

PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

LEARNING TOGETHER

Winter 2010 Newsletter

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Overview of the Elementary Configuration

Beginning in the fall of 2010, the Pine Plains Central School District will implement a new configuration that affects all students in the elementary grades. The new configuration will create two specialized schools. The Cold Spring Early Learning Center will be dedicated to students in the primary grades, K-2, while the Seymour Smith Intermediate Learning Center will specialize in the intermediate grades, 3-5.

The new configuration was designed to address growing concerns regarding equitable class size, services for students with special needs, effective use of resources, fiscal responsibility and meeting the District mission statement and Board of Education (BOE) goals.

As the 2010 calendar year begins and the implementation draws nearer, parents are urged to keep informed of BOE meetings, informational sessions and other services available. In addition to a special monthly newsletter being sent home with students for the remainder of the school year, information will also be available on our website at www.ppcsd.org.

Parent Information Available Now

The Pine Plains Central School District (PPCSD) is making a concerted effort to make the newest information regarding the new configuration available. The following is a list of where you can find the latest information.



Home Page of PPCSD.org – The current information will be listed with links on the home page under the headline of *News and Updates*.

Board of Education Meetings – Meetings are listed in the timeline in this newsletter as well as online under the *Board of Education (BOE) Meeting Dates* on the PPCSD website. An agenda for the next meeting is available under the *Current BOE Agenda* tab.

Board of Education Minutes – If you have missed a BOE meeting or wish to review what has happened at past meetings, meeting minutes are posted under the *Board of Ed>BOE Meeting Minutes* tab on the PPCSD website.

Superintendent's Reflections e-Newsletter – This e-newsletter can be found online on the PPCSD website under the *Board of Education> Superintendent's Reflections*.

Elementary Configuration Newsletter – Enjoy this monthly newsletter that is produced between January and June. It is sent directly home with students, and features upcoming events, frequently asked questions and program highlights. This newsletter will also be posted on the PPCSD website.

The Schedule for the Chats and Tours

Principals' Daytime Informational Meetings – These informational chats are one hour in length and are hosted jointly by the principals of both elementary buildings, and, when possible, parent, faculty and staff volunteers. They are designed to answer questions and solicit ideas from parents. The chats will be followed by a brief tour of the building.

January 20 & February 5 at Seymour Smith Elementary School, Room 305

January 28 & February 10 at Cold Spring Elementary School, Library

All daytime sessions are held between 11AM and 12PM.

Parent Information Nights – These informational chats are one hour in length and are designed for those parents who are unable to attend the daytime meetings. These chats will also be followed by a brief tour of the building.

January 21 at Cold Spring Elementary School, Cafetorium

February 4 at Seymour Smith Elementary School, Cafeteria

All Information Nights will be held between 7PM – 8PM.

Email questions to options@ppcsd.org

Snapshot of Seymour Smith Intermediate Learning Center

Year Built.....	1932
Number of Stories.....	3
Location.....	Town of Pine Plains
Number of Classrooms.....	34
Other Instructional Space.....	8
Current Enrollment (K-5).....	309
Projected Enrollment (3-5).....	233
Projected Operating Hours.....	9:00 AM – 3:15 PM

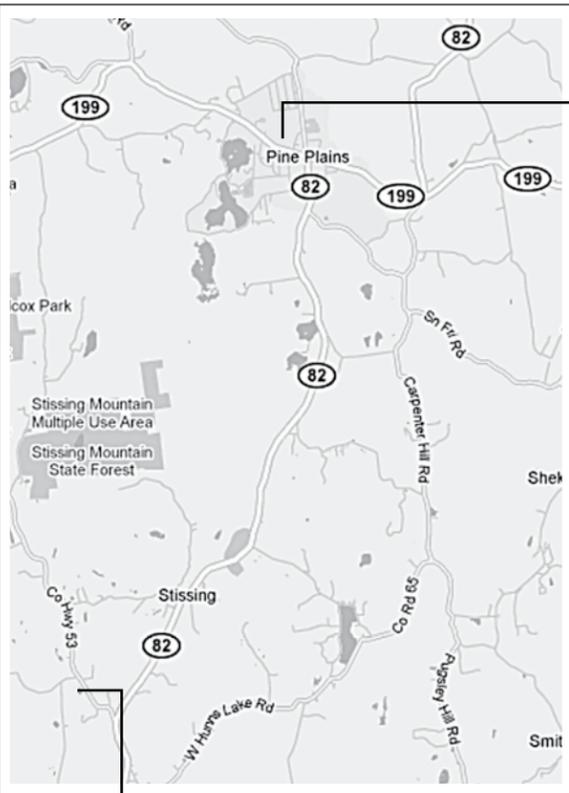
Preparing Students for the New Configuration

The new configuration will provide a great opportunity for students to meet and learn with their peers from all over the community. For some, it will mean a new school building and a new principal. There are exciting changes for all children, since there will be new classmates to meet and learn about.



In order to prepare students for the new configuration, there are a number of orientation activities planned throughout this school year and into the fall. Students are currently being introduced to the configuration via each school's newspaper. There are also pen pal activities between the schools using both written and video communication. Building principals are spending time at each facility so students can become familiar with both of them.

Additional activities are being planned and will be updated on the District website and via the new monthly Elementary Configuration Newsletter, which will be sent home with students. Some of these activities may include a joint field day, joint field trips and special school assemblies during the first week of school. Details about these activities will be made available as the planning process continues.



Snapshot of Cold Spring Early Learning Center

Year Built.....	1969
Number of Stories.....	1
Location.....	Stanfordville
Number of Classrooms.....	18
Other Instructional Space.....	5
Current Enrollment (K-2).....	185
Projected Enrollment (K-2).....	233
Projected Operating Hours.....	9:15 AM – 3:30 PM

Save the Date!

Kindergarten Registration
 March 3-5 at Cold Spring Elementary School

 WWW.PPCSD.ORG

Highlights of K-2 and 3-5 Configuration

Academic	Academic
Highlight	Opportunity
Equal class size across grade levels	Equal educational opportunities for all students
Special Ed, AI-First and ESL students no longer need to be bused to another school for classes	More instructional time for students who need it the most
All sections of a grade in a single facility	Teachers can collaborate on ideas, activities and pool resources
Instrumental music classes housed in one building (Seymour Smith)	Flexibility in the scheduling of lessons; less class disruption for other subjects
All students transition together from school to school	Students all come from the same school with a consistent core curriculum of instruction
Reading teachers deal with a narrow grade span	Allows more streamlined and specialized attention to the needs of a particular age group
Library caters to the needs of the specific grades	Allows for more specialized and level appropriate materials, instruction and assistance
Social	Social
Highlight	Opportunity
Students will meet all of their classmates in kindergarten.	Opportunities to build friendships with all other students across the entire the community in the beginning of their academic careers
Students will be blended together at each grade level	Helps address any behavioral issues by having other classroom options
Students transition together from elementary to middle school	A single facility allows students to transition together as a cohort throughout their academic careers
Parents get to meet each other and work together from the beginning of their child's academic career	Allows all District parents to work together to build a sense of community, diversity and understanding
Financial	Financial
Highlight	Opportunity
Centralized inventory of textbooks and other classroom materials	Reduces replacement needs and costs
Fewer elementary classes needed	Reduces personnel costs



Programs Available

Cold Spring (K-2)	Seymour Smith (3-5)
AIS	AIS
Art	Art
Breakfast	Breakfast
Computers	Computers
English Language Arts	English Language Arts
ESL	ESL
Library	Library
Lunch	Lunch
Mathematics	Mathematics
Music	Music (Instrumental)
Physical Education	Physical Education
Recess	Recess
Science	Science
Social Studies	Social Studies
Special Education	Special Education

Building Leadership Team Addresses Concerns

One of the ways that the District has addressed the needs and concerns of the configuration was to establish a joint Building Leadership Team (BLT). The team is comprised of faculty members representing all grade levels and both libraries, administrators and parent members representing both schools. The BLT has met on several occasions and continues to meet to assist in the implementation of the new configuration.

The BLT has several subgroups designed to address specific issues. The Student Subgroup is designed to assist in smoothing the transition. Their tasks include creating a timeline of activities that encourages interaction between students in both facilities, including pen pal letters, joint field trips, joint school assemblies, and open house events.

The Parent Subgroup is designed to help parents better understand the configuration. The subgroup is planning a parent orientation calendar and joint activities.

The Faculty Subgroup focuses on creating a consistent curriculum for the students in both schools. They are also helping to plan the physical move as well as staff support workshops.

Transportation for the New Configuration

There have been many questions and concerns regarding the transportation arrangements for the new configuration. The safe and efficient transportation of our students is of paramount importance to the District. We have spent much time optimizing the transportation models to minimize travel time for the students. Here are the highlights:

- Hours at Seymour Smith (grades 3-5) will be 9:00 AM – 3:15 PM.
- Hours at Cold Spring (grades K-2) will be 9:15 AM – 3:30 PM.
- Breakfast programs are available at both locations.
- The transportation model for the new configuration (2010-2011) has all bus routes operating less than 60 minutes. Therefore, no student will be on a bus route longer than 60 minutes.
- Students may have different routes to and from school to minimize travel times.

- Bus routes will be determined, alternate requests processed and final routes and bus numbers will be sent via letters mailed to parents in August 2010.
- The shuttle bus between schools will be eliminated because special education students will no longer need to be transported to Seymour Smith for classes.
- The direct routes will take students residing the farthest from their building straight to school. The combination routes will stop at both schools for those students that live nearest to the buildings.



The following is a summary of the route configuration for 2010-2011:

	# Routes AM	# Routes PM	Serves
Direct 3-5.....	4.....	5.....	Students farthest from Seymour Smith
Direct K-2.....	3.....	5.....	Students farthest from Cold Spring
Combo Routes.....	9.....	6.....	Students closest to buildings

Time Line - History

<p>July 2006 Informal think-tank session held at the H.S. to address the issue of class size inequality</p>	<p>May 2007 EFUC publishes an Interim Report outlining the situation, objectives, considerations, process and options, presenting it at the Board of Education (BOE) meeting</p>	<p>Summer 2008 BOE hires Educorps to conduct a Feasibility Study on closing an elementary school within the District</p>	<p>October 2008 Emergency masonry stabilization repairs completed at Seymour Smith</p>	<p>January 2009 Three community meetings are held to solicit public comments on possible reconfiguration or closing of elementary schools in the District. After considering all possibilities and public comments, the BOE votes unanimously to begin implementation of the reconfiguration plan for the 2009-2010 school year</p>	<p>May 2009 District voters approve \$4 million capital construction project at Seymour Smith that included masonry reconstruction and repair, roofing work, site, drainage and waterproofing improvements, paving and sidewalk replacements and façade reconstruction</p>	<p>January 20, 2010 • Principals' Daytime Informational Meeting 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Seymour Smith, Room 305 • BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>January 28, 2010 Principal's Daytime Informational Meeting 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Cold Spring Library</p>	<p>February 4, 2010 Parent Information Night 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM at Seymour Smith Cafeteria</p>	<p>February 10, 2010 Principals' Daytime Informational Meeting 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Cold Spring Library (Spanish translation provided)</p>	<p>March 3, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>April 7, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>Spring 2010 Joint Field Day and other events planned for students</p>	<p>June 2, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>July 2010 Faculty and staff move to new location</p>	<p>Fall 2010 Joint Assemblies planned for students</p>
<p>Fall 2006 Elementary Facilities Utilization Committee (EFUC) created to address the issue of unequal class sizes between Cold Spring and Seymour Smith Elementary Schools</p>	<p>Fall 2007 EFUC conducts a Reconfiguration Impact Study</p>	<p>September 2008 Emergency repairs begin on Seymour Smith Elementary to stabilize masonry on the exterior of the building</p>	<p>December 2008 EFUC publishes a Financial and Logistical Analysis, which is presented at the BOE meeting</p>	<p>February 2009 The BOE holds a fourth community question-and-answer session to re-open discussions about the new configuration plans. In response to the community, the BOE decides to postpone the implementation of the new configuration until the 2010-2011 school year</p>	<p>December 2009 Presentation regarding how the schools will prepare for its new configuration was given to the BOE at the December 2nd meeting</p>	<p>January 21, 2010 Parent Information Night 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM at Cold Spring Cafetorium</p>	<p>February 3, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>February 5, 2010 Principals' Daytime Informational Meeting 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Seymour Smith, Room 305 (Spanish translation provided)</p>	<p>March 2010 Kindergarten Registration at Cold Spring Elementary School, March 3-5</p>	<p>March 17, 2010 BOE meeting at Cold Spring Elementary Cafetorium</p>	<p>April 20, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library for BOCES Budget Vote</p>	<p>May 5, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library</p>	<p>June 16, 2010 BOE meeting at Stissing Mountain Library – Annual Organizational Meeting</p>	<p>August 2010 Final bus transportation information for parents/guardians</p>	

Time Line - Future