

**Pownal Middle School Choice Responses
April 28, 2010**

An expectation of the budget development process is to consider the most effective use of our financial resources while providing the strongest programming possible for our students. Equity of educational opportunities had been a concern expressed by several parents about Pownal's middle school program. Parents have commented on a strengthened middle level program this year; however, there are limited funds to increase student access to other offerings and opportunities. The question to consider was how, in light of decreasing state revenues, we can continue to provide varied academic, athletic, and co-curricular experiences to all of our students while limiting the impact to taxpayers.

The initial recommendation was to replace Pownal's current middle school program with the choice of attending either Durham or Freeport middle school. Transportation would be provided to either school. The goal of this recommendation was to save funds while continuing to provide and enhance educational opportunities for our students. It was not an easy recommendation to make but one that is focused on the best interests of students and taxpayers.

The RSU Board directed administration to ask families to consider their preferred choice of school for their child's middle school program for next year. All three middle schools were offered as options. Transportation would be provided to the schools but we do not anticipate providing transportation for after-school activities.

Families provided the following responses:

	Durham	Freeport	Pownal
Grade 6	0	2	9
One student is moving; and one student lives in another town and may be assigned to Pownal if parents make that request.			
Grade 7	1	7	4
All families responded			
Grade 8	0	7	5
One student is moving.			

Considerations:

As outlined at the last meeting, the Board is being asked to consider a vote on one of the following options:

1. Keep all Pownal students at Pownal Middle School;
2. Eliminate the Pownal Middle School program and allow Pownal students in grades 6-8 the choice of Freeport or Durham middle school programs with transportation provided;
3. Allow Pownal students in grades 6-8 the choice of attending school at Pownal, Freeport, or Durham.