

Who Gains? Who Loses?

To the Editor:

Did January 8th's Region 14 BOE hearing reveal what we gain with reconfiguration? The better question: what do we lose?

High schoolers lose 1/2 hour/day for electives, tutoring, study, etc.

Middle schoolers: also 1/2 hour. Exactly what they'll sacrifice wasn't explained.

Elementary grades: art, music and other "specials" lose time. Special education, occupational/physical/speech therapy lose space. They'll "office share" with the school psychologist.

Mitchell: activity room and other spaces go (same changes in 2004 would have let the fifth grade stay).

Both elementary schools lose principals and office space.

We lose teachers. Combined classes will yield higher student:teacher ratio. Remember Cronin's comment on savings through attrition? Naugatuck fired 10 teachers after his reconfiguration.

Who gains? 450+ students gain bus time as they are bused out of town for elementary grades. Have you read what goes on during bus rides lately?

And 4-1/2 year-olds getting picked up at 7:20 means 6-6:30 a.m. wake-up times. Students incur more school transitions at younger ages, the hardest factor for children to overcome in education.

Dr. Cronin has no experience leading large square-mile, multi-town school districts with only two elementary schools. The board abandoned previously thought-out and prepared plans (1997's middle school renovation incorporating fifth grades; 2004's temporary fifth-grade move; 1968's regional contract for each town to maintain an elementary). No school region similar to ours has grades configured in Cronin's design.

Students in dissimilar districts who do use the proposed configuration achieve lower scores than Region 14.

Find transcripts and information at [www.saveregion14elementary.com](http://www.saveregion14elementary.com). Contact the board and voice your opinion. Only parents and residents can ensure that sound educational/ financial decisions are made. The board and administration are not doing the job.

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