare are self-sustaining programs
- The Cafeteria is a self-sustaining department
- The After-school Enrichment Programs (separate from Clubs) vary school by school in terms of their funding/supervision requirements

Defining Superintendency Unions

While Superintendency Unions can be time-consuming and potentially complicated or bureaucratic for those involved, they can offer economic benefits.

- **A superintendency union is governed by a joint union school committee**
 - Composed of three members of each constituent district school committee: the chairperson of each district committee and two other members appointed by the district committee
- **School budgets, school committees, parent organizations, teacher contracts, and curriculum choices of the respective school districts are unaffected by the Union structure**
- **The primary responsibilities of the joint union school committee are:**
 - Hiring the superintendent of schools
 - Establishing salary schedules, benefits, and other conditions of employment for the shared staff
 - Apportioning the shared costs among the member towns
- **In addition to the Superintendent, shared staff may include a SpEd Director (or Director of Pupil Services), a Director of Instruction, a Business Manager (or Finance/Operation Director), and related support personnel**
 - No other school staff, including school principals, are part of a Superintendency Union structure
- **Nauset and Martha's Vineyard are the two most proximal superintendency union districts**

Dennis K-8 Dedicated Administration Staffing – Possible Scenario

For a Dennis K-8 system with a dedicated administrative structure, the Committee offers this SUGGESTED model of staffing, which includes hiring both school-related employees and shoring up Dennis town departments that the school system would be relying upon...

Office of Superintendent (2 positions)

- Superintendent
- Administrative Assistant
 - *Current district positions: Superintendent, Administrative Assistant*

Office of Instruction/Special Services (4 positions)

- Director of Instruction/K-8 ELA Instructional Coach (ideally a joint position)
- Director of Pupil Services (SpEd/ELL)
- K-8 Math Instructional Coach
- Administrative Assistant (shared by Director of Instruction and Director of Pupil Services)
 - *Current district positions: Director of Instruction, Administrative Assistant (Dir. Of Instruction), ELA Instructional Coach (4-8) Math Instructional Coach (K-3), Director of Pupil Services, Administrative Assistant (Dir. Of Pupil Services)*

Dennis K-8 Dedicated Administration Staffing – Possible Scenario

Continued...

Finance (2 positions)

- Dennis Town Accountant expresses confidence she can assume schools' Business Manager role under the supervision of the Superintendent
 - *The Superintendent and Principals would make instructional-level purchasing decisions*
- Additional administrative staff would be needed for town staff: 1.0 FTE Accounts Payable and 1.0 FTE Payroll
 - *Current district positions: Director of Finance and Operations, Administrative Assistant to Director of Finance and Operations, Assistant Treasurer, Bookkeeper, Business Affairs and Medicaid Reimbursements – thus, town employees would be absorbing a certain amount of effort*

Human Resources (see overlap with Finance)

- Town Hall currently does not have an HR department, but the Town Administrator and Town Accountant express confidence school-related HR matters (e.g., benefits) could be subsumed under Town Hall with modest increase/shifting in staff; this likely would be an overlap with the added 1.0 FTE Payroll added in Finance
 - *Current district positions: Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent for Personnel*

Dennis K-8 Dedicated Administration Staffing – Possible Scenario

Continued...

Technology (1.5 positions)

- *Director of Technology from both DY and Town of Dennis were consulted*
- Director of Technology Instruction/Media Services
- Town's Director of Technology expresses confidence that schools' Director of Technology role could be subsumed under town Technology Department (with increase in salary to Town's Director role), but additional technology maintenance professional would be needed for town staff (1.0 FTE maintenance tech and increase from PT to FT video tech)
- (Other scenario would be to contract technology services from DY)
 - *Current district positions: Director of Technology, Director of Instructional Technology, Instructional Technology Assistant, Administrative Assistant for Technology, Technology Maintenance Specialist, Technology Maintenance Specialist – thus, town employees would be absorbing a certain amount of effort*

Grounds (staff)

- *Assistant Director of DPW was consulted*
- Add to town DPW, but on an estimated \$ budget not in terms of FTE because DPW staff often is PT and seasonally based
 - *Current district positions: Grounds Foreman, 3 staff*

Dennis K-8 Dedicated Administration Staffing – Possible Scenario

Continued...

Custodial

- Costed out based on existing contracted services
- Currently, indirect supervision from custodial company plus additional onsite supervision from principals
 - Assistant Director of DPW expresses potential for additional supervisory role of contracted services

Maintenance

- Costed out based on existing contracted services + proportion of district maintenance staff time (25%)
- DPW can subsume (based on costed-out additional FTEs) carpenter, mechanic, and administrative assistant
- DPW would contract (based on costed-out contract services fees) plumbing, electrical, and HVAC services
 - Assistant Director of DPW expresses potential for additional supervisory role of contracted services
 - *Current district positions: Complex Supervisor, Administrative Assistant, Carpenter, Plumber, Electrician, Mechanic, Mechanic*

Food Services

- Multiple options, but this is not a full-time (i.e., 1.0 FTE) position for two schools of EHB+NHW size; continue to share Food Services Coordinator with Yarmouth? Outsource all food services?
- Position, benefits, and program described to be covered by receipts from program
 - *Current district positions: Coordinator*

Dennis K-8 In-school Staffing – EHB Possible Scenario

For a Dennis K-8 system, we offer two SUGGESTED models of in-school staffing – a base case scenario and an enhanced case scenario.

Ezra H Baker Base Case

All staffing would remain exactly the same as exists in the regionalized system – as of FY12 cuts:

Administration

- Principal, Dean of Students, associated secretarial staff

Classroom Teachers

- Four Kindergarten, four 1st grade, four 2nd grade, and four 3rd grade teachers

Related Arts Teachers

- Art, Music, and PE teachers
- No library

Special Education (SpEd) Education

- SpEd teachers and SpEd assistants

Additional specialized instructional services

- Reading Recovery, Consulting Teacher of Reading, English Language Learning (ELL), Academic support, Kindergarten assistants

Psycho-social, medical, & other specialized services

- Psychologist, Social Worker, Nurses, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist

Dennis K-8 In-school Staffing – EHB Possible Scenario

The Enhanced Case scenario would restore recently reduced essential positions as well as introduce new enrichment and educational support programs.

Ezra H Baker Enhanced Case

Same as Base Case Scenario with the following SUGGESTED additions...

Classroom Teachers

–Hire one more teacher than FY12 (3rd grade), reducing class size to preferred range of 18-20 students (vs. 23-24)

Related Arts Teachers

–Hire joint 1.0 FTE Library/Computer teacher

SpEd Education

– Hire 3.0 FTE more SpEd aides/assistants than FY12 (same number of FTEs that were reduced from FY11)

Enrichment Programs

–Hire 0.6 FTE foreign language teacher

–Hire 0.6 FTE specialized enrichment/experiential learning teacher

–Hire 2 additional staff associated with before- and afterschool day care for extended educational support (however, these staff are paid for by revenue generated by the program)

Switching from the current five-day schedule to a six-day schedule (as exists at NHW)

–This shift would offer more flexibility in scheduling for academic, related arts, and enhancement programs

The possibility of a modestly extended school day

–An extension in school time (potentially via staff shifts) would allow for additional programmatic enhancements

Grant Writing

–Hire contractual K-8 district grant writer dedicated to help writing grants across all departments/programs

Dennis K-8 In-school Staffing – NHW Possible Scenario

For a Dennis K-8 system, we offer two SUGGESTED models of in-school staffing – a base case scenario and an enhanced case scenario.

Nathaniel H Wixon Base Case

All staffing would remain exactly the same as exists in the regionalized system – as of FY12 cuts:

Administration

- Principal, Assistant Principal, associated secretarial staff

Classroom Teachers

- Four 4th, four 5th, five 6th, four 7th, and four 8th grade teachers

Related Arts Teachers

- Art (2D and 3D), General Music, Health, Technology, Band/Orchestra/Chorus, and PE teachers
- Foreign Language (at 7th and 8th grade only)
- No library

SpEd Education

- SpEd teachers and SpEd assistants

Additional specialized instructional services

- Consulting Teacher of Reading, ELL, Academic support

Psycho-social, medical, & other specialized services

- Psychologist, Social Worker, Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist

Dennis K-8 In-school Staffing – NHW Possible Scenario

The Enhanced Case scenario would restore recently reduced essential positions as well as introducing new enrichment and educational support programs.

Nathaniel H Wixon Enhanced Case

Same as Base Case Scenario with the following SUGGESTED additions...

Classroom Teachers

–Hire one more teacher than FY12 (4th grade), reducing class size to preferred range of 18-20 students (vs. 24-25)

Related Arts Teachers

–Hire joint 0.5 FTE Library/Computer teacher (library class is for Grades 4-6 only)

SpEd Education

– Hire 3.0 FTE more SpEd aides/assistants than FY12

Enrichment Programs

–Hire 0.6 FTE specialized enrichment/experiential learning teacher

- Organize and ensure additional opportunities for students to participate in creative hands-on scholarship activities inside and outside of school (e.g., Destination Imagination)

–Incorporate foreign language into schedule at earlier grades (4th – 6th) as an exploratory subject

- Foreign language in 7th – 8th grades is taught as a content subject currently and will continue as such

–Offer additional enrichment courses during the school day or through afterschool programs , such as drama

The possibility of a modestly extended school day

–An extension in school time (potentially via staff shifts) would allow for additional programmatic enhancements

Grant Writing

–Hire contractual K-8 district grant writer dedicated to help writing grants across all departments/programs

Financial Implications of De-regionalizing

The current cost of educating Dennis' K-8 population is approximately \$9.5M. The Superintendency Union is the more economically efficient of the proposed scenarios. Transitional costs are estimated as an upfront impact of \$400,000.

Total Cost to Dennis for K-8 Schools				
FY11 (September 2010- June 2011)	Adjusted for FY12* (September 2011-June 2012)		Adjusted FY12* (September 2011-June 2012)	
<i>Current Actual</i>	<i>Proposed Base Case Scenario</i>		<i>Proposed Enhanced Case Scenario</i>	
Regional K-12 Superintendent	Superintendency Union Shared with Yarmouth	Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8)	Superintendency Union Shared with Yarmouth	Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8)
\$9,458,000				
<i>Initial Year</i>	\$10,101,000	\$10,628,000	\$10,718,000	\$11,245,000
<i>Out Years (- Transition)</i>	\$9,701,000	\$10,228,000	\$10,318,000	\$10,845,000

*This is intended to be a financial model that closely reflects the staffing and programmatic offerings recommended by the D-Y School Committee and Administration for FY12. The Dennis K-8 Committee recognizes that the FY12 school budget has not yet gone through the Town Meeting process. As such, the K-8 Committee made adjustments to the known FY11 budget, including the staff reductions approved of by the D-Y School Committee and appropriate salary step increases, to gain an estimated "adjusted" FY12 budget.

Financial Implications of De-regionalizing (Continued)

The least expensive option (the proposed Base Case with Superintendency Union) would cost an estimated 3% more in the out years than Dennis currently spends; the Enhanced case with dedicated Superintendent would be an estimated 15% more.

How Much More Would K-8 De-Regionalization Cost Annually Than Current K-8 Regional Spending Cost in Dennis?

	<i>Proposed Base Case Scenario Superintendency Union</i>	<i>Proposed Enhanced Case Scenario Superintendency Union</i>
Initial Year	\$643,000	\$1,260,000
Estimated Out Years <i>(level funding minus transition costs)*</i>	\$243,000	\$860,000
	<i>Proposed Base Case Scenario Dedicated Superintendent</i>	<i>Proposed Enhanced Case Scenario Dedicated Superintendent</i>
Initial Year	\$1,170,000	\$1,787,000
Estimated Out Years <i>(level funding minus transition costs)*</i>	\$770,000	\$1,387,000

**Understanding that other factors (Chapter 70, insurance, etc.) always change annually*

Financial Implications of De-regionalizing (Continued)

Depending on the proposed scenario, the tax implications for a median-level property holder in Dennis range anywhere from an estimated additional \$30-\$90/year in the initial year; this is estimated to be closer to \$10-\$70/year in the out years.

Additional Tax Impact for \$300,000 Property				
	<i>Proposed Base Case Scenario</i>		<i>Proposed Enhanced Case Scenario</i>	
	Superintendency Union Shared with Yarmouth	Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8)	Superintendency Union Shared with Yarmouth	Dedicated Dennis Superintendent (K-8)
<i>Initial Year</i>	\$31.82/yr	\$57.91/yr	\$62.63/yr	\$88.44/yr
<i>Out Years (- Transition)</i>	\$12.03/yr	\$38.11/yr	\$42.56/yr	\$68.65/yr

Variables that Contributed to Calculating the Scenarios

In addition to examining various scenarios from a structural and programmatic point of view, the Committee necessarily incorporated numerous variables to populate the financial analysis for the Base and Enhanced Case Scenarios.

- **Staffing**
- **Chapter 70 Aid**
- **Transitional Costs**
- **Enrollment Including Choice and Charter Tuitions**
- **Additional Budget Line Items**

The Challenges of Remaining Regionalized

With remaining regionalized, the citizens of Dennis do not have full decision-making power in managing the education of our K-8 children and affecting the changes that many exiting and local existing families are desiring.

- **Lack of financial autonomy**

- As has been seen over past several years, financial cuts (and therefore programmatic and staff cuts) have been required in both of the district's towns because "level services" or "level funding" budgets have been requested by the Town of Yarmouth. Further, no school-specific overrides have passed in the Town of Yarmouth in recent years.

- **Lack of academic autonomy**

- Dennis has limited ability to provide desired programs or supplies/resources if such programs are not also available in Yarmouth.

- **Lack of being able to affect changes that would make modifications to the educational system sought by some families leaving for alternate schooling options**

- **Annual anxiety and apprehension experienced by multiple levels of community (families, school, Dennis, Yarmouth) around budget time**

The Benefits of Remaining Regionalized

With remaining regionalized, teachers and administrators benefit from increased opportunities for collaboration and professional development. Additionally, students enter DYRHS with parallel curriculum experiences.

– Existing Extensive Collaboration Opportunities

- Teachers in the regional system now collaborate with grade level teachers from several schools, hence providing a much wider foundation to share experiences, expertise, and divergent thoughts
 - Teachers/administrators have abundant access to the ideas, materials, and strategies at multiple schools within the region, and are not limited to the resources and viewpoints within only one building

– Integrated Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development

- A district-wide mechanism is in place to use data to drive decisions regarding curriculum, professional development, instruction, and further assessment
 - The present system provides common assessments as well as district-wide integrated professional and curriculum development

– Dennis and Yarmouth students enter DYRHS with having access to parallel academic offerings

The Benefits of Remaining Regionalized

With remaining regionalized, there also is realization of some financial benefit.

– Financial benefits

- In town-only system, less incentive exists to save: unspent funds return to town (E&D not allowed)
 - Regionally, the district is allowed to keep unspent funds
- Costs for consultants, programs (strings, e.g.), special teachers spread district-wide
- Costs for maintenance staff (including district carpenter, plumber, electrician, mechanic, et al) are spread across the district
- Potential lower administrative/operating costs through economies of scale
- Current regional system qualifies for grants available to K-12 systems only
- Transportation reimbursement is provided to regional districts (\$166,000 currently for K-8)
- A regional system (vs. three separate districts) avoids duplication of centralized administrative services
- Larger districts spend smaller % of budgets on administrative costs than smaller districts
- Bulk purchasing opportunities greater in a larger system
- Regional school district capital projects qualify for greater state reimbursement

The Challenges of De-regionalizing

With de-regionalizing the possibilities of enhanced educational programs, but not the finances, are endless. The K-8 Committee has developed the following SUGGESTED inventory of potential weaknesses of de-regionalizing.

- **More expensive (especially taking into account initial transition costs)**
- **Loss of Transportation Aid for K-8**
- **Less inherent instructional collaboration with teachers/administrative leaders in other schools**
 - However, de-regionalizing does not preclude schools from collaborating with any other school
- **Dennis students may be entering DYRHS with having access to different academic offerings than Yarmouth students**
 - Potential lack of a parallel curriculum for incoming students at the regional high school (DYRHS)

The Benefits of De-regionalizing

As stated, with de-regionalizing the possibilities of enhanced educational programs, but not the finances, are endless. The K-8 Committee has developed the following SUGGESTED inventory of potential benefits of de-regionalizing.

- **Increased financial autonomy**

- **Increased academic autonomy**

Such as being able to offer these possible programmatic enhancements:

- Foreign language in grades K-6
- More emphasis on experiential learning
- The return of librarians and SpEd aides
- Talented and gifted opportunities
- Drama programs in both schools
- Potentially extending the school day
- Increased curriculum-based field trips
- Developmental guidance program
- Enhanced family education/support services

The Benefits of De-regionalizing

Continued...

- **With the more enriched program, potentially reap benefits of increasing K-8 school population via school choice**
 - Or, at a minimum, curb the shrinking enrollment
- **Potential for greater community involvement**
 - The Dennis School Committee would have the opportunity to focus on the education in just one town (K-8)
 - Closer citizen identification with the two local schools (K-8)
- **Dennis students may be entering DYRHS with having access to different academic offerings than Yarmouth students**
 - Though previously listed as a potential challenge of de-regionalizing, the Committee also points out the potential benefit of having access to the *Enhanced Case Scenario*: NHW students will be entering the DYRHS having been offered a greater breadth and depth of academic programs

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

In the process of identifying possible outcomes and projected costs associated with de-regionalizing K-8th grade in Dennis, the Committee has compiled an inventory of outstanding concerns.

- **Commonwealth’s position on regionalization vs. de-regionalization**
 - The Commonwealth is clear that regionalization and consolidation are favored over stand alone districts
 - Current incentives for regionalization/consolidation include:
 - Some transportation funds
 - Increased partial reimbursement for capital projects
 - \$50.00/student bonus for five years for new regions (this incentive has not been funded by the legislature as of yet)
 - Recent State publications speak of the creation or expansion of additional incentives for districts to regionalize or consolidate
 - The Executive office of Education lists theoretical benefits of regionalization which include:
 - “Increased central office capacity to support instruction, increased academic opportunities and program choice for students and parents, and lower operating and administrative costs through economies of scale”
 - In spite of the Commonwealth’s preferred position on regionalization, a representative from the DESE has stated de-regionalizing is allowable; should both towns vote in favor of de-regionalization for grades K-8, the next steps include:
 - Create an amendment to the regional agreement
 - Create and submit to the DESE: 1) an organizational plan, 2) an educational plan, 3) a financial plan (i.e., budget)
 - Pursue collective bargaining agreements (4 unions)

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

Continued...

– **8th Grade Pilot Program**

- 86 seventh grade students have applied to Pilot Program at DYRHS (as of 4/7/11), 19 of whom are from Dennis (22%); the program initially was intended to be for 40 students total
- Raises this issue: if the Pilot Program succeeds and 8th grade moves to DYRHS, should the article for de-regionalization be for K-7?

– **Additional Issue of Complicating and Potentially Conflicting Warrant Articles**

- A petitioned article at Town Meeting calls for the further regionalization at the lower grades
 - This would enable students in Grade 4-8 to cross town lines (to potentially group all Dennis and Yarmouth 4th and 5th graders in one school and all Dennis and Yarmouth 6th and 7th graders another school, assuming the 8th grade moves fully in DYRHS at some point in the future)
- The K-8 Committee cautions about the potential for confusion regarding the differing messages and notes the importance of informed debate on both topics for Dennis citizens before a vote on either article is cast
- The order that the two articles are voted on seems important
 - Is it possible to have information on both articles presented prior to either one being voted on? This might alleviate the impact of order.

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

Continued...

– **Yarmouth's POV**

- For de-regionalization to even be a consideration for Dennis, Yarmouth also has to vote affirmatively to amend the regional agreement, leading both towns to de-regionalize K-8
- If Dennis de-regionalizes K-8 (or K-7), but keeps the remaining grades (9-12) in the current regionalized high school, Yarmouth would automatically be de-regionalized at the lower grades as well.

– **Superintendency Union Model vs. Dedicated K-8 Superintendent Model**

- Under superintendency union the towns presumably would continue sharing a Director of Instruction; this would be beneficial in terms of parity and parallelism of curriculum as students from both towns enter DYRHS, but may reduce Dennis's freedom and flexibility to make alternate curricular choices
- Economics are slightly more favorable under the superintendency union model – not just from a staffing POV, but also from an economies of scale POV when negotiating contracted services

– **Transportation**

- In de-regionalizing the lower grades, Chapter 71 transportation funding (though already diminishing) will be lost. However, the proposed Terms of Withdrawal stipulate continuing joint purchase of regular day student transportation.
- St Pius currently falls under the D-Y regional transportation agreement. If K-8 de-regionalizes, Dennis would be relieved of the commitment to transport St. Pius students, but Yarmouth would not. The current total cost is \$60K (\$12,165 paid by Dennis). The Town of Dennis would need to assess next steps.

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

Continued...

– Questions of Equity

- Station Avenue School is currently sited on DY Regional District property
 - If there are separate K-8 districts would the Region be compensated for Station Ave (site rent)?
- If the existing Region remains intact, is there a possibility of amending the Regional agreement in a way that would allow member communities to award grants to their schools in addition to their regular budget obligations?

– Capacity Constraints

- There currently is more space available for growth at NHW than there is at EHB. Should the 8th grade move to DYRHS there certainly will be more room at NHW than at EHB for growth.
- Assessment needs to be undertaken to evaluate a more complete picture of maximum capacity numbers in each school and classrooms (while maintaining an optimal learning environment)
- These capacity issues leave open the possibility for creative options (e.g., moving the Pre-K program to NHW)

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

Continued...

– Legal

- The recently submitted Terms and Conditions of Withdrawal of K-8 by the DY School Committee, or any other negotiated amendment to the Regional Agreement, must be agreed upon by a vote in both Yarmouth and Dennis; further such terms must be approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- There will need to be contractual agreements between a newly formed K-8 district and vendors for shared expenses such as transportation, IT ,and food service

– Intra-District Special Education Students

- EHB and NHW house district-wide SpEd programs, which they would not be obligated to continue if K-8 de-regionalized
- The programs are well-developed and have been in place for quite some time; thus it is likely that the two schools would continue to offer the programs
 - Yarmouth currently sends six K-3 and four 4-8 students to Dennis for various SpEd programs
- In a de-regionalized setting, Dennis and Yarmouth would need to negotiate an agreement for the Yarmouth SpEd students educated in Dennis schools (or vice versa)

Remaining Issues and Open Questions

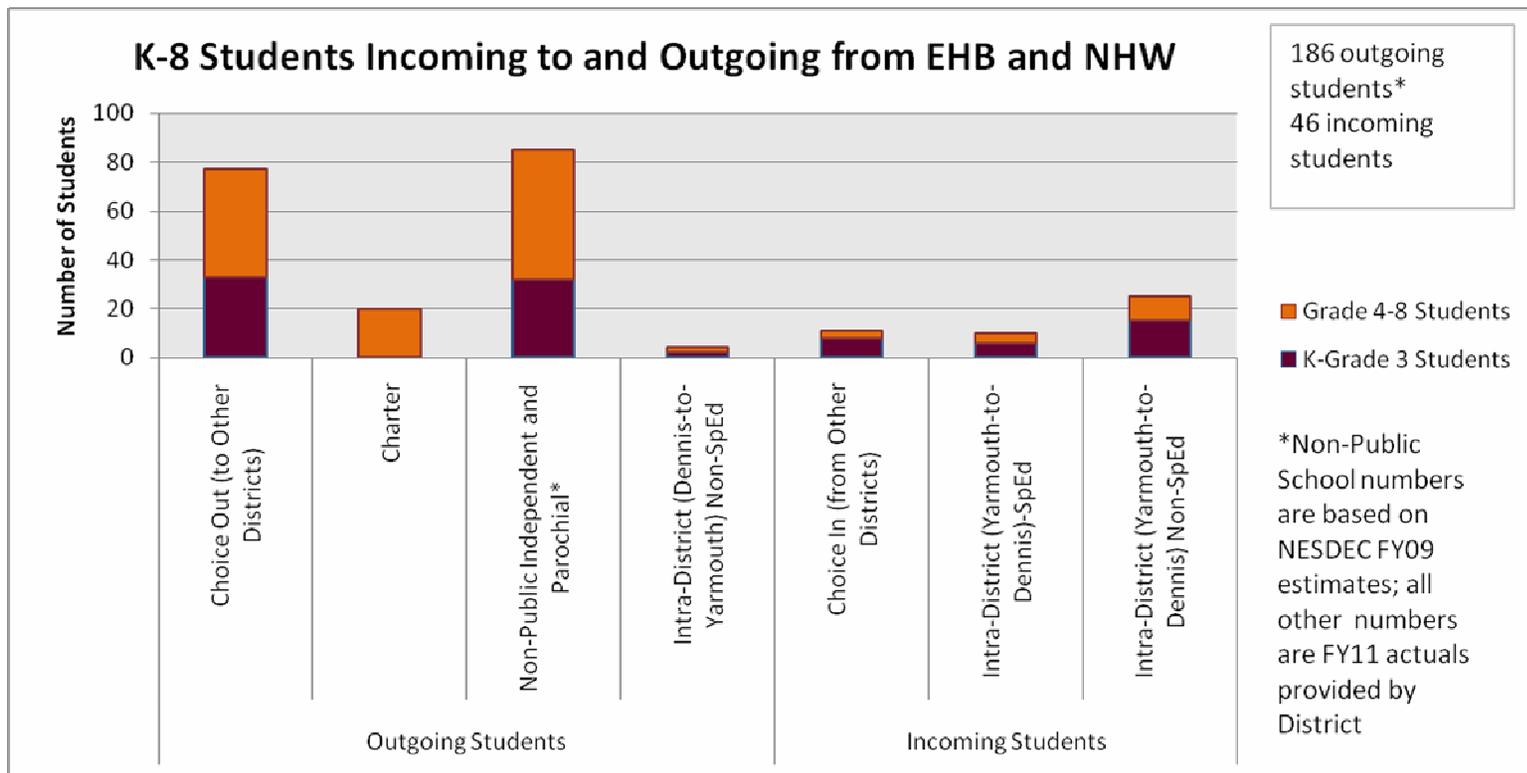
Continued...

– Student Enrollment/Population

- The K-8 Committee has utilized several inputs for student population numbers:
 - An Enrollment Projections study conducted by New England School Development Council (*NESDEC*, January 2010) incorporates local real estate, migration, birth rate, drop-out/transfer, and grade-retention trends; however, in this forecast through 2020 NESDEC provides a one-time snapshot that cannot predict annual dynamics that occasionally affect the D-Y district enrollment
 - While a forecast is very useful to have, the FY10 PreK-8 enrollment NESDEC forecast figure underestimated the actual enrollment in Dennis by 23 students and the FY11 PreK-8 NESDEC figure overestimated by 22 students in Dennis, thus having a variance of about 2.6% in either direction each year – or potentially one whole classroom worth of students depending on where the fluctuations occur
 - The matters of Choice, Charter, and Private Schools are of critical importance, particularly with the recent regionalization of Chatham-Harwich and the impending more proximal move of the Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School. The Committee has utilized District-provided Choice-In, Choice-Out, and Charter enrollment numbers
- According to the US Census numbers just released, Dennis saw a population decrease greater than most towns on Cape Cod – both for overall population (11.1%) and for ≤ 18 (26.7%)
 - If population was to continue decreasing at such a rate resulting in an enrollment decline significant enough to continue a reduction in number of grade sections at EHB and NHW, what would be the minimum number of students/sections at these schools the town needs to offer to maintain the quantity and quality of programs the townspeople would want and our students would deserve?
- In the Enhanced Case Scenario of de-regionalizing, the K-8 Committee suggest academic programs to be offered in Dennis that are currently offered at schools where Dennis families now are sending their children through the School Choice or Charter system; it would be reasonable to expect an increase in the Dennis K-8 student enrollment under the Enhanced Case Scenario

Student Enrollment: Now and in the Future

As of January 2011, there were approximately 850 students in EHB and NHW (Pre-K-Grade 8). Almost 200 K-8 Dennis students seek education elsewhere while almost 50 non-Dennis students come to Dennis for education. To offset the cost of the Enhanced Case Scenario, Dennis would need to attract 100-200 additional students depending on superintendency model; delete transition costs and that range reduces to 25-130 additional students.



Summary

In a nutshell...

– **What would de-regionalizing Grades K-8 cost Dennis residents?**

- The Base Case would cost the Town \$643,000-\$1,170,000 more (in the initial year) or an estimated \$243,000-\$770,000 more (in the out years) than it did to educate its K-8 students this year (FY11), depending on superintendency model
- The Enhanced Case would cost the Town \$1,260,000-\$ 1,787,000 more (in the initial year) or an estimated \$860,000-\$ 1,387,000 more (in the out years) than it did to educate its K-8 students this year (FY11), depending on superintendency model
 - Tax implications: \$30-\$60 more/year for the median property holder in Dennis in the Base Case and \$60-\$90 more/year in the Enhanced Case for the initial year; those rates would drop to an estimated annual rate of \$10-\$40/yr or \$40-\$70/yr, respectively

– **What would Dennis residents get for that added cost (in the Enhanced Case Scenario)?**

- Greater financial and academic autonomy
- Opportunity for more enriched academic programs
- Potential for greater community involvement and citizen identification with the two Dennis schools
- Prospect of attracting students into the K-8 district

– **What might Dennis residents lose while paying that added cost?**

- Collaboration inherent among teachers/administrators at similar grades in other schools in the regional district
- Integrated curriculum with Yarmouth – particularly as students advance into DYRHS
- Financial benefits of being regionalized

– **What is the next step?**

- Obtain community feedback via a “town hall meeting” style forum