



## Groton 2020

Public Informational  
Meeting  
&  
Community  
Conversation



# Introduction

- School Facilities Initiative Task Force (SFITF)  
Introduction and Process: Jon Heller & Craig Koehler  
- Chair & Co-Chair
- Addressing Groton's Educational Needs: Dr. Graner
- Addressing Groton's Facility Needs: Sam Kilpatrick
- The Plan – Groton 2020: Mike Zuba (MMI) & Kemp Morhardt (SLAM)
- Next Steps...
- Public Comment & Workshop



# SFITF Resolution & Members

## RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

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WHEREAS, the Town Council and the Board of Education recognize the need to address elementary and middle school redistricting and provide recommendations for the design of a school system that reflects the system's long-term vision, and takes into consideration educational programs, budgets, facilities, and demographic changes, and

### Representative Membership from:

- Board of Education
- School Administrators
- RTM
- Town Council, Planning Commission
- Teachers
- Permanent School Building Committee
- Citizens at large

# SFITF Process

SFITF Process Begins – Feb. 2013

Existing Conditions Analysis and Discussion – Spring 2013

Scenario Planning/Configuration Options – Summer 2013

Stakeholder Involvement – May 2014

Middle School Ed Spec – Summer 2014

Elementary Ed Spec – Fall 2014

SFITF Recommendations – Winter 2015

Public Outreach/ Survey – Spring/ Summer 2015

Referendum – Spring 2016

Application for School Construction Grant – June 2016



# SFITF Weaknesses to Address

Early in the planning process SFITF identified issues to address

- **Code issues** with existing facilities
- Limited PreK facilities
- **Age** of schools
- Location of two middle schools limiting integration and diversity
- **Cost** to maintain status quo
- Gaps in student performance/achievement between schools
- Portables are **substandard** spaces that pose a **security concern**
- Classes are full
- **Exodus** of Groton students to magnet schools
- Student groupings not addressing all students needs
- School **safety** and physical layouts
- Small elementary schools – **inefficient** operations
- Buildings prohibit district flexibility for reconfiguration
- Lack of air-conditioning in schools - limits summer programming
- Redistricting & **State Mandates**
- Lack appropriate space for 21st century learning
- Too many facilities to maintain - **cost of maintenance**
- Lack of playing fields and appropriate play surfaces



# Challenges – How To:

- Address numerous aging Elementary & Middle School facilities requiring significant capital investment over the next decade
- Provide equitable opportunities for all Groton students
- Address explosion of public school options in the region over the past five years – increase in Groton residents choosing those options
- Maintain State-mandated racial balance without continued redistricting



# Objectives

- Upgrade school facilities to create a modern learning environment (built)
- Provide educational facilities to support 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning (program)
- Position Groton Public Schools to remain competitive, given the region's many school choices
- Address state mandates without future redistricting



# Educational Considerations

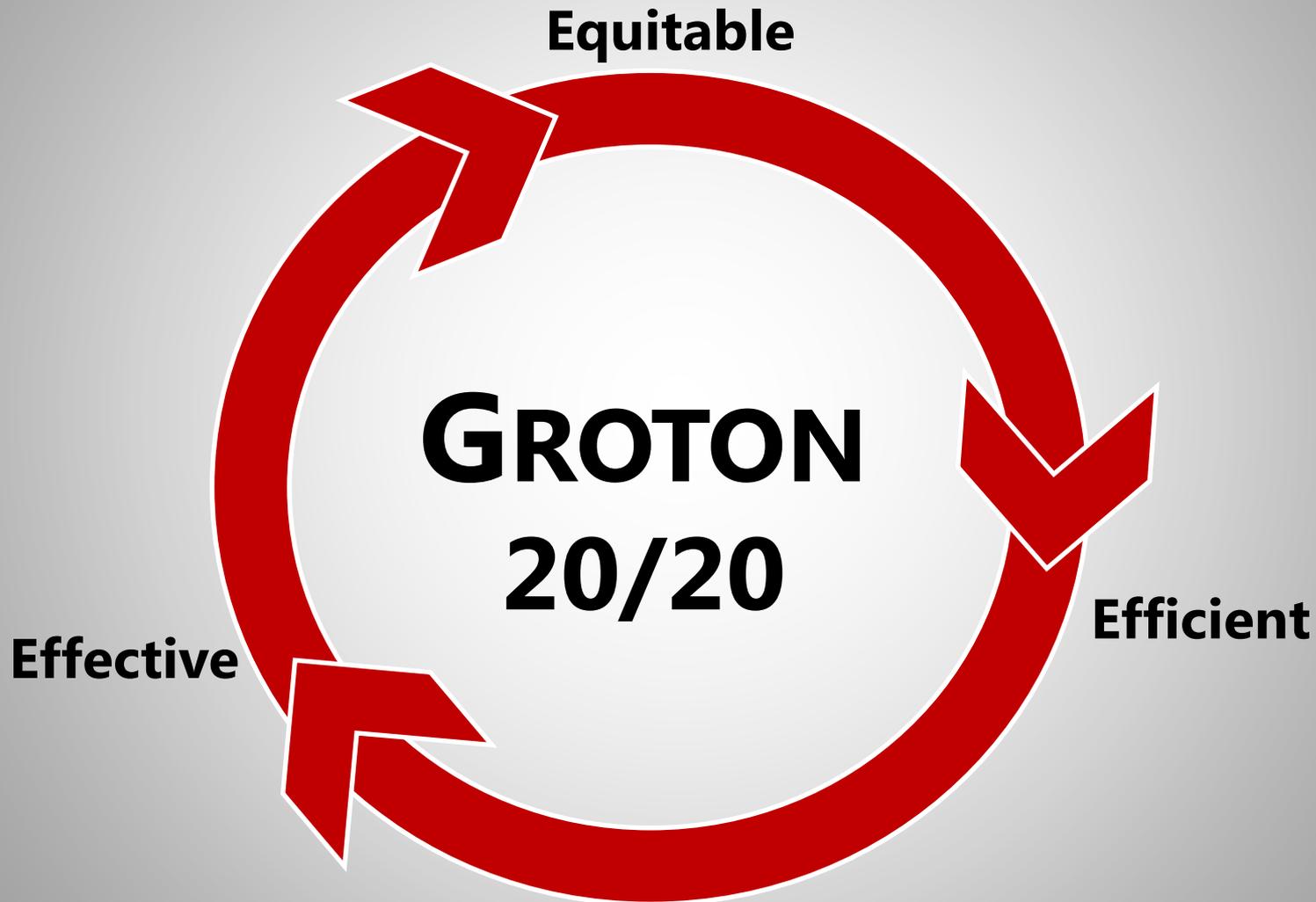


# Addressing Groton's Educational Needs

- Facilities impact educational environment...
  - Building condition, air quality, ventilation, acoustics, and technology can impact teaching and learning environment – positively or negatively
  - Pride in school affects the school culture, involvement, and attitude towards teaching and learning
  - A well-designed building can serve as a community resource



# Addressing Groton's Educational Needs



# Addressing Groton's Educational Needs

- Educational Environment is enriched when facilities....
  - Provide for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments
  - Provide an environment adaptable to changes in teaching and learning styles
- Provide proper space for instruction, preparation and teacher collaboration
- Facilitate the appropriate use of instructional technology

## 20<sup>th</sup> vs. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Has the landscape changed?





# Regional School Choice

- Increasing choice for education in region
- Groton students are attending other Public Schools

**School**

- [Connecticut River Academy](#)  
860-913-2200
- [Dual Language & Arts Magnet Middle School](#)  
860-443-0461
- [Goodwin College Early Childhood Magnet School](#)  
860-709-6800
- [Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut](#)  
860-446-9380
- [Regional Multicultural Magnet School](#)  
860-437-7775
- [Southeastern CT Magnet Schools Information](#)
- [The Friendship School](#)  
860-447-4049
- [Three Rivers Middle College](#)  
New Number: 860-215-9055

*New London Public Schools*  
134 WILLIAMS STREET | NEW LONDON, CT 06320 | (860) 447-6000

[Jennings Elementary School Dual Language/FLES](#)

[Nathan Hale Arts Magnet School](#)

[Winthrop Elementary Magnet School STEM](#)

[STEM Magnet Middle School](#)

[Science & Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern CT](#)

About ISAAC   Admissions

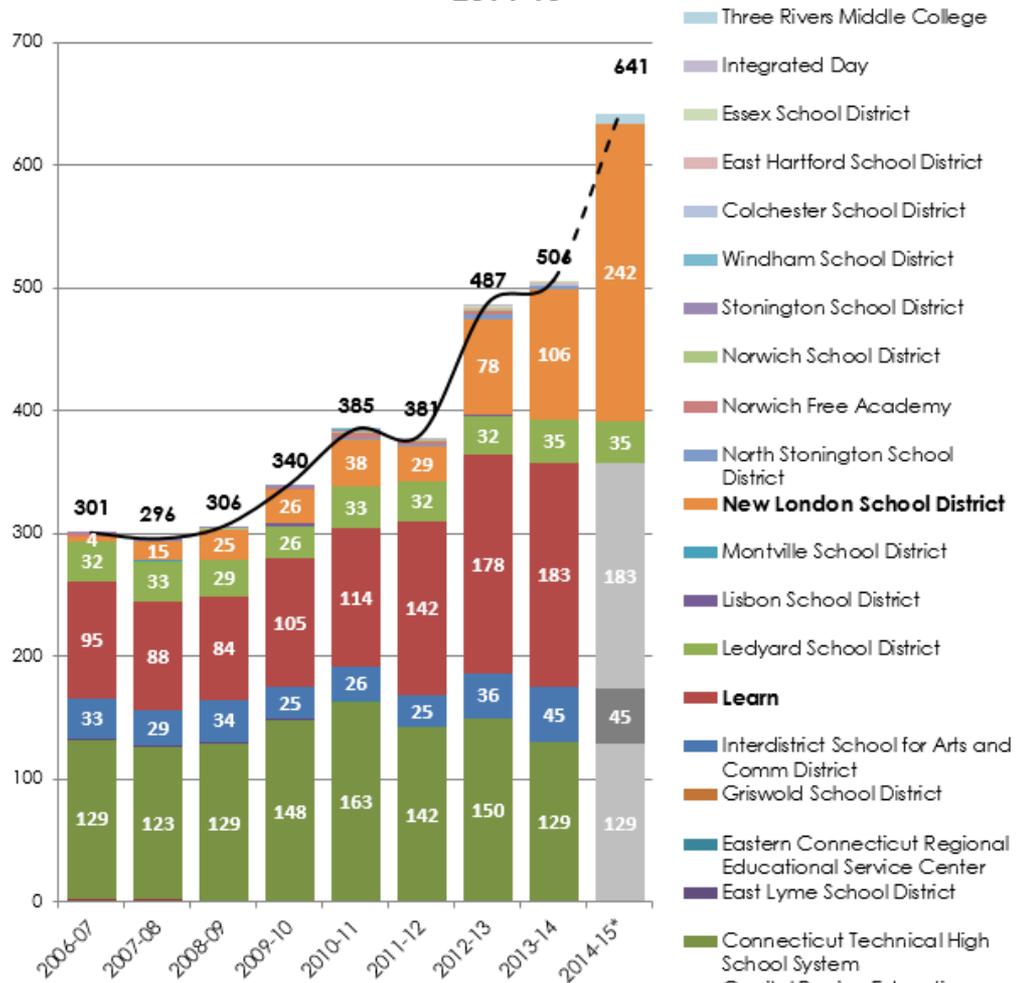
**ISAAC**  
Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication  
A Free Public Charter School



# Regional School Choice

- Number of Groton students attending other Public Schools has doubled since 2008
- Significant increases in GPS students at NLPS
- Impact when NLPS full magnet pathway is complete?
- Currently costs \$2.4 million for tuition & transportation (2014-15)
- Groton Students voting with feet on education in Groton

Groton K-12 Enrollment in Other Public Schools, 2006-07 to 2014-15\*



Sources: 2006-07 to 2013-14 from CEDaR.

\*2014-15 data is preliminary data from Groton Public Schools. Missing or incomplete school enrollments are shown in gray with the previous year's enrollment for illustrative purposes only.



# School Facility Considerations

# Elementary Facility Overview



- CC, PV & SB average 62 years of service
- Maintained functionality through continued maintenance with little reinvestment and modernization
- Portables exceeded useful life and pose a security risk

**2015 Groton Elementary Schools Facilities**



# Elementary School Needs

## Claude Chester Needs

Non-friable asbestos removal  
 Fire alarm replacement  
 Fire sprinklers  
 Parking  
 Replace heating system  
 Electrical distribution  
 Structural  
 Handicap accessibility  
 HVAC  
 Security  
 Encapsulate dirt crawl space

## Pleasant Valley School Needs

Fire alarm replacement  
 Fire sprinklers  
 Replace boilers  
 Replace heating system  
 Electrical distribution  
 Handicap accessibility  
 HVAC  
 Security  
 Replace temporary classrooms  
 Encapsulate dirt crawl space

## SB Butler Needs

Non-friable asbestos removal  
 Energy Efficient Windows  
 Rescue Windows  
 Fire Alarm replacement  
 Fire sprinklers  
 Replace heating system  
 Electrical distribution  
 Structural  
 Handicap accessibility  
 HVAC  
 Security  
 Replace temporary classrooms with permanent space  
 Encapsulate dirt crawl space  
 Roofing

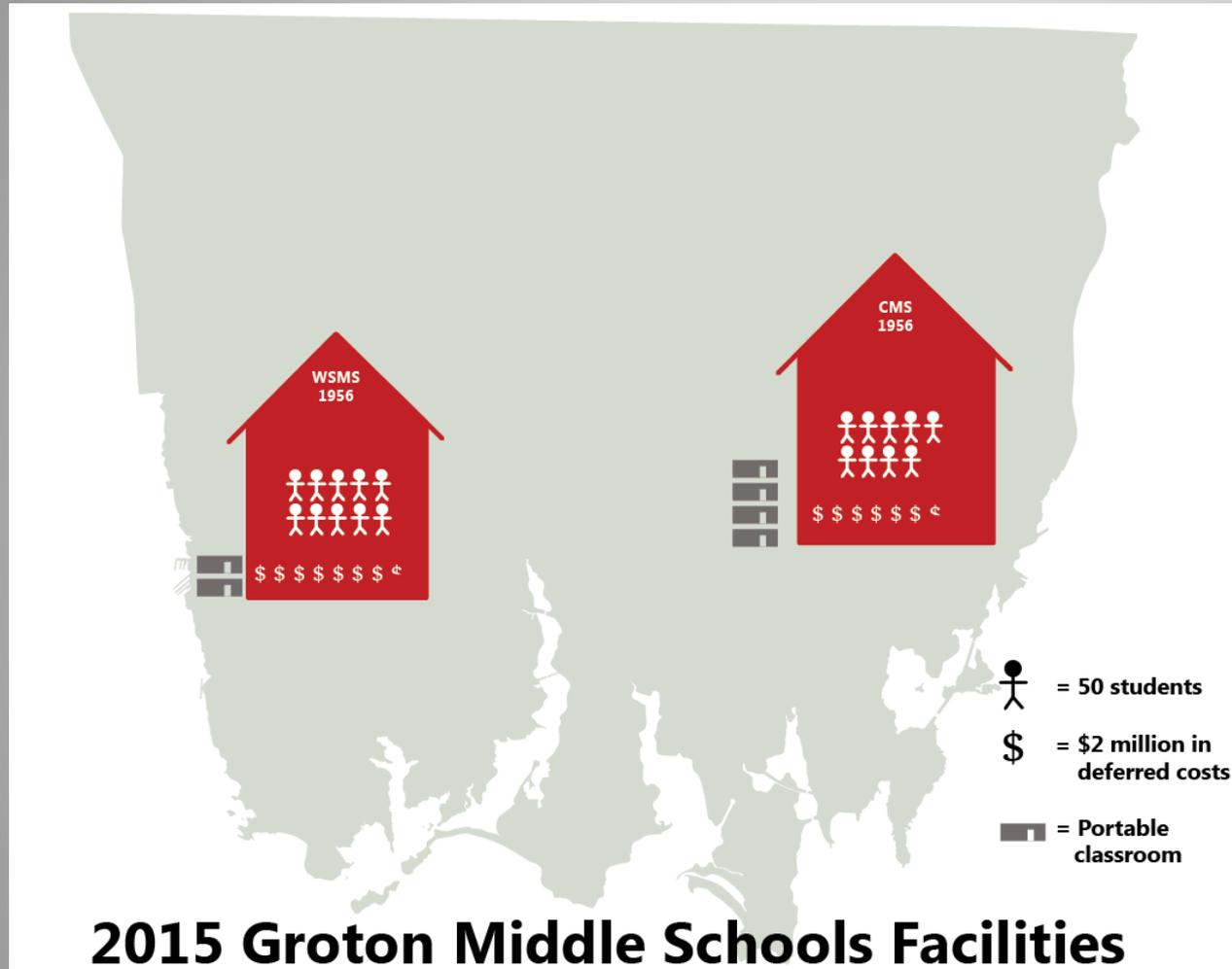
### Summary of Deferred Costs by Building

| Facility        | Total        |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Kolnaski        | \$137,500    |
| Barnum          | \$7,333,750  |
| Chester         | \$9,500,000  |
| Morrisson       | \$6,773,141  |
| Northeast       | \$123,685    |
| Pleasant Valley | \$7,174,597  |
| S.B. Butler     | \$10,488,117 |



**Priority  
 Elementary  
 Schools Total:  
 \$27,162,714**

# Middle School Facility Overview



- CMS & WSMS-combined 114 years of services
- CMS & WSMS have remained functional through continued maintenance & modest reinvestment
- 5 Portables
- Require significant investment to maintain functionality without modernization



# Middle School Needs

## Cutler Middle School Needs

- Non-friable asbestos removal
- Energy Efficient Windows
- Rescue Windows
- Fire Alarm replacement
- Fire sprinklers
- Parking
- Electrical distribution
- Structural
- Handicap accessibility
- HVAC
- Security
- Replace temporary classrooms w/ permanent space

## West Side Middle School Needs

- Non-friable asbestos removal
- Fire alarm replacement
- Parking
- Replace boilers
- Replace heating system
- Electrical distribution
- HVAC
- Security
- Replace temporary classrooms
- Encapsulate dirt crawl space
- Roofing

### Summary of Deferred Costs by Building

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| Cutler    | \$12,795,936 |
| West Side | \$15,145,721 |



**Middle  
School  
Needs Total:  
\$27,941,657**

# Status Quo – Deferred Costs

## Conservative Estimate of Building, MEP, and Portable Classroom Replacement Costs

| Summary of Deferred Costs<br>by Building |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Facility                                 | Total               |
| Kolnaski                                 | \$137,500           |
| Barnum                                   | \$7,333,750         |
| Chester                                  | \$9,500,000         |
| Morrisson                                | \$6,773,141         |
| Northeast                                | \$123,685           |
| Pleasant Valley                          | \$7,174,597         |
| S.B. Butler                              | \$10,488,117        |
|  |                     |
| Cutler                                   | \$12,795,936        |
| West Side                                | \$15,145,721        |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                            | <b>\$69,472,447</b> |

**Priority  
Elementary  
Schools  
Total:  
\$27,162,714**

**Middle  
Schools  
Total:  
\$27,941,657**

**Grand Total: \$55,104,371**

- Costs to address critical items
- Assumes no expansions – replacement of existing portables only
- Assumes no improvements to school buildings
- **Just Keeps Buildings Standing**
- **If Groton were to bond \$55 million in improvements, average annual cost to median homeowner = \$150 over life of the bond**



# Planning and Design Considerations



# Options Explored

## Scenario Planning & Analysis

## School Reconfigurations

## Grade Reconfigurations

## Site Test-Fits

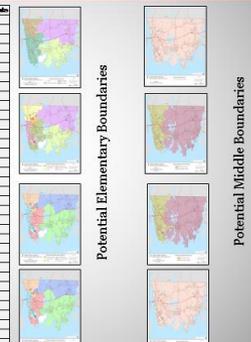
### Option 2A – Two Middle Schools

- Build a New Middle School at Kolnaski Site
- Renovate Cutler As New Middle School
- Renovate West Side as New PreK-5<sup>th</sup>
- Build New Elementary on East Side
- Add Classrooms to Northeast Academy
- Close Claude Chester, Pleasant Valley and S.B. Butler
- Take Portables Off-Line at Charles Barnum and Mary Morrisson

\*Variations from Option 2 Underlined

### Reconfiguration Options

| Option   | Facility                   | 2012 IS Enrollment |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Option 4: One New Middle School (C-3), Former PreK-2 and S.B., Portables | Cutler PreK-3              | 383                |
|  | Northeast PreK-3           | 400                |
|  | Northeast PreK-2           | 305                |
|  | Northeast S.B.             | 200                |
|  | Northwest PreK-2           | 357                |
| Option 5: Two New Middle Schools (C-3, DA, PreK-3)                       | Northwest S.B.             | 381                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-3</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | <u>New Middle School 1</u> | <u>376</u>         |
|  | Claude Chester PreK-3      | 482                |
|  | Charles Barnum             | 305                |
| Option 6: Two New Middle Schools (C-3, DA, PreK-3)                       | Cutler                     | 400                |
|  | Mary Morrisson             | 417                |
|  | Northeast                  | 400                |
|  | West Side                  | 314                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-3</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
| Option 7: One New Middle School (B-4), PreK-4                            | New Eastern Middle         | 457                |
|  | New Western Middle         | 450                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | Claude Chester PreK-4      | 482                |
|  | Charles Barnum             | 305                |
| Option 8: Two New Middle Schools (B-4, DA, PreK-4)                       | Cutler                     | 400                |
|  | Mary Morrisson             | 450                |
|  | Northeast                  | 428                |
|  | West Side                  | 407                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
| Option 9: One New Middle School (B-4), PreK-4                            | New Eastern Middle         | 250                |
|  | New Western Middle         | 250                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>1,525</u>       |
|  | Claude Chester PreK-4      | 352                |
|  | Cutler                     | 375                |
| Option 10: One New Middle School (B-4), PreK-4                           | Mary Morrisson             | 450                |
|  | Northeast                  | 428                |
|  | West Side                  | 407                |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | New Middle                 | 1,525              |
| Option 11: One New Middle School (B-4), PreK-4                           | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | New Middle                 | 1,525              |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |
|  | <u>NEW PreK-4</u>          | <u>2,027</u>       |



### Option A





# Groton 2020 – The Charge

The Board of Education should consider and approve a school organization and facilities plan that enables progress toward achieving the school district vision and mission, and addresses the critical issues presented.

The Planning Committee agreed to present what is perceived to be the best organizational option to the Board of Education for its consideration. This option has several interrelated components, as follows:

1. Maintain the high school program in its current facility. Design and implement challenging programs at the high school that will enhance the variety and rigor of opportunities available to ALL students. Fitch High School will provide an equal or better education than area schools of choice, including early graduation, college level courses, and multiple pathways to success.
2. Build a new middle school for all Groton students. This middle school will provide enhanced program opportunities for ALL students that are challenging and varied. The new middle school programs will be well-articulated with high school opportunities [multiple pathways to success]. The school should be located in close proximity to Fitch High School to encourage and take advantage of multiple interface activities, such as providing advanced course work opportunities for students. Middle school students should be able to gain high school credit for these courses.
3. Convert Cutler and Westside Middle Schools to Pre-kindergarten through grade 5 schools. Students would be transferred to these schools after the new middle school was completed and occupied. Some work will need to be done to enable these schools to accommodate primary grade children in appropriate learning settings. These modifications may be made prior to or during the school consolidation.
4. Close the three elementary schools that are in the poorest physical condition and require the most capital investment for bringing them up to code and contemporary educational space standards.



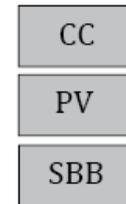
# Groton 2020

## Proposed Groton 2020

1 High School  
1 Middle School  
6 Elementary Schools

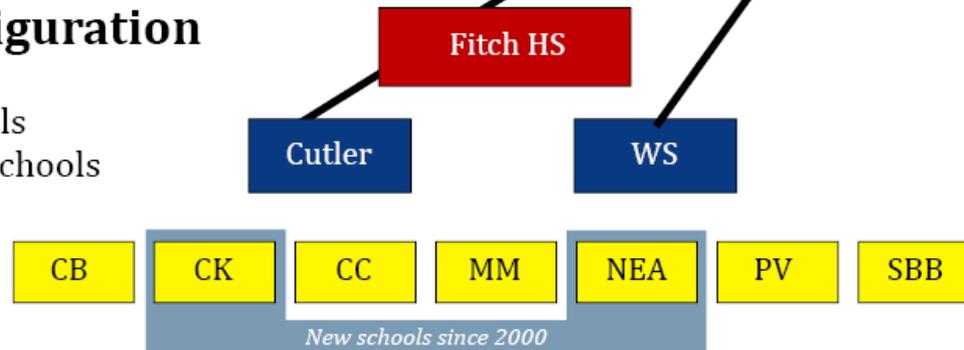


*Elementary Schools to be closed*

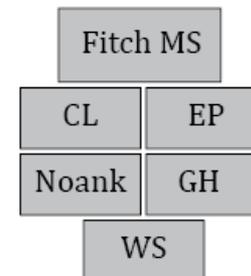


## 2015 Configuration

1 High School  
2 Middle Schools  
7 Elementary Schools

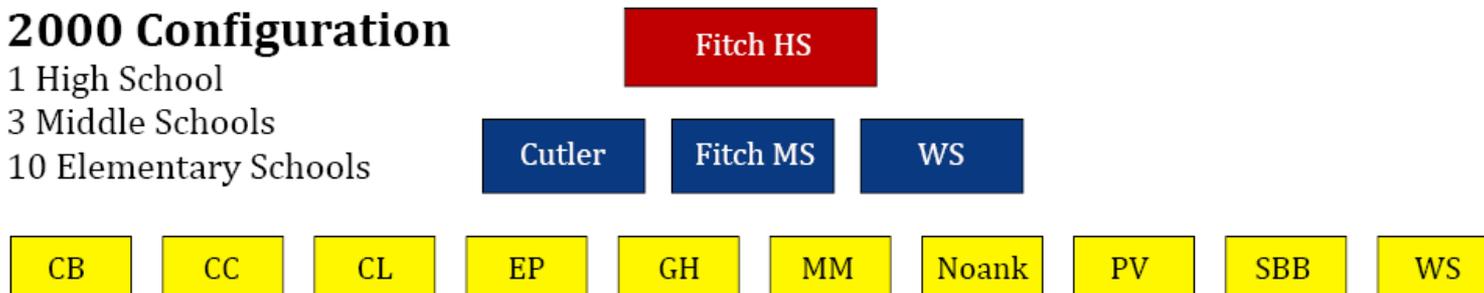


*Schools closed since 2000*



## 2000 Configuration

1 High School  
3 Middle Schools  
10 Elementary Schools



# Foundation for School

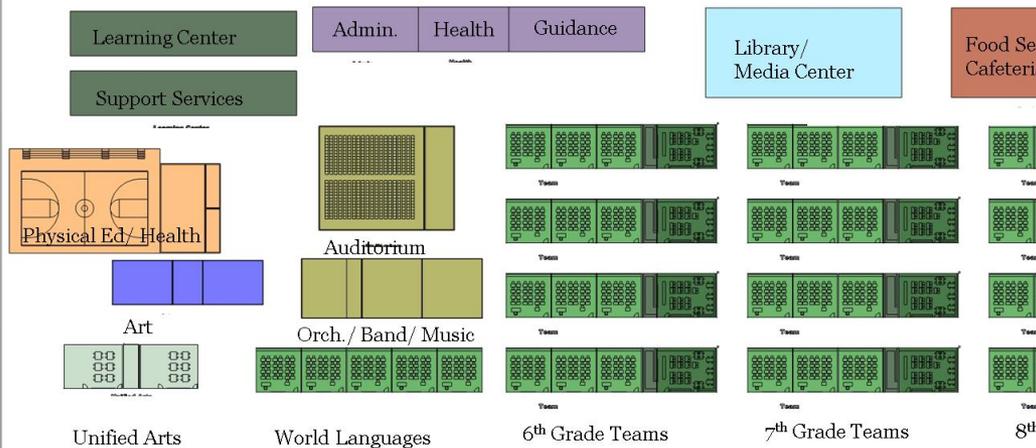
➤ Educational Specifications serve as the basis for the educational space program

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
GROTON, CONNECTICUT



EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS  
for a  
NEW CONSOLIDATED MIDDLE SCHOOL  
GRADES 6 – 8

| SPACE   |
|---|
| Pre-kindergarten  |
| Kindergarten  |
| Grade One-Five  |
| Art:<br>3-dimensional classroom<br>2-dimensional classroom<br>Storage |
| Music:<br>General<br>Choral & Instrumental<br>Storage                 |
| Physical Education & Health:<br>Gymnasium<br>Offices<br>Storage       |
| Auditorium Stage<br>Seating   |



| Learning Center/Support Services:         | Developed July, 2014 |       |
|---|----------------------|-------|
| English Language Learners                 | 4 @ 200              |       |
| Special Services Education Tutorial (RTI) | 2 @ 200              |       |
| Conference Rooms                          | 1 @ 150              |       |
| Sensory/Therapy Room                      |                      |       |
| Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy   | 1 @ 400              |       |
| Speech Services                           | 1 @ 150              |       |
| SPED Classroom (dividable)                | 2 @ 800              | 4,500 |
| Conference Rooms                          |                      |       |
| Social Work, Psychologist Offices         | 2 @ 150              |       |
| Records storage                           | 1 @ 100              | 400   |
| Administrative Office Complex:            |                      |       |
| Offices                                   | 1 @ 250; 1 @ 300     |       |
| Conference Rooms                          | 1 @ 200              |       |
| Secretary/Reception                       | 1 @ 400              |       |



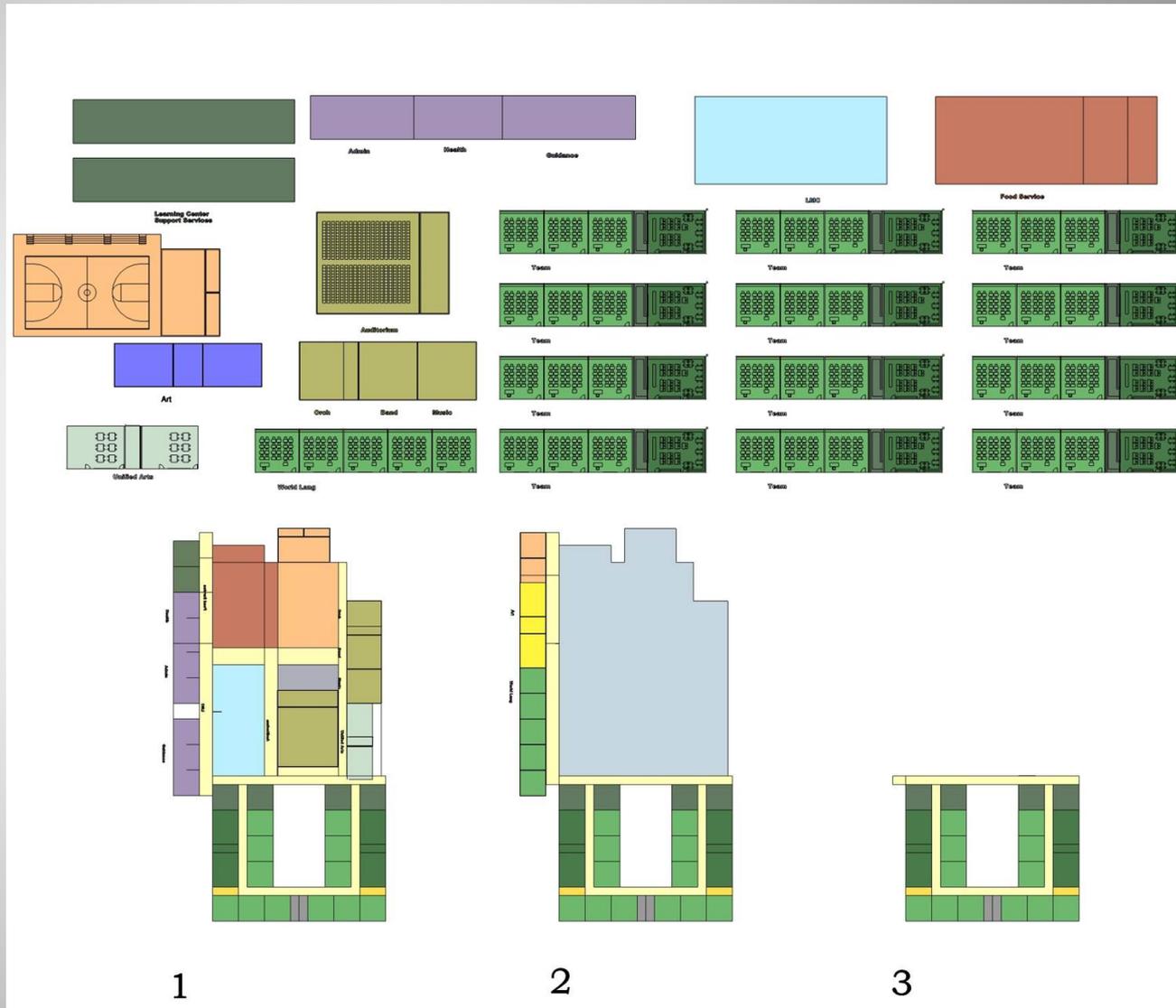
# Space Spec. Design Priorities

- Configure Space to Minimize Project Cost
- Design Priorities Include:
  - Personalization of learning and teaching spaces
  - Flexibility in the current and future use of school space
  - Access to appropriate technologies for teaching, learning and management
  - Serving the needs of diverse learners
  - Indoor air quality and overall environmental impact of materials used
  - LEED standards for energy conservation and environmental impact design
  - Potential for adding classroom space at a future date



# New Middle School

- Developed Graphical Space Program & Conceptual Floor Plans from Educational Specifications



# New Middle School



**HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS CONCEPT 'D2'**  
**GROTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE**

GROTON LONG POINT ROAD  
 GROTON, CONNECTICUT      DECEMBER 11, 2014

**LEGEND**

- TARGET FUND-RISE & POTENTIAL CONFLICT
- PARKING SPACES
- BUS ROUTE

+ **SLAM**



# Test- Fit Considerations

- Compact building design can be accommodated – proximate to High School, works with existing topography
- Wetlands preserved & lower wooded portion of site
- Independent access for Middle School with controlled access to High School site
- Middle School site PE/ athletic program has been met
- Existing HS PE/ athletic program preserved and complemented
- Met with DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land & Identified mechanism and process for conversion of Merritt Property (+/- 35 ac) to a municipal educational use



# Site & Building Summary

- Outdoor athletics include a baseball, softball, multi-purpose synthetic turf field, and multi-sport field
- Campus allows for greater opportunities and synergy for teachers and students for grades 6-12
- Hub of academic, athletic, performing arts and community activities
- Ease of maintenance for campus environment



# Consolidated Middle School - Strengths

SFITF identified strengths of Consolidated Middle School

- Early integration
- **Stable** class size – larger grade cohorts
- **Consolidate** resources
- Prevents future redistricting
- Improved district operational **efficiency**; better use of fiscal resources
- Ability to **expand programs**
- One less facility to maintain
- **Parity**
- Students have **more choices** re: academic and after-school activities
- Better space utilization
- Greater opportunity for teacher **collaboration**
- Easier to address **security**
- Opportunity for a **community center**
- Larger core facilities i.e. Auditorium and cafeteria
- Avoid split teams



# Two Elementary Schools

Conversion of Cutler & West Side Middle Schools to Elementary School

- Conducted feasibility and developed cost estimates to renovate like new
- Developed scenarios both with and without additions
- **Renovate Like-New cost estimates exceeded state allowable limit for renovate like-new projects**
- **In order to move forward with the renovation like new, would require special legislation**





# Why Two New Elementary Schools

In response to the exceedance of the allowable limit for renovate like new, the committee explored options of new construction on the existing sites

## Funding for West Haven High School project in question

By [Mark Zaretsky](#), *New Haven Register*

POSTED: 03/11/15, 9:26 PM EDT

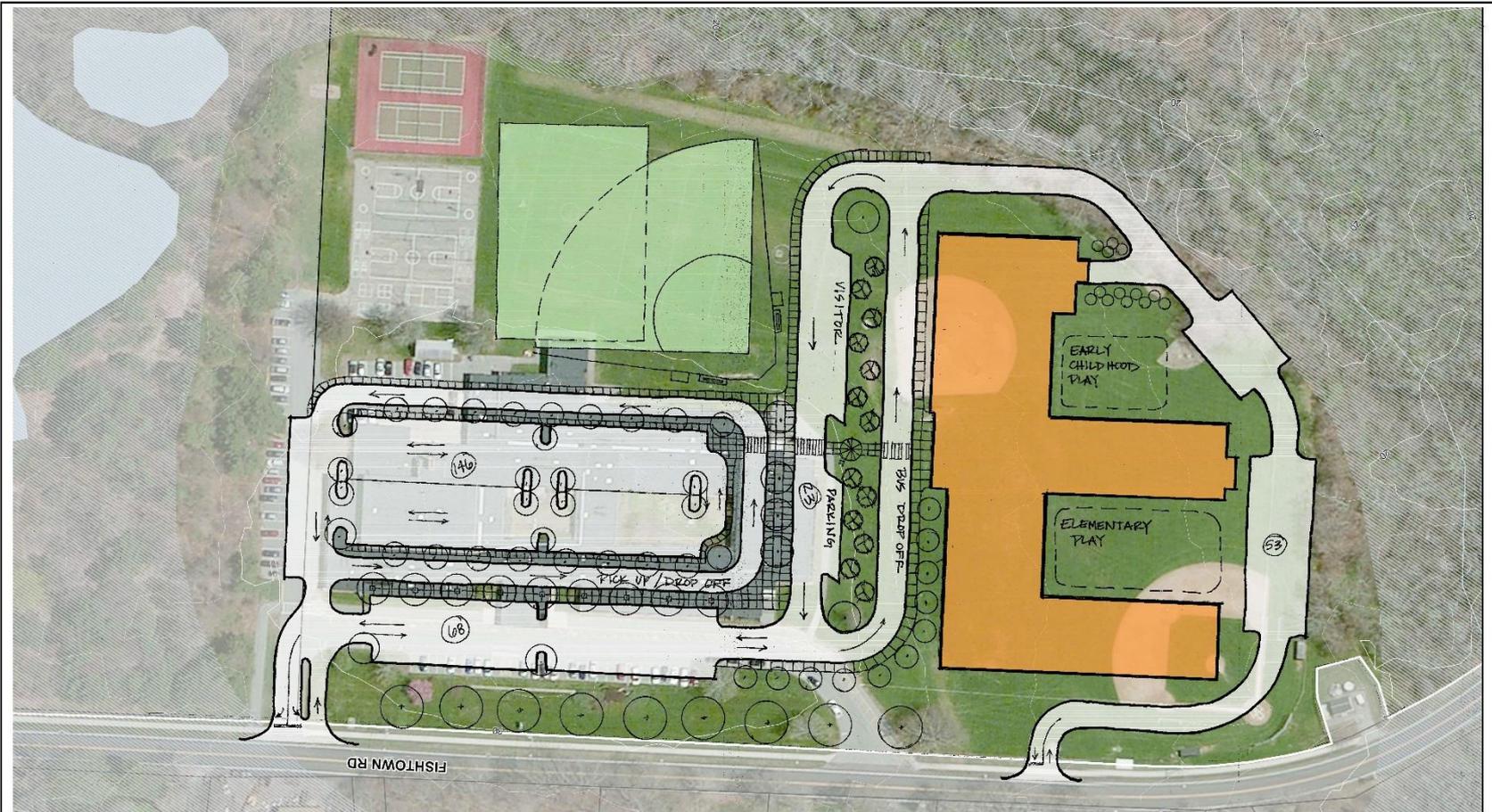
9 COMMENTS

WEST HAVEN >> Funding for the new West Haven High School project is up in the air following the state's declaration that it has yet to approve [the change from a \\$109.3 million alteration project to a \\$120.64 million "renovate as new" project](#) — and won't approve it as configured, officials said. State statute requires that the cost of a renovated facility built with state funds be less than that to build a new facility. Right now, that's not the case, a state consultant wrote in a recent letter to the city.

The letter also revealed that there are more than \$7 million in expenses for the project that currently are not reimbursable.

"Based upon current project file documentation, we have estimated construction costs for a new facility to be \$124,697,7000...or 277,106 (square feet) at \$450 per s.f.," wrote state [Department of Administrative Services](#) education consultant Page Farnham in a Feb. 20 letter to Ken Carney, chairman of the [West Haven High School Building Committee](#).

# Elementary School on Cutler

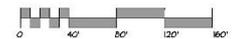


CONCEPT "3"

CUTLER SCHOOL - ELEMENTARY CONVERSION  
SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

160 FISHTOWN ROAD  
GROTON, CONNECTICUT

MILONE & MACBROOM + SLAM





# Cutler Prototype PK-5 – Layout



Str = Stairs  
S = Storage

# Elementary School at West Side



CONCEPT "3"

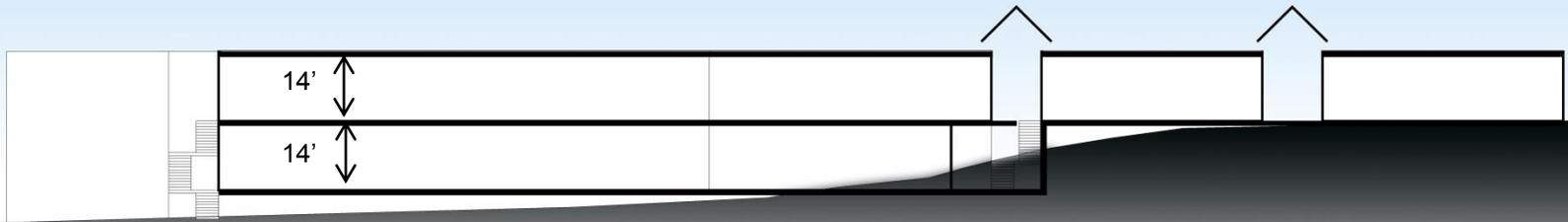
WEST SIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

250 BRANDEGEE AVENUE  
GROTON, CONNECTICUT





# West Side ES – Prototype Fit Study - Section Diagram





# West Side ES – Prototype Fit Study





# West Side ES – Prototype Fit Study





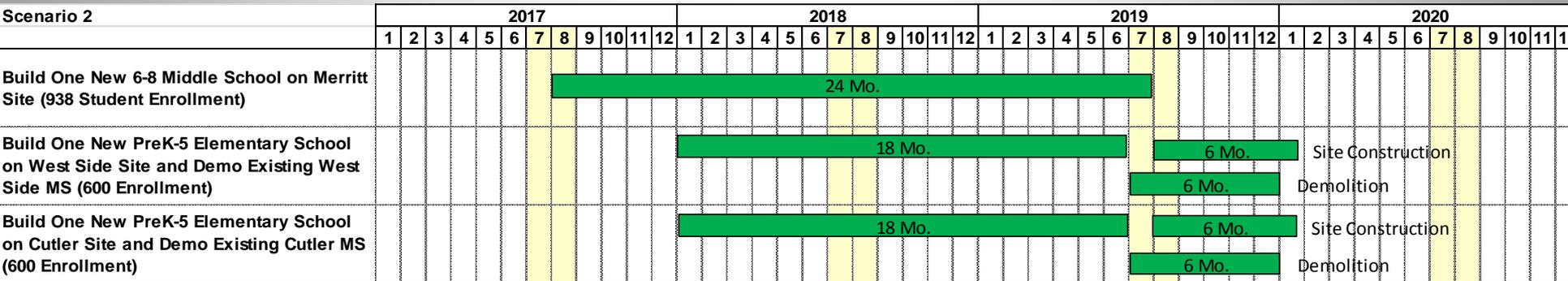
# Elementary Summary

- Construction of two new 80,000 sq. ft. elementary schools with capacity for 600 students each to replace Claude Chester, S.B. Butler and Pleasant Valley
- Best use of existing town-owned asset and maintains historical presence of schools
- Improvements to outdoor athletics



# Groton 2020- Schedule

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Scenario 2:</b> | Build One New 6-8 Middle School on Merritt Site (938 Student Enrollment)                                 |
|                    | Build One New PreK-5 Elementary School on West Side Site and Demo Existing West Side MS (600 Enrollment) |
|                    | Build One New PreK-5 Elementary School on Cutler Site and Demo Existing Cutler MS (600 Enrollment)       |
|                    | Close Claude Chester, Pleasant Valley and S.B. Butler  |
|                    | Remove portables at Barnum and Morrison  |



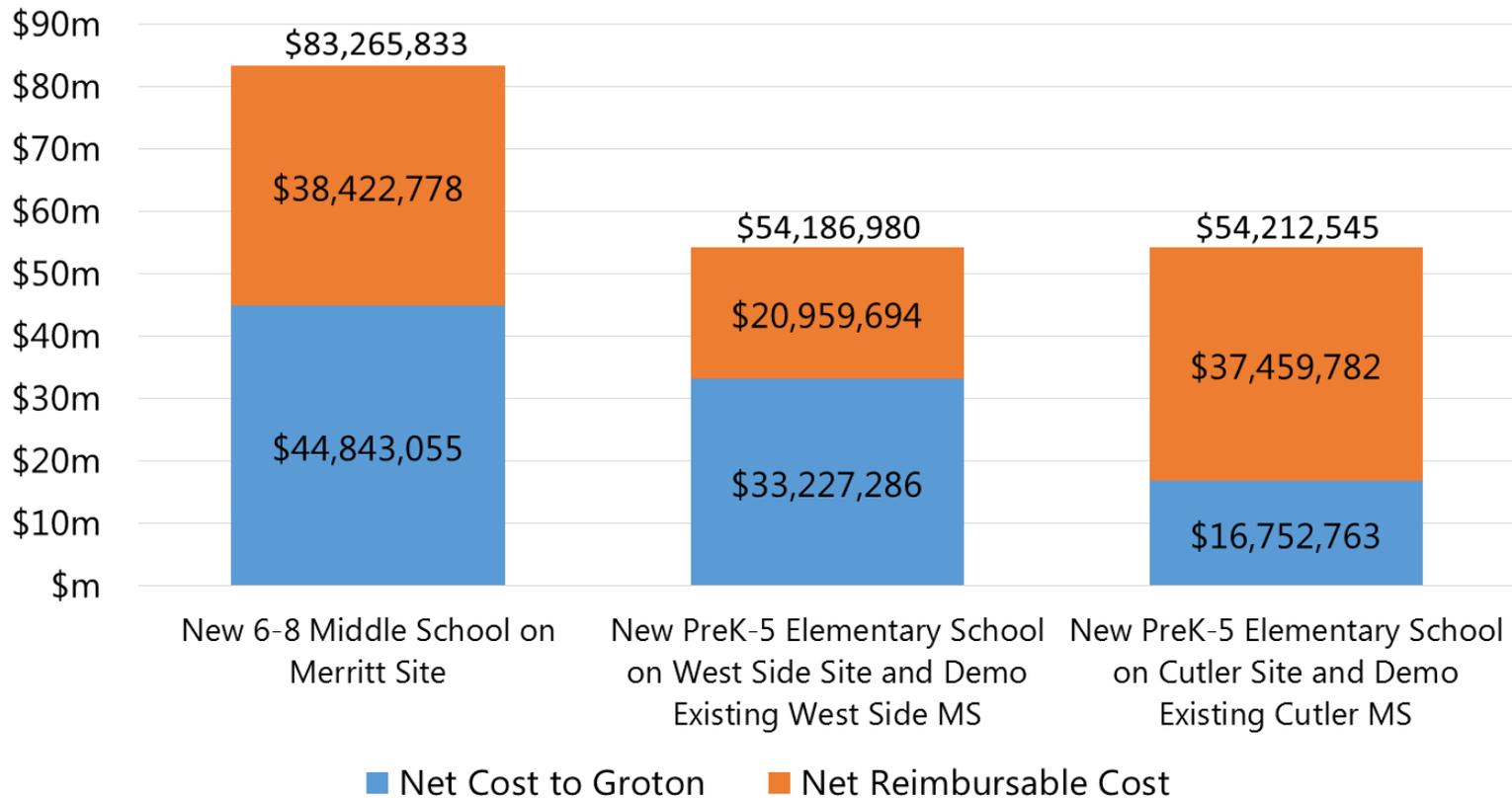
## Assumptions:

- MS design starts May 2016, 15 Mo. duration: design through bidding (Groton “At Risk” for initial pre-construction costs )
- Construction start deferred until after legislative approval (7/2017)



# Cost Summary

## Groton 2020 Cost Breakdown

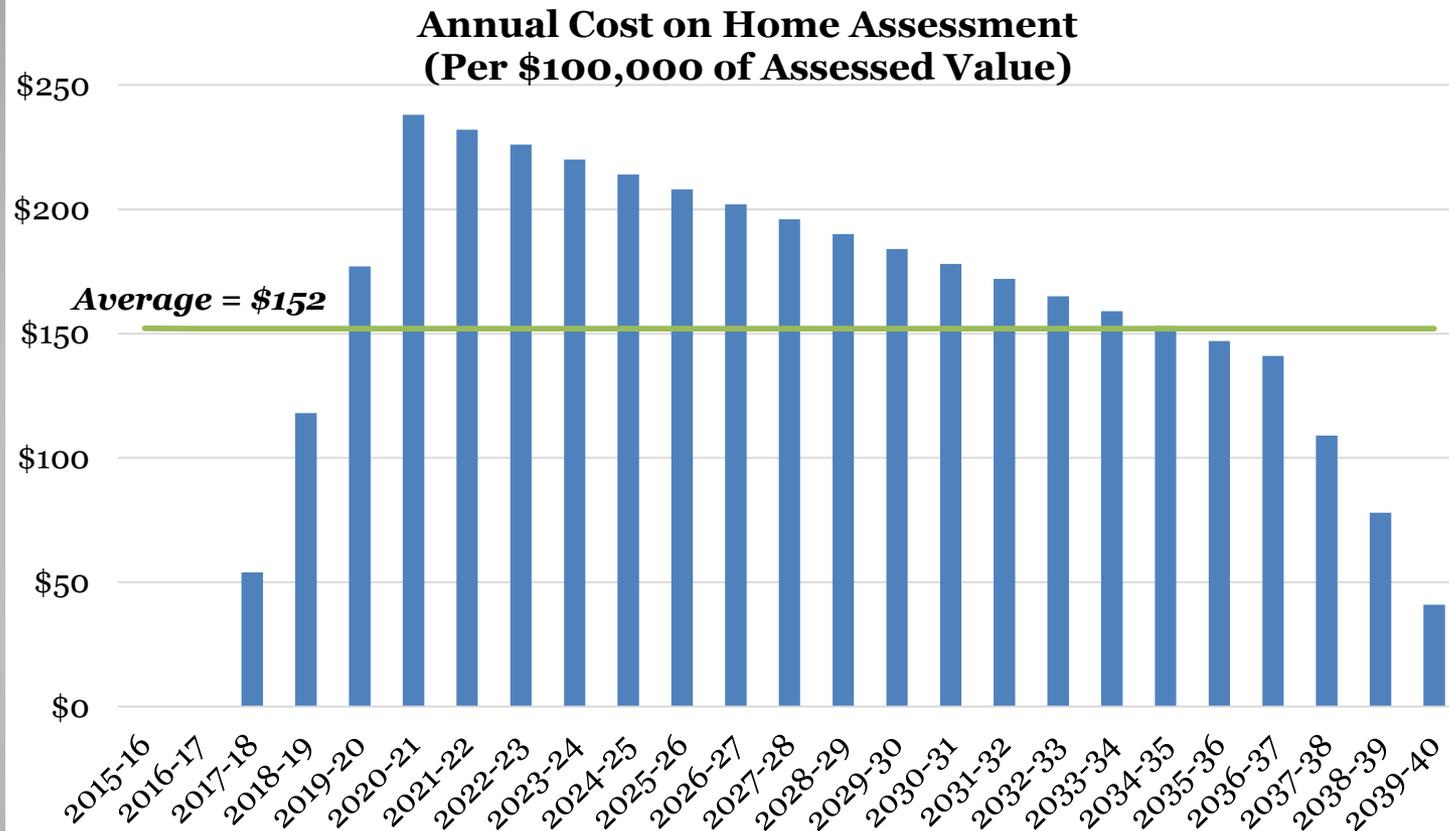


➤ Total Project Cost:  
\$191.7 million

➤ Net Cost to Groton:  
\$94.8 million



# Implications for Taxpayers



Source: "Town of Groton, CT Pro Forma Debt & Mill Rate Impact: Proposed School Projects - \$94.8M Net Cost to the Town" by IBIC LLC

- Median homeowner (\$247,000) will see an average tax increase of \$262.

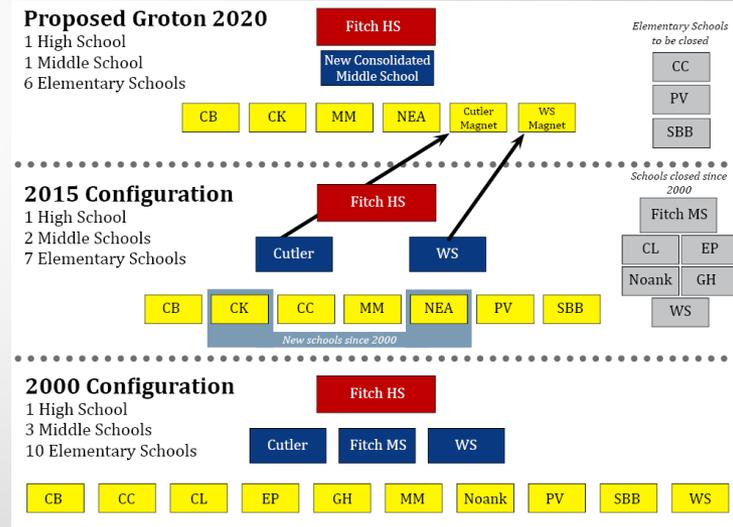


# Operational Considerations

- Reduces number of buildings from **10** schools to **8** schools – helps address concerns about economic conditions
  - Average annual maintenance of ~\$134,500/bldg.  
= potential savings of ~\$269,000 annually
- Operational staffing efficiency through consolidation to larger schools
  - Potential operational staff savings of ~\$1.2 million annually
- Total Potential Annual Cost Avoidance: ~\$1.47 million

# Groton 2020...

- Provides equity and parity for all students of Groton
- Final Phase of the long term consolidation plan to move from 14 to 8 schools
- Investment provides enhancements and modernization, and does not just preserve the status quo
- Modern facilities will make Groton competitive in a regional school market
- Enhances educational opportunities for all students – move towards 21<sup>st</sup> century learning
- Operational efficiencies gained and significant cost avoidance





# Next Steps

Public Outreach/ Survey – Spring/ Summer 2015

Referendum – Spring 2016

Application for School Construction Grant – June 2016

- Currently conducting public outreach, with phone survey to roll out this summer
  - Goal of survey is to gather community perceptions of school system, ask willingness to vote on referendum
- Referendum on bonding will occur in Spring 2016
- If referendum passes, application for School Construction Grant in June 2016



# Thank You!

## Public Comments or Questions?