

VIII. SCHOOL FACILITIES & SERVICES

The purpose of this chapter is not to evaluate or express any future view concerning Grantham's school facilities and services. These duties are in the hands of others. The purpose here is to acquaint the public with the educational enterprise that exists in Grantham, and to identify issues that the community will face as it strives to maintain the vibrancy and rich contribution that enterprise makes to the town.

GRANTHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Grantham School District operates the Grantham Village School (GVS). The school provides educational services for Grantham children in grades K through 6. The Grantham Village School is located on Learning Drive, just off NH Route 114. In addition, the Grantham School District provides education on a tuition basis for Grantham children in grades 7 and 8 at the Lebanon Junior High School, and in grades 9 through 12 at the Lebanon High School. Bus service is provided to all three schools by the district.

The responsibility for the operation of the Grantham School District rests with a five-member School Board elected by the citizens of Grantham at the annual School District Meeting. The electoral term for board members is three years. Typically, one to two board positions are elected each year.

The bulk of the funds to operate the Grantham Village School are derived from local property taxes. The amount of funds made available is approved by the taxpayers by vote at the annual district meeting. At the annual meeting, those eligible residents "present and voting" act on the budget and any other warrant articles presented.

Administrative services for the Grantham School District are provided by School Administrative Unit (SAU) 75. These services include coordination with the Lebanon School District for Grantham's 7th through 12th grades. Overall responsibility for day-to-day operations and budget expenditures rests with the Superintendent of the SAU. The School Administration Unit 75 office will be located in the new Grantham Municipal Complex beginning in 2005.

Grantham Village School Building

The original facility was built in 1979, with two major additions built later, the most recent being completed in 2000-2001. The Grantham Village School operating capacity is 270 pupils, based on additional classroom space added in 2004. The enrollment for 2004-2005 is 211, while the expected enrollment for 2005-2006 is 223.

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The historical growth rate for GVS is 12-14 pupils per year. The following table indicates staffing and classroom resources needed for the projected enrollment of 223 students in 2005-2006.

2005-2006 GVS Teacher-Classroom Allocation for 223 Students		
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Students</i>
K	2	18/17
1	2	17/18
2	2	12/13
3	2	20/21
4	1	20
4/5	1	11/11
5	1	19
6	2	13/13
Totals	13 Teachers	223 Students

School Enrollment Projection Factors

(Based on New England School Development Council (NESDC) Report, 2003, modified in 2004.)

- The turnover of 3- and 4-bedroom homes, from older families without children to younger families with children.
- New housing start rates continue at 40-45 units per year, as shown in the table presented in Chapter II, *Demographics*, and reproduced on the following page.
- Approximately 80% of seasonal homes sold in Eastman are converted to year-round homes.
- Private school and home-school rates will remain at present levels: less than 10 home-schooled, less than 10 in private schools.
- Annual birth rate through 2013 is estimated at 20-32 per year (up 36% in 2000-2003 compared to 1995-2000).

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GRANTHAM BUILDING PERMITS 1988-2004	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of New Home Building Permits</i>
1988	65
1989	54
1990	27
1991	27
1992	17
1993	22
1994	28
1995	22
1996	24
1997	25
1998	21
1999	25
2000	35
2001	32
2002	45
2003	59
2004	38

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Grantham School District Enrollment Projections K-12

(Based on New England School Development Council Report, 2003. The estimates for K-6 were refined by NESDC, 2004-05)

Enrollment: 2005-06 through 2013-14			
<i>School Year</i>	<i>K-6</i>	<i>7-8</i>	<i>9-12</i>
2005-06	223	61	110
2006-07	265	57	118
2007-08	302	60	118
2008-09	332	68	112
2009-10	356	82	114
2010-11	unk*	78	119
2011-12	unk	78	135
2012-13	unk	96	139
2013-14	unk	130	152

*unk: Unknown based on lack of birth rate information for 2005 and later years. Assuming a continuation of the historical birth rate, new housing start rates, and migrations of families with children to Grantham (7.2% K-6 growth rate), the 2015 school population projections could reach over 500 students.

Grantham Village School Needs Assessment

The New England School Development Council study identified the lack of dedicated music and art teaching stations as a major deficiency. Both the art and music teachers use the school cafeteria. With the current GVS enrollment of over 200, the cafeteria is stressed to provide an efficient flow of students in view of all the demands placed upon this space.

With the projected school population (302) exceeding the present school capacity (270) beginning in school year 2007-2008, the Grantham School Board is faced with building options which include the following:

- Employ interim measures, e.g., increase student load in each classroom to 20 for grades K-3 and 25 in grades 4-6 (providing space for 285 students), use portable classrooms, and/or develop other options.
- Expand the current GVS building, providing additional classrooms and facilities for projected student enrollments in excess of 400.

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- Construct a second school building on the present school site, to be used as a middle school for students in grades 5-8, and use the existing GVS building for grades K-4.

Formed in 2004-2005, the Grantham Village School Long Range Planning Committee (made up of Grantham residents, School Board members, and school administrators) is now exploring the above options and will provide recommendations to the citizens of Grantham. The review of options will contain benefit-cost analyses, site-selection opportunities, and financing options. Construction could commence as early as 2007 to meet 2008-2009 school year projected enrollment of over 330.

A School Building trust fund for GVS expansion was approved at the 2004 School District Meeting. It is expected that this trust fund will add funds each of the next three to four years to offset projected funding requirements for a modified or new school facility in 2008.

GOAL

- Provide the best possible education for Grantham's school children in appropriate facilities at a reasonable cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In conjunction with the Town of Grantham, develop an integrated Capital Improvements Program (CIP) addressing the costs, timing, and extent of capital improvements and infrastructure improvements for the Grantham Village School.
- Support the Grantham School Board and the Grantham Village School Long Range Planning Committee as it seeks to address the future educational facility needs of the the town.
- Encourage the exploration of alternative educational opportunities (e.g., vouchers, private-public school enterprises, charter schools) to ensure that Grantham's children are presented with the best possible education options balanced with fiscal responsibility.

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