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WESTPORT — There is a possibility that modular classrooms could be used to house sixth grade students next year, while students in grades 7 and 8 could move to Westport High School, according to school officials.



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By JEFFREY D. WAGNER

Posted Oct. 4, 2014 @ 12:01 am

WESTPORT — There is a possibility that modular classrooms could be used to house sixth grade students next year, while students in grades 7 and 8 could move to Westport High School, according to school officials.

This decision could come about as the town continues to battle polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) found in the middle school building on Old County Road more than three years ago.

At the last School Committee meeting, Vice Chairwoman Melissa Pacheco said she and other school officials will ask for funding support at the Special Town Meeting, tentatively set for December.

"We predicted that we would need six modular units to house Grade 6 someplace else and move grades 7 and 8 to WHS," Superintendent Ann Marie Dargon said recently. "That would allow us to close the middle school for instructional purposes. At that time, we were also looking to move the administrative offices to the WMS. The estimated cost depends on how long we needed the modular units and whether we leased them or bought them."

Dargon said cost estimates for the modular units are around \$400,000 and the district will be turning to the Massachusetts School Building Authority as well.

Dargon said the price would be offset by the savings that the school would net by closing the middle school building.

She added that the school business manager is expected to give a presentation on the matter later this week and then make a recommendation.

This action comes amid quarterly testing of the PCB count to the tune of \$41,400. There is also a lawsuit that both the town and district have launched against the PCB manufacturer.

The town and schools are looking to recover more than \$3 million from the St. Louis, Missouri-based Monsanto Company and its corporate successors.

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