



# Bethel Public Schools

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October 5, 2017

Commissioner Currey  
Department of Administrative Services  
State of Connecticut  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Currey,

On behalf of the Bethel Board of Education, we are requesting a Space Standards Waiver from the Department of Administrative Services for the Anna H. Rockwell School - Project No. TMP-009-DLTK. The district has worked collaboratively with the Office of School Construction since last Spring and we have made the modifications to the site plans to meet the educational needs of our program and modified plans to fit within the existing envelope of the school building.

The community of Bethel has been working on the renovation of Anna H. Rockwell School for over 10 years. The building (1970), although well maintained has: (1) failing heating and ventilation systems; (2) is not ADA compliant; (3) does not meet current security and safety standards; (4) roof that is at the end of its lifespan; (5) electrical and utility systems are at capacity; (6) building code violations; (7) hazardous materials; (8) site traffic and circulation conditions which are unsafe; and (9) the current school is too crowded to meet the educational needs of the students.

Bethel does not have a declining enrollment. Although we conducted a second enrollment analysis by Milone and MacBroom which projected stable enrollment for the next ten years, our actual enrollment is trending higher than projected enrollment. As of today, our actual elementary enrollment (Pre-K-5) is 1482. According to the Milone and MacBroom study, our highest elementary enrollment in the 10 year project was 1370. We are exceeding it this year by 112 students.

The Director of the Office of School Construction was kind enough to come for a tour of the school in the spring of 2017. The space is inadequate due to the overall student population, the

*“Our Primary Purpose is to Improve Student Achievement.”*

complexity of programs we are required to provide our students and instructional and non-instructional storage. We do not have adequate intervention or special education spaces and are in violation of student confidentiality. When the building was constructed Special Education laws and intervention programs were not existent.

The district, with community input, extensively studied the grade configuration of the district. On May 11, 2017 the Bethel Board of Education approved the educational specifications inclusive of a grade configuration which would make Anna H. Rockwell a K-2 school. This is widely supported by the community, as it allows all of our schools to be in three year increments (with the exception of high school). Many other options were considered: Build-as-New; do nothing; changing grade configurations; closing schools, etc.

Our team has met with the Office of School Construction several times to problem solve our space needs. Initially, our plan for Anna H. Rockwell School included a small addition for two (2) kindergarten classes. The Office of School Construction asked us to reevaluate the design to stay within the envelope of the existing building. We were able to come up with a solution, which does have some program sacrifices, but allows us to meet the needs of our students. As Bethel is a fiscally conservative community, the design reflects its values by minimizing any impact to the building structure and maximizing efficiencies to meet student needs.

In summary, Anna H. Rockwell is designed to serve K-2 students for the next 30-50 years. We have successfully collaborated with the Office of School construction to accommodate our program within the existing envelope of the building (11,225 square feet). We are respectfully requesting the space standard waiver for the Anna H. Rockwell School project number TMP-009-DLTK.

I am happy to answer any questions you might have regarding the request or any aspect of the project.

Sincerely,



Christine Carver, Ed.D.  
Bethel Public Schools

C: Kostas Diamantis, Director, Office of School Construction  
Theresa Yonsky, Director of Fiscal Services  
Michelle Dixon, Office of School Construction  
Joe Costa, Perkins Eastman  
Tina Greco, Perkins Eastman  
Bethel Board of Education