



Town of Cheshire


SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE – FINAL REPORT

April 1, 2021

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PREPARED FOR:
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I. STATEMENT OF MISSION

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF MISSION

The Cheshire Public Schools facilities range in age from 48 to 107 years old. In addition to providing education services, these facilities also serve as social and recreational hubs for our community. The School Modernization Committee (SMC) has been established to consider available options to upgrade the school facilities, which may include new construction, renovating existing facilities, closing and repurposing facilities, and other creative, viable proposals.

The SMC is tasked with developing recommendations for modernizing our schools that will address the educational needs of CPS students in the 21st century while considering the fiscal impact on the residents of Cheshire. In developing its recommendations, the SMC may hire consultants, engineers, or other professionals to assist with strategy and plans, as the SMC deems appropriate. The Town Council has appropriated \$150,000 to cover such professional fees.

The SMC shall present their recommendations to the Town Council and the Board of Education as soon as completed.

School Modernization Committee Members

Matt Bowman
Rich Gusenburg
Anne Harrigan, Board of Education Member
Jim Jinks, Town Council Member
Andrew Martelli, Board of Education Member
Rene Martinez
Chuck Neth, Chairman
Sylvia Nichols, Town Council Member
Kate O'Donnell
Jeff Pangaro
Anthony Perugini, Board of Education Chairman
Don Walsh, Town Council Member

II. INTRODUCTION

The School Modernization Committee [SMC] was established as a collaborative effort by the Town Council and the Board of Education to develop a fiscally responsible plan for upgrading the school facilities in the Town of Cheshire. The SMC is comprised of three [3] Town Councilors, three [3] members of the Board of Education, and six [6] public appointees – [12] total members.

In developing a recommended plan, the SMC was guided by a three-step process:

1. Fact finding

From the first meeting in November of 2019 through the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March of 2020, the SMC endeavored to tour the school facilities, meet with school staff, and farm relevant information from the previous facility assessment (performed in 2017).

2. Scenario Development

In January 2020, it was determined by a vote of the SMC to seek the services of an Owner Project Manager [OPM] to assist in preparing a school modernization plan and guide the SMC through the process. Following the completed RFP process in March 2020, the SMC selected Colliers Project Leaders [Colliers] as the OPM. In addition to the OPM, the services of a demographer were sought to prepare a detailed enrollment projection for the school district. SLR (formerly Milone & MacBroom) was contracted to perform these services.

Through November 2020, high-level scenarios were developed by Colliers at the direction and input of the SMC and a subcommittee thereto.

3. Scenario Refinement

Preliminary enrollments for each school, budgets and details of State reimbursement were prepared for each of the high-level scenarios, and the original list of [13] was trimmed to [2] based on a weighted scoring criterion developed by a subcommittee of the SMC. These two selected scenarios were Scenario 1A and Scenario 2A.

These two selected scenarios were further refined with actual enrollment projections, budget details, cash flows, and preliminary feedback from the State Office of School Construction Grants & Review [OSCG&R] resulting in the final Scenario 2A and Scenario 6. On March 17, the SMC voted 9-3 in favor of the recommended scenario, Scenario 6.

It was a focus of the SMC to make a data-driven decision with any recommendation. The documentation for the recommended scenario, Scenario 6, can be found within Section V of this report. The documentation for the alternate scenario, Scenario 2A, can be found within Section VI of this report. The content that follows provides the basis of that recommendation and the conclusion that was reached by a majority of the SMC.

III. WHY MODERNIZATION?

a. 21st Century Educational Goals

School modernization is necessary to meet the growing enrollment demand and to ensure the district's education goals are met. As the school learning environment has rapidly evolved over the years, there is the need to keep current and on pace not only with the other school systems within the state, but also those throughout the country. Today, that means ensuring that the school structures are as current and updated as possible, both physically and programmatically.

Factors to be incorporated into the 21st Century Learning Environment:

- Expanded educational programs
- Updated information and technology components within the schools
- Updated mechanical systems for improved efficiency and ventilation
- Facilities in place are to current building codes
- Accessibility into and throughout all schools
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment
- Optimize traffic patterns and alleviate vehicular circulation challenges on sites

Additionally, the district submitted to the School Modernization Committee (SMC) the following objectives for their vision of a 21st Century Learning Environment:

- Focus on flexible grouping during lessons
- Focus on opportunities for collaboration
- Provide opportunities for application
- Meet individual needs of students
- Design for flexibility given the pace of change
- Consider more sophisticated early childhood and special education needs

b. Existing Building Conditions

There are currently eight school buildings used by the Cheshire Public School district, ranging in age from 50 to 109 years, with an average age of approximately 70 years.

Existing Building Data				
Building Name	Year Built	Age	Grades	Current Student Enrollment (Fall 2020)
Humiston School/Central Office	1912	109	Alt 9-12	30
Darcey School (Early Intervention)	1947	74	PK	102
			K	81
Chapman Elementary School	1950	71	K-6	316
Norton Elementary School	1955	66	K-6	417
Doolittle Elementary School	1962	59	1 thru 6	437
Highland Elementary School	1971	50	K-6	738
Dodd Middle School	1958	63	7-8	651
Cheshire High School	1951	70	9-12	1410
Average		70.25		

Figure 3-1

Due to their age and lack of any significant renovations over the past several years, the Town of Cheshire's school facilities are in need of corrective action. The existing challenges presented by an expanding educational program, non-compliance with current school safety guidelines, handicapped accessibility limitations, and outdated mechanical systems all contribute to most of the current schools not being equipped to handle the 21st century learning environment.

c. State Recommendations

The State of Connecticut has several recommendations for any new project which must be considered by a district when assessing their school's needs:

- An enrollment projection and the capacity of the school.
- A substantiation of the estimated total project costs.
- The readiness of such eligible project to begin construction.
- Efforts made by the local or regional board of education to redistrict, reconfigure, merge or close schools under the jurisdiction of such board prior to submitting an application under this section.
- Efforts made by such board to collaborate with other boards of education to reduce under enrollment in the schools under the jurisdiction of such board.
- Enrollment and capacity information for all schools under the jurisdiction of such board for the five years prior to application for a school building project grant.
- Estimated enrollment and capacity information for all of the schools under the jurisdiction of such board for the eight years following such application is submitted.
- The state's education priorities relating to reducing racial and economic isolation for the school district.

d. Enrollment Projections

SLR (formerly Milone & MacBroom) was selected by the SMC to prepare enrollment projections for the district over the next eight to ten years, to fully grasp the potential impact that the student enrollment would have on the existing facilities.

The preliminary study by SLR indicated that the following elementary enrollment projections (high) could be anticipated by the Town:

Elementary School Enrollment Projections (High)

School	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Darcey	170	147	157	176	178	185	156	198	201	199	184	207	209	203	204	206
Chapman	350	344	323	313	312	315	320	345	364	385	388	408	430	440	445	453
Doolittle	502	480	464	456	444	436	433	423	442	469	477	487	504	545	550	552
Highland	768	751	722	721	743	721	746	782	814	850	872	908	942	963	973	974
Norton	447	445	418	400	425	415	403	437	442	447	464	459	485	502	508	526
Total	2,237	2,167	2,084	2,066	2,102	2,072	2,058	2,185	2,263	2,350	2,385	2,469	2,570	2,653	2,680	2,711

Figure 3-2

Enrollment Projections Findings:

- Significant uptick in births in 2016 through 2018 (209-212 birth annually) contributes to immediate and sustained projected increase.
- Delayed impact to Doolittle School because its Kindergarten class is not physically in the building.
- All districts are projected to grow; however, Chapman and Highland are projected to experience the strongest growth trends.

Using these projected enrollment numbers, SLR subsequently determined the following functional capacity for each school:

School	Grade-Level Classrooms	Other Full-Size Rooms Contributing to Enrollment	Functional Capacity
Darcey	8	1	180
Chapman	20	0	411
Doolittle	27	5	606
Norton	24	0	494
Highland	39	3	827
Total PK-6	118	9	2,518

Figure 3-3

School Capacities Findings:

- It was determined that capacities are largely in line with the review of prior studies (including the Perkins Eastman 2016 study) and reflect the current programming within buildings.
- Noted increasing special education programming needs and subsequent need for appropriate spaces.
- Concerns beyond classroom availability due to core spaces and site constraints.
- Assumed average class sizes of (20-21) for regular education and (8-15) for special education and early childhood development.
- “Target” enrollments for elementary schools are usually 90% of capacity to ensure flexibility for accommodating enrollment bubbles.
- Elementary system currently operating within capacity and target enrollments with shifts in programming, such as Doolittle’s kindergarten class at Darcey.
- With projected rapid increase in enrollment, elementary system is projected to exceed target enrollment in 2023-24, and exceed the system’s functional capacity in 2026-27, based on current programming.

This data is broken down further by school, with the *functional capacity* delineated by the solid blue line and the *target capacity* depicted by the dashed blue line within these charts:

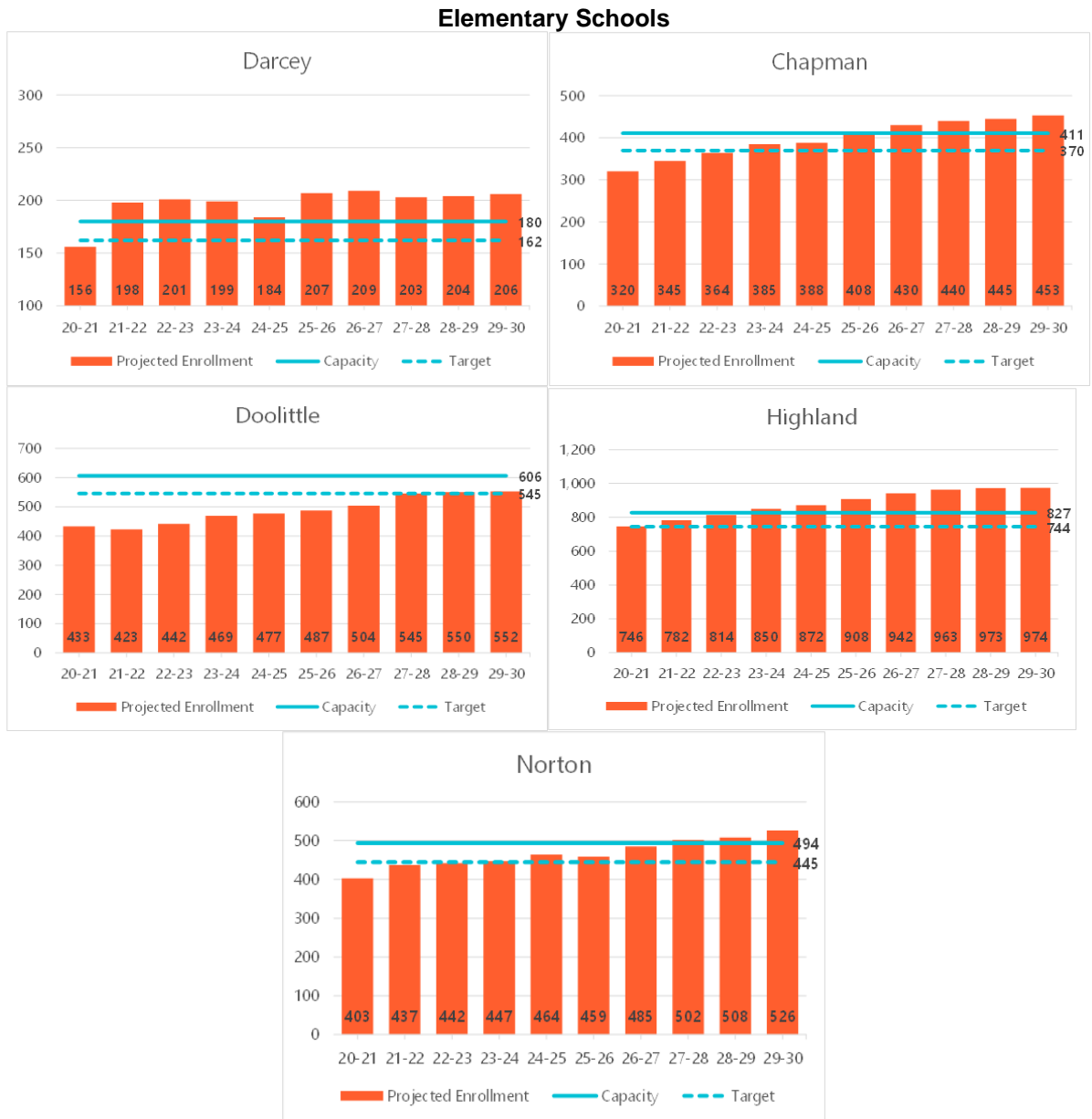


Figure 3-4

Elementary School Utilization Findings:

- Darcey projected to exceed target enrollment and functional capacity next year with the additional programming currently located in building.
- Chapman projected to exceed target enrollment in three years and functional capacity in six years.
- Doolittle projected to remain within target enrollment; however, this assumes its kindergarten class remains at Darcey.
- Highland projected to exceed target enrollment next year and exceed functional capacity within three years.
- Norton projected to be roughly at targeted enrollment until it starts to exceed in 2026-27, and approaches functional capacity by 2029-30.

Similarly, SLR determined the functional capacities for the Middle School and High School as follows:

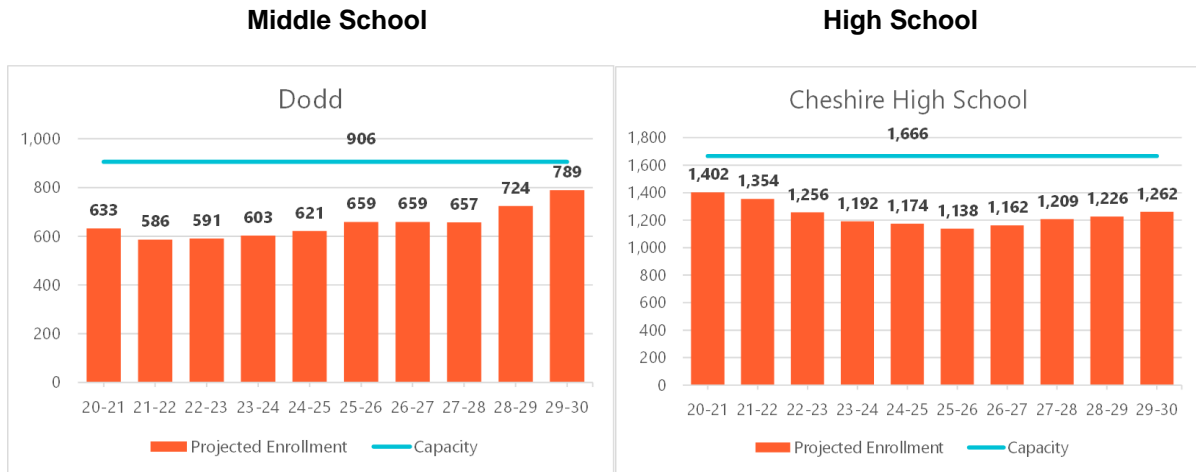


Figure 3-5

School	Grade-Level Classrooms	Functional Capacity
Dodd	45	906
CHS	98	1,666

Figure 3-6

Middle School and High School Utilization Findings:

- Assumed average class sizes of (20) at the Middle School and (17) at the High School.
- Target capacities for the Middle School and High School are determined by scheduling and programming and are not calculated as 90% of the functional capacity as is the case for elementary schools.
- Both schools' enrollments are projected to remain well within functional capacity over the next decade.

Based on the projected enrollments and existing facility assessments, the data indicates that the greatest need for action is at the Elementary Schools, whereas the Middle School and High School are each spatially adequate for the future student enrollments.

e. Space Standards

Space standards have been developed by the State of Connecticut's Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCG&R) and is the statutory tool to determine how much of the project is deemed reimbursable by the state. It is also used to guide districts and the state on how large the school should be in terms of square feet. The space standard is calculated using the Space Standard Worksheet shown in Figure 3-7 and is driven by the 8-year high projected student enrollment (as calculated by a professional demographer) for a specific school.

Depending on where the 8-year high projected enrollment falls as well as the grades housed for that school, the allowable square footage per pupil will vary as shown in the "Allowable Footage Per Pupil" table in Figure 3-7. Utilizing the worksheet, the average square feet per student is calculated by entering the values from the table for each grade, summing the total allowable square feet, then dividing by the number of grades. This average is then multiplied by the 8-year high projected enrollment to determine the "Space Standard" or "Maximum Square Footage" as shown in Figure 3-7. This is the maximum amount of square footage the state is willing to reimburse unless a space standard waiver is granted based upon various factors (e.g., programming, existing conditions, etc.)

In cases such as renovation for existing buildings or new buildings when the educational specification is complete, the area at the completion of the project is entered in 3c of the Space Standard Worksheet. The space standard RATIO is then calculated by dividing the "Maximum Square Footage" by the "Area at completion of the project". The State of Connecticut's goal is to have this percentage be 100%. When the ratio is less than 100%, it indicates that the building may be too large for the given enrollment. However, as noted above, various factors may be considered in such cases to justify the excess space.

By statute, if a space waiver is not granted for the excess building area, the space standard ratio is applied to the district's appropriate reimbursement rate. For example, if the space standard ratio indicates 95%, the applicable reimbursement rate is multiplied by .95 which results in a reimbursement rate that is less than the district rate. This rate is then applied to all eligible project costs. Thus, right sizing the building as close to the space standard is important to maximizing reimbursement to the district.

An example of the space standard assessment is shown here for one of the proposed new Elementary Schools in Scenario 6:

PROPOSED NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-6/653 STUDENTS)
SPACE STANDARD CALCULATION
SCENARIO 6 - CONCEPTUAL RE-DISTRICTING PLAN BY SLR DATED FEBRUARY 25, 2021

SPACE STANDARD WORKSHEET

This worksheet should be completed and submitted with the application for any N (New), E (Extension), A (Alternation, or RENO (Renovation) project, or combination

State Standard Space Specifications

Project Enrollment	Grade												
	Pre K & K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Allowable Square Footage per Pupil													
0-350	124	124	124	124	124	156	156	180	180	180	194	194	194
351-750	120	120	120	120	120	152	152	176	176	176	190	190	190
751-1500	116	116	116	116	116	148	148	170	170	170	184	184	184
Over 1500	112	112	112	112	112	142	142	164	164	164	178	178	178

1. Under the column headed "Projected Enrollment", find the range within which your school's highest project 8-year enrollment falls.
2. Using the figures on that line, complete the grid below for only those grades housed within the school.

Values are taken from Table above and are based on highest projected 8-year enrollment

Pre-K _____ K _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____	6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____ 11 _____ 12 _____
---	--

(a) Total (grades Pre-K through 12) 904 = Sum of values above
(b) Number of grades housed 7 = Number of grades in school
(c) Average [(a)/(b)] 129.14

(d) Highest Project 8-year Enrollment Enrollment Projection = 653
(e) Maximum Square Footage [c x d] 84,330

3. Total Square Footage at completion of project:

a. Existing Area constructed pre-1950	0
b. Multiply "a" by 80%	0
c. Area (at completion of project) constructed 1950 or later	0 ED-050 Value
d. Square footage for space standards computation (b+c)	0

If line 2e is greater than line 3d there no grant reduction
If line 3d is greater than line 2e, divide line 2e by line 3d 0% *

*This factor will be used to reduce total eligible costs because of space in excess of the maximum eligible for reimbursement. If a project exceeds the standard solely as the result of extraordinary programmatic requirements, the superintendent of schools may submit a request to the Commissioner for a waiver. A detailed list of space allocations for all the extraordinary programs with explanations must be included with the request.

Figure 3-7

Calculating space standards for each of the schools provides an insight of which schools exceed the 100% space standard threshold and, subsequently, indicate where there may be room for expansion (and as shown within column D in the Figure 3-8) if needed. Additionally, when reviewing the space standard calculations versus the school capacities, the enrollment/capacity ratios reflect the projected space standard percentages (as shown in column F in Figure 3-8). Where column D and column F do not coincide, it may be due to how the building is programmed, originally constructed, and utilized. Each building would have to be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.

Existing Building Data		Summary of Space Standard vs. Existing S.F.				MMI Capacity vs. Utilization	
Building Name	Grades	A	B	C	D	E	F (=A/E)
		Highest 8-year Enrollment*	ED-050 NSF	SPACE STANDARD AREA FOR 8-YEAR HIGH	Space Standard vs Existing S.F.	90% Capacity (Functional Capacity)	8-Year Utilization vs. Capacity
Humiston School/Central Office	Alt 9-12		14,800				
Darcey School (Early Intervention)	PK	105					
	K	104	29,000	25,916	89%	162	129%
Chapman Elementary School	K-6	453	51,200	60,314	118%	370	122%
Norton Elementary School	K-6	526	58,100	60,568	104%	445	118%
Doolittle Elementary School	K-6	552	73,850	79,035	107%	545	101%
Highland Elementary School	K-6	974	106,000	96,720	91%	744	131%
Dodd Middle School	7-8	789	128,502	134,130	104%	815	97%
Cheshire High School	9-12	1354	264,952	227,791	86%	1499	90%

*Chapman/Norton/Doolittle/Highland=2029-30 Year

Figure 3-8

Based on the results of the space standard assessments and the projected enrollment calculations, the following criteria must be addressed to transition the existing school system into the 21st century learning environment:

- Accommodate the space needs for the impending enrollment growth
- Renovate existing or provide new elementary schools
- Provide the necessary information and technology services to the existing schools
- Provide sufficient space for the evolving programmatic needs
- Provide the building code and handicap accessibility upgrades necessary
- Modernize the existing school system

IV. SCENARIO DISCUSSION

a. Description

The considerations established for developing the initial scenarios were as follows:

- **Data Driven** – scenarios are determined by the data
- **Holistic Approach** – established per the State recommendations and considering *all* facilities, not just a single facility
- **Physical square footage needs** - versus the physical conditions and predicated on enrollment

Ideally, any school district must have enough space to accommodate all of the students within the district.

Subsequently, a subcommittee was formed to determine how to best assess the potential options that would be considered for the next step moving forward and based on the findings within the SLR report. After much deliberation, the following five factors, and the detailed descriptions of each, were selected as the basis for the assessment of each school scenario:

- **Address Enrollment Projections and Space Requirements (the most prominent issue from the SLR projections)**
 - Meets space needs for Elementary School students
 - Meets space needs for Middle School students
 - Prevents overcrowding
- **Physical Condition Needs and Code Requirements**
 - School Security Infrastructure Council (SSIC) Requirements
 - Energy Improvements
 - Life Safety Requirements
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Indoor Air Quality
- **Modernizes the Schools Instructional Spaces**
 - Updated learning environment
 - Information and Telecommunications (IT) infrastructure
 - Addresses program needs (including Special Education)
- **Student Impact**
 - Timeliness of benefits to students at all grade levels
 - Improved learning environment
 - Re-districting
 - Impact to families
- **Minimizes Financial Impact**
 - Initial capital cost
 - Based on per month/per year tax impact for the Town
 - Individual impact vs. Town impact

A total of thirteen scenarios were initially selected to be scored by the SMC members. Variations of these scenarios were created by portions of the work being proposed as either “Capital Improvement Projects” (CIP) or as Renovations above and beyond any new schools(s) being proposed.

To clarify, CIP projects are smaller, individual projects that will only address specific aspects of a building such as windows, roofs, boilers, or general maintenance upgrades. A renovation project is considered a complete renovation of the facility to bring it to a like new 20-year life span where all aspects of the facility are improved.

Following the scoring of the thirteen initial scenarios, further analysis and discussions resulted in the SMC narrowing their selection down to two options:

Scenario 1A

- **Phase 1**
 - New K-6 Elementary School to replace Chapman
 - Existing Darcey and Chapman buildings are taken offline
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
- **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle, Highland, and Norton
 - Renovations to Dodd Middle School
 - Renovations to the High School
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD

Scenario 2A

- **Phase 1**
 - New 6-8 Middle School
 - New K-5 Elementary School to replace Chapman
 - Existing Darcey and Chapman buildings are taken offline
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
- **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle and Norton (as K-5)
 - Renovations to Highland
 - Renovations to the High School
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly relocated into vacant Dodd)

These two scenarios were further vetted by SLR with respect to the actual enrollment projections factored into the scenarios in lieu of the capacity figures. This process, in addition to further discussions at the SMC Meeting on March 8th, resulted in the elimination of Scenario 1A by a unanimous vote based on the following:

1. An oversized proposed elementary school with an enrollment forecast of 858 students, and
2. The redistricting impact on roughly 40% of the elementary school population.

Further debate introduced a new scenario ("Scenario 6") as a variation of the original Scenario 1A.

Scenario 2A was also refined with actual enrollment projections to include a K-5 elementary school in Phase 1 with the 515 projected enrollment; the corresponding redistricting plan impacted approximately 15% of the elementary students.

On March 11, 2021, a second meeting with OSCG&R was held to review the updated enrollment projections and current scenarios. The State suggested the following:

- Starting with a High School project would be a "hard no" given the enrollment projections
- A 6-8 middle school with a projected enrollment of ~1200 is very large and not preferred; 900 would be a recommended max. It was not ruled out by the State, but would require a further study to validate it as an option
- A 400-700 enrollment for an elementary school is preferred; 850+ is too large
- Any plan should provide ample, dedicated space for early childhood development, special education and/or behavioral health needs. (This was stated multiple times and in many ways).
- Do not rush an application and make sure to do your homework to provide a holistic plan.

As a result of these discussions, the final two scenarios considered by the SMC were as follows:

Revised Scenario 2A

- **Phase 1**
 - New 6-8 Middle School
 - New K-5 Elementary School to replace Chapman (potentially on the existing site, based on a test fit)
 - Existing Darcey building is taken offline and the existing Chapman is demolished
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
 - **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle, Highland, and Norton (as K-5)*
 - Renovations to the High School*
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly relocated into vacant Dodd)
- *(As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence)

Scenario 6

- **Phase 1**
 - Two New K-6 Elementary Schools
 - (1) located at North end of Town and (1) located at South end of Town-possibly on the Norton site
 - Existing Darcey and Chapman buildings are taken offline
 - Norton is demolished (pending South end school location)
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
 - **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle and Highland (as K-6)*
 - Renovations to Dodd Middle School*
 - Renovations to the High School*
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly addressed as CIP)
- *(As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence)

With these two scenarios now finalized, the SMC scored each of them based on the same criterion used previously. The results of those scores are as follows for both the average and median scores of the committee members.

Average Scores

Evaluation - Based on Average Scores of SMC Members												
Factors		Addresses Enrollment Projections/ Space Requirements		Physical Condition Needs/ Code Requirements		Modernizes the Schools Instructional Spaces		Student Impact		Minimizes Financial Impact		TOTAL
Description of Factor		- Meets space needs for ES students - Meets space needs for MS students - Prevents overcrowding		- SSIC Requirements - Energy Improvements - Life Safety Requirements - ADA Requirements - Indoor Air Quality		- Updated learning environment - IT infrastructure - Addresses program needs (including Special Ed)		- Timeliness of benefits to students at all grade levels - Improved learning environment - Re-districting - Impact to Families		- Initial Capital Cost - Based on per month/per year tax impact for SMC or the Town - Individual impact vs. Town impact		
Weight		30		25		20		5		20		100
Scenarios w/ Phases Overview (reference budget sheets)		SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	
6	Phase 1: Two (2) new K-6 elementary schools - (1) north end, (1) south end (Norton?), Darcey taken offline, pK moves to Highland, Chapman taken offline, Norton taken offline Phase 2+: Renovate Cheshire High School, Renovate Doolittle, Renovate Highland, Humiston TBD	3.6	27	3.6	22.5	3.6	18	3.1	3.875	3.6	18	89.4
2A	Phase 1: New 6-8 middle school, new K-5 elementary school (Chapman?), Darcey taken offline, Dodd taken offline, pK moves to Highland Phase 2+: Renovate Cheshire High School, Renovate Doolittle, Renovate Highland, Humiston TBD	3.1	23.25	3.6	22.5	3.7	18.5	3.1	3.875	2.4	12	80.1

Figure 4-1

Median Scores

Evaluation - Based on Median Scores of SMC Members												
Factors		Addresses Enrollment Projections/ Space Requirements		Physical Condition Needs/ Code Requirements		Modernizes the Schools Instructional Spaces		Student Impact		Minimizes Financial Impact		TOTAL
Description of Factor		- Meets space needs for ES students - Meets space needs for MS students - Prevents overcrowding		- SSIC Requirements - Energy Improvements - Life Safety Requirements - ADA Requirements - Indoor Air Quality		- Updated learning environment - IT infrastructure - Addresses program needs (including Special Ed)		- Timeliness of benefits to students at all grade levels - Improved learning environment - Re-districting - Impact to Families		- Initial Capital Cost - Based on per month/per year tax impact for SMC or the Town - Individual impact vs. Town impact		
Weight		30		25		20		5		20		100
Scenarios w/ Phases Overview (reference budget sheets)		SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	SCORE (1-4)	Weighted Score	
6	Phase 1: Two (2) new K-6 elementary schools - (1) north end, (1) south end (Norton?), Darcey taken offline, pK moves to Highland, Chapman taken offline, Norton taken offline Phase 2+: Renovate Cheshire High School, Renovate Doolittle, Renovate Highland, Humiston TBD	4	30	4	25	4	20	3	3.75	4	20	98.8
2A	Phase 1: New 6-8 middle school, new K-5 elementary school (Chapman?), Darcey taken offline, Dodd taken offline, pK moves to Highland Phase 2+: Renovate Cheshire High School, Renovate Doolittle, Renovate Highland, Humiston TBD	3	22.5	4	25	4	20	3	3.75	2	10	81.3

Figure 4-2

At a meeting on March 17, 2021, a 9-3 majority of the SMC voted to recommend Scenario 6 as the best option for School Modernization.

b. Parcel Review

Land parcels, both Town-owned and private, were preliminarily explored to determine adequacy to support a potential new elementary or middle school. As a guideline, the state recommends that the minimal acreage for an elementary school to be 10 acres plus an additional acre for every 100 students. For a middle school, the suggested requirement is a site of 15 acres plus another acre for every 100 students as the minimum standard site requirement.

Initially, the Town of Cheshire provided Colliers with a list of town owned properties which could be considered for potential use while determining the location of a possible new elementary or middle school. It was noted that these parcels were only recommendations and that they would be reviewed to determine their viability based on the acreage of the lot and if there were any known land use restrictions.

From this list, the following four properties were identified as the most viable due to their acreage and location:

Northwest – Casertano Property
Northeast – Cheshire Park Property
Southeast – Bartlem Park Property
Southwest – Norton Site Property

Once again, these properties would need to be studied further, yet the four properties meet the minimal acreage requirements and are viable parcels for potential construction activity.

Colliers further expanded their search for properties that were privately owned to obtain a sense of what land may be available within the central Route 10 artery of the town. This resulted in nine properties of which were evaluated to be potential viable lots. The average cost per acre was determined to be approximately \$53,000.00, with the initial assessment to be as follows:

6-8 Middle School with 1,200 Enrollment (27 acres minimum)
Estimated property purchase cost: \$1,426,839.00

K-6 Elementary School with 700 maximum Enrollment (17 acres minimum)
Estimated property purchase cost: \$898,380.00

The final determination, following further discussion within the School Modernization Committee, was to allocate within the estimated budgets a potential purchase price for a new property at \$1,200,000.00 for a parcel adequate in size for an elementary school facility, and \$1,700,000.00 for a potential piece of property that could accommodate a new middle school. These costs, in turn, were projected within our updated scenarios to reflect the costs for any necessary land acquisition which had not previously been accounted for within our original budget projections.

It should be noted at this time that no actual sites have been selected or proposed for a new school(s). Further detailed assessments will need to be conducted in order to determine the feasibility of any proposed site and to determine that it is suitable for such a project.

c. Steps/Phases

Preliminary budgets were prepared for each scenario. Colliers addressed this by developing estimated project budgets using a high and low cost range for the anticipated cost line items which would be incurred for these proposed new construction and/or renovation projects. These costs were also predicated on the anticipated timing and overall project duration which would help to establish the time necessary for the significant components within the project schedule (i.e., architect and contractor selections, project design, local and state approvals, construction, close-out, etc.).

The enrollment figures are used to establish the gross square footage for the new facility. Factoring in the anticipated project costs (both “hard costs” for the building construction including escalation and the “soft costs” for the ancillary expenses such as furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E), fees and expenses, and contingencies associated with the project), and the anticipated high and low range of costs are then estimated.

An **example** of one such High-Low cost assessment is shown here for one of the proposed new elementary schools within the Scenario 6 study:

Town of Cheshire New Elementary School

Project Budget Development - High / Low Cost Range		
Date: March 30, 2021		
	PROPOSED BUDGET (HIGH RANGE)	PROPOSED BUDGET (LOW RANGE)
<i>Enrollment</i>	653	653
<i>\$(000) except \$/GSF</i>		
New Construction GSF	96,980	88,547
Renovation GSF		
Total GSF	96,980	88,547
New Construction \$/GSF - Current	\$ 365.00	\$ 350.00
Renovation \$/GSF - Current		
New Construction \$/GSF - Escalated	\$ 418.80	\$ 401.60
Renovation \$/GSF - Escalated	\$ -	\$ -
Total Construction w/ site \$/GSF	\$ 510.99	\$ 461.88
Total Project \$/GSF	\$ 656.80	\$ 595.49
I. Building Construction		
A. New Building Construction	\$ 35,397.6	\$ 30,991.4
Total Building Construction	35,397.6	30,991.4
II. Related Construction		
A. Sitework		
1 Earthwork / Site Prep	7,787.5	4,648.7
2 Exterior Improvements	w/ site prep	w/ site prep
B. Site Utility Systems		
Total Site Construction	7,787.5	4,648.7
C. Building Demolition	N/A	N/A
Total Related Construction	7,787.5	4,648.7
Subtotal Construction - Current \$	43,185.1	35,640.1
III. Escalation (2020 Construction)		
Total Construction - Escalated	\$ 49,555.9	\$ 40,897.8
IV. Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (FF&E)		
A. Loose Furnishings	1,110.1	979.5
B. Program Related Equipment	100.0	100.0
C. Data / Telecomm Equipment	979.5	979.5
F. Specialty Signage	75.0	25.0
Total FF & E	\$ 2,264.6	\$ 2,084.0
V. Fees and Expenses		
A. Fees		
1 Existing Conditions & Space Program	-	-
2 Architect	3,627.4	3,008.7
3 Special Consultants		
Haz. Mat. Consultant	150.0	100.0
Ecologist / Soil Sample	50.0	50.0
Peer Reviews	50.0	50.0
Storm Water Monitoring	75.0	50.0
4 Project Management	1,250.0	950.0
5 Building Commissioning	220.0	175.0
7 CM Preconstruction Fee	225.0	175.0
8 Owner's Legal Fees	75.0	50.0
10 Utility Assessment	75.0	50.0
Sub-total Fees	5,797.4	4,658.7
B. Expenses		
1 Owner's Insurance	74.3	61.3
2 Permits	12.9	10.6
3 Printing	25.0	20.0
6 Materials Testing	275.0	200.0
7 Special Inspections	45.0	30.0
8 Consultant Reimbursables	100.0	50.0
9 Moving / Relocation	250.0	150.0
10 Temporary Space / Operations	50.0	35.0
11 Advertising	25.0	15.0
12 Physical Plant Expenses	25.0	20.0
13 Misc. Expenses	25.0	15.0
14 Financing Costs / Bond Origination	TBD	TBD
15 Site Acquisition	1,200.0	1,200.0
Sub-total Expenses	2,107.2	1,806.9
Total Fees and Expenses	7,904.6	6,465.6
V. Contingency		
A. Construction	2,477.8	2,044.9
B. Owner's Project	1,493.1	1,236.2
Total Contingency	3,970.9	3,281.1
Total Project	\$ 63,696.0	\$ 52,728.5
Construction Cost vs. Total Project Cost	78%	78%
Soft Cost vs. Total Project Cost	22%	22%

Figure 4-3

d. Schedule

As noted previously, the project schedule plays an instrumental role in determining the successful sequencing of the projects and ensuring that the projects are not only completed on time but also within budget. Following the completion and final selection of a scenario, the next significant step is to confirm the site locations for the projects themselves and ensure that the sites are suitable for construction. Once the sites have been confirmed to be viable (through a site assessment and test fit by an architectural firm, in addition to geotechnical and hazardous material testing and reviews), the next significant step is to develop and approve the Educational Specifications and budget for the projects.

As with any Grant Application to the State, the deadline for submittal is June 30. Assuming that all required paperwork and approvals have been successfully submitted by the Town of Cheshire, the referendum date is another milestone for the projects and that is typically carried out in the beginning of November. Assuming that the referendum is successful, the next step is to hire an architect to begin the design process and, following the public bidding of the projects, the construction would then commence.

An example of one such schedule, reflecting the major steps as outlined above is shown here for Phase 1 of the proposed Scenario 6 option:

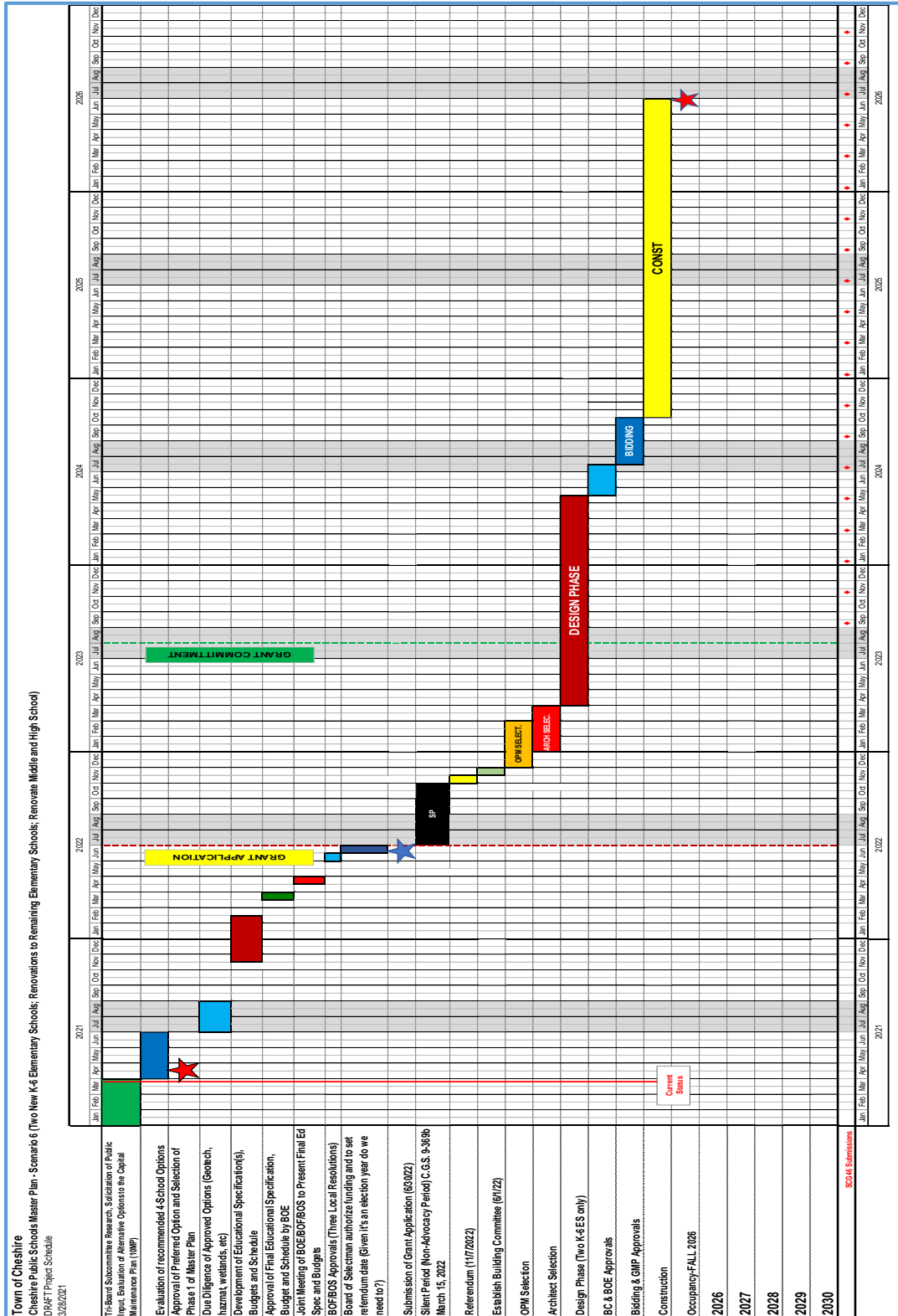


Figure 4-4

e. Benefits to the community

Ultimately, the objective of the SMC was to provide options to the Town Council and Board of Education which would encompass part or all of the following objectives:

- Develop recommendations for modernizing the Cheshire Public Schools
- Address the educational needs of the Town of Cheshire students
- Upgrade the school facilities (which may include new construction, renovating existing facilities, and/or closing and repurposing facilities)
- Encourage public use of the school facilities
- Anticipate the needs of the growing school enrollment numbers
- Address the increasing demand of the school services and operational costs of the aging school structures
- Consider improved traffic patterns associated with the existing schools
- Provide safe and accessible school facilities
- Capitalize on the State's financial grant reimbursements
- Minimize redistricting of the student where possible

Much of this was also echoed within the survey results, conducted by The Center for Research & Public Policy, Inc., an independent firm selected by the SMC Communications subcommittee, and attached within the Appendices, Section VIII, of this report.

V. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS – SCENARIO 6 (RECOMMENDED)

As the different scenarios and permutations of these options developed over the months of analyzing these educational assessments for the Town, it was critical that the potential estimated costs associated with each of these scenarios being discussed were determined to analyze and comprehend the financial impact to the Town of Cheshire and its residents.

An initial factor incorporated into the project cost impacts is the State Construction Reimbursement Rate. For the Town of Cheshire, these figures are 35.72% for any new school construction project and 45.72% for any school renovation project. These percentages are used to help calculate approximately what the state will reimburse the Town of Cheshire for any school project(s). These figures do not account for certain ineligible costs on any project; however, it provides a reasonable assessment of what the state will reimburse a town for when calculating the final district share for a project.

Additionally, when considering the eventual size requirements for any new school (or renovations to an existing), another component which OSCG&R relies on is their established Space Standard worksheet. This sheet calculates the recommended maximum size for a new or renovated school based on the proposed enrollment numbers and, subsequently, to what extent a town may qualify for financial reimbursement from the state. This was discussed in further detail within Section III of this report.

Another process in the financial assessment is to establish the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) costs which are carried by the Town to address the yearly on-going maintenance costs associated with the numerous school facilities within the district. Part of the financial review process is determining what, if any, of these potential costs could be alleviated if the work proposed within any of these scenarios were to proceed. In other words, if a specific school were to undergo renovations within the next few years, the projected, or forecasted, costs to address any future maintenance items could be removed from the corresponding spreadsheet since these repairs would be addressed during any proposed renovation scope of work.

As a reminder, the proposed scope of work and phasing for Scenario 6 is as follows:

Scenario 6

- **Phase 1**
 - Two New K-6 Elementary Schools
 - (1) located at North end of Town and (1) located at South end of Town-possibly on the Norton site
 - Existing Darcey and Chapman buildings are taken offline
 - Norton is demolished (pending South end school location)
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
- **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle and Highland (as K-6)*
 - Renovations to Dodd Middle School*
 - Renovations to the High School*
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly addressed as CIP)

*(As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence)

The estimated probable costs impact on each phase and the schools within the scenario were established using the high and low gross square footage for the facility (based on the space standard from the state); the estimated high and low total budgets; as well as the estimated high and low district shares after factoring in the state reimbursements.

The estimated phased financial overview for the SMC's Scenario 6:

Cheshire School Modernization Committee Scenario 6 Two New Elementary Schools Updated Per Conceptual Re-Districting Values provided by SLR dated March 15, 2021							
	8-Year High Enrollment	Building Size		Total Budget		Estimated District Share	
		Low GSF	High GSF	Low Budget (\$M)	High Budget (\$M)	Low District Share (\$M)	High District Share (\$M)
New Elementary School K-6 (North)*	653	88,547	96,980	\$ 52.7	\$ 63.7	\$ 35.3	\$ 42.7
New Elementary School K-6 (South)* (Assumed demo of Norton also)	669	99,356	90,716	\$ 55.6	\$ 66.8	\$ 37.2	\$ 44.7
Estimated Total for Phase 1				\$ 108.3	\$ 130.5	\$ 72.5	\$ 87.4
Renovation of Remaining Elementary Schools							
Doolittle ES (K-6) (Capacity is 606)	612	82,987	90,890	\$ 42.3	\$ 57.6	\$ 24.4	\$ 33.2
Highland ES (PK-6) (Capacity is 827)	780	111,300	111,300	\$ 55.2	\$ 69.2	\$ 31.8	\$ 40.0
Darcey (Taken offline)							
Chapman (Taken offline)							
Dodd MS 7-8 (Renovation)	789	134,927	134,927	\$ 64.6	\$ 79.6	\$ 37.3	\$ 46.0
Renovate HS (2030 - Midpoint)	1262	278,200	278,200	\$ 153.1	\$ 189.3	\$ 88.4	\$ 109.3
Humiston-TBD	30	14,800	14,800	\$ 4.40	\$ 14.00	\$ 4.40	\$ 14.00
Total Estimated Costs-exclusive of Maintenance Costs to Darcey and Chapman:				\$ 427.91	\$ 540.24	\$ 258.82	\$ 329.76

Figure 5-1

Following this exercise, the financial implications established by Colliers were then forwarded to the Town of Cheshire Finance Department for their assessment and establishment of the debt service summary and projected bond calculations to determine the estimated tax impact to the Town of Cheshire residents.

The Town of Cheshire Finance Department's estimated Projected Bonds based on Scenario 6:

PROJECTED BONDS - SCENARIO 6					
PHASE 1 (2 NEW K-6 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)					
AND PHASES 2 AND 3 (RENOVATIONS OF REMAINING SCHOOLS)					
	Project Cash Flow	Less Grants	Add Humiston Renovations	Projected Bonds	Interest Rate Assumption
Feb-23	\$ 34,214,600	\$ (7,812,000)	\$ -	\$ 26,402,600	2.50%
Feb-24	51,678,600	(14,775,300)	-	36,903,300	2.50%
Feb-25	38,104,000	(12,190,100)	-	25,913,900	2.75%
Feb-26	8,123,300	(2,805,200)	4,000,000	9,318,100	2.75%
Feb-27	37,232,200	(12,387,300)	4,000,000	28,844,900	3.00%
Feb-28	67,545,200	(24,576,400)	4,000,000	46,968,800	3.00%
Feb-29	67,256,500	(22,543,600)	2,000,000	46,712,900	3.25%
Feb-30	34,947,500	(14,472,900)	-	20,474,600	3.25%
Feb-31	60,106,400	(22,012,000)	-	38,094,400	3.50%
Feb-32	69,456,700	(25,436,100)	-	44,020,600	3.50%
Feb-33	23,508,400	(8,609,200)	-	14,899,200	3.75%
	<u>\$ 492,173,400</u>	<u>\$ (167,620,100)</u>	<u>\$ 14,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 338,553,300</u>	

Figure 5-2

Projected Bonds based solely on Phase 1 of Scenario 6:

PROJECTED BONDS - SCENARIO 6					
PHASE 1 ONLY (2 NEW K-6 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)					
	Project Cash Flow	Less Grants	Add Humiston Renovations	Projected Bonds	Interest Rate Assumption
Feb-23	\$ 33,014,600	\$ (7,812,100)	\$ -	\$ 25,202,500	2.50%
Feb-24	51,678,600	(14,775,300)	-	36,903,300	2.50%
Feb-25	38,034,400	(12,177,200)	-	25,857,200	2.75%
	<u>\$ 122,727,600</u>	<u>\$ (34,764,600)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 87,963,000</u>	

Figure 5-3

The Town of Cheshire Finance Department's estimated Debt Service Summary based on Scenario 6:

COST SUMMARY - SCENARIO 6
PHASE 1 (2 NEW K-6 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)
AND PHASES 2 AND 3 (RENOVATIONS OF REMAINING SCHOOLS)

Year End June 30	Debt Service	Total in Mills (1)	Annual Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	Monthly Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)
2023	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
2024	605,060	0.2161	50.35	4.20
2025	2,809,394	1.0032	233.79	19.48
2026	5,328,619	1.9027	443.43	36.95
2027	6,836,594	2.4412	568.92	47.41
2028	7,980,969	2.8498	664.16	55.35
2029	10,637,759	3.7985	885.25	73.77
2030	14,289,205	5.1023	1,189.11	99.09
2031	17,082,086	6.0996	1,421.53	118.46
2032	19,049,622	6.8022	1,585.26	132.11
2033	22,093,969	7.8892	1,838.61	153.22
2034	24,479,893	8.7412	2,037.16	169.76
2035	24,763,267	8.8424	2,060.74	171.73
2036	24,241,153	8.6559	2,017.29	168.11
2037	23,719,039	8.4695	1,973.84	164.49
2038	23,196,925	8.2831	1,930.39	160.87
2039	22,674,812	8.0966	1,886.94	157.25
2040	22,152,698	7.9102	1,843.49	153.62
2041	21,630,584	7.7238	1,800.04	150.00
2042	21,108,470	7.5373	1,756.59	146.38
2043	20,586,356	7.3509	1,713.15	142.76
2044	20,064,242	7.1645	1,669.70	139.14
2045	18,238,500	6.5125	1,517.76	126.48
2046	15,927,289	5.6873	1,325.43	110.45
2047	14,206,428	5.0728	1,182.22	98.52
2048	13,339,580	4.7633	1,110.09	92.51
2049	11,524,431	4.1151	959.03	79.92
2050	8,859,947	3.1637	737.30	61.44
2051	6,281,440	2.2430	522.73	43.56
2052	5,069,437	1.8102	421.87	35.16
2053	3,026,412	1.0807	251.85	20.99
2054	758,928	0.2710	63.16	5.26
	\$ 452,563,108	161.5997	\$ 37,661.19	\$ 3,138.43
		5.0500	\$ 1,176.91	\$ 98.08

(1) Based on FY 2021 value of a mill - \$2,800,520 (Oct 1, 2019 Grand List).

(2) Based on FY 2021 taxes on average assessment (house and two cars) of \$7,742, 33.22 mills.

Figure 5-4

Debt Service Summary based solely on Phase 1 of Scenario 6:

COST SUMMARY - SCENARIO 6					
PHASE 1 ONLY (2 NEW K-6 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)					
Year End June 30	Debt Service	Total in Mills (1)	Annual Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	Monthly Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	
2023	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-
2024	577,557	0.2062	48.06	4.01	
2025	2,720,137	0.9713	226.36	18.86	
2026	5,239,433	1.8709	436.01	36.33	
2027	6,496,140	2.3196	540.59	45.05	
2028	6,382,954	2.2792	531.17	44.26	
2029	6,269,768	2.2388	521.75	43.48	
2030	6,156,582	2.1984	512.34	42.69	
2031	6,043,396	2.1580	502.92	41.91	
2032	5,930,210	2.1175	493.50	41.12	
2033	5,817,024	2.0771	484.08	40.34	
2034	5,703,838	2.0367	474.66	39.55	
2035	5,590,652	1.9963	465.24	38.77	
2036	5,477,467	1.9559	455.82	37.99	
2037	5,364,281	1.9155	446.40	37.20	
2038	5,251,095	1.8750	436.98	36.42	
2039	5,137,909	1.8346	427.56	35.63	
2040	5,024,723	1.7942	418.15	34.85	
2041	4,911,537	1.7538	408.73	34.06	
2042	4,798,351	1.7134	399.31	33.28	
2043	4,685,165	1.6730	389.89	32.49	
2044	4,571,979	1.6325	380.47	31.71	
2045	3,214,420	1.1478	267.50	22.29	
2046	1,310,637	0.4680	109.07	9.09	
	<u>\$ 112,675,255</u>	<u>40.2337</u>	<u>\$ 9,376.56</u>	<u>\$ 781.38</u>	
		<u>1.6764</u>	<u>\$ 390.69</u>	<u>\$ 32.56</u>	

(1) Based on FY 2021 value of a mill - \$2,800,520 (Oct 1, 2019 Grand List).
 (2) Based on FY 2021 taxes on average assessment (house and two cars) of \$7,742, 33.22 mills.

Figure 5-5

Note that costs for Scenario 2A are reflected within Section VI of this report.

As part of the impact of Scenario 6, the following maps by SLR reflect the existing school district attendance zones and one conceptual plan affecting approximately 18% of the elementary students:

Existing School District Attendance Zones

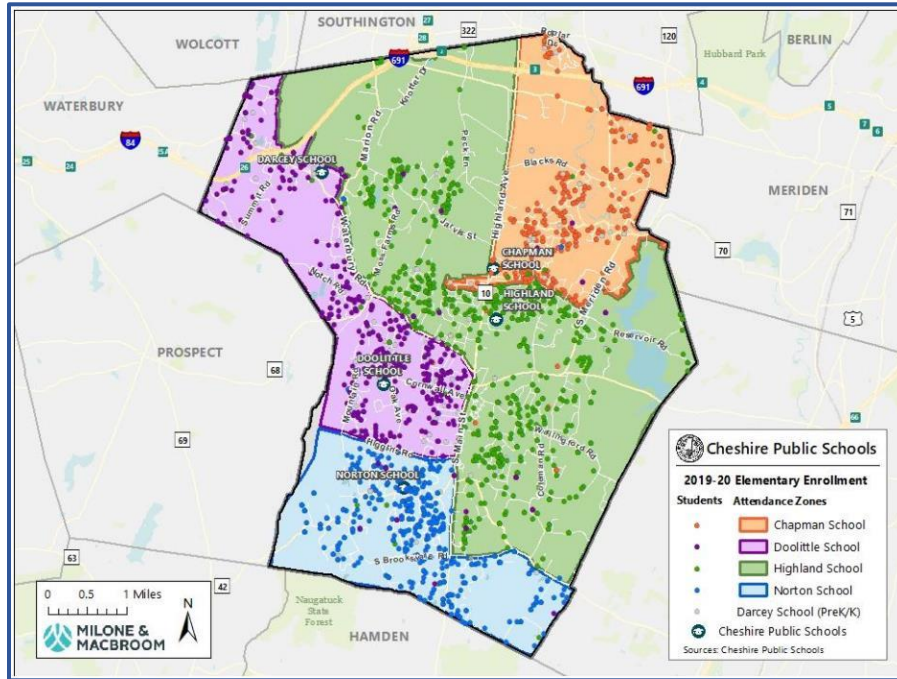


Figure 5-6

Conceptual School District Attendance Zones (impact to 18%)

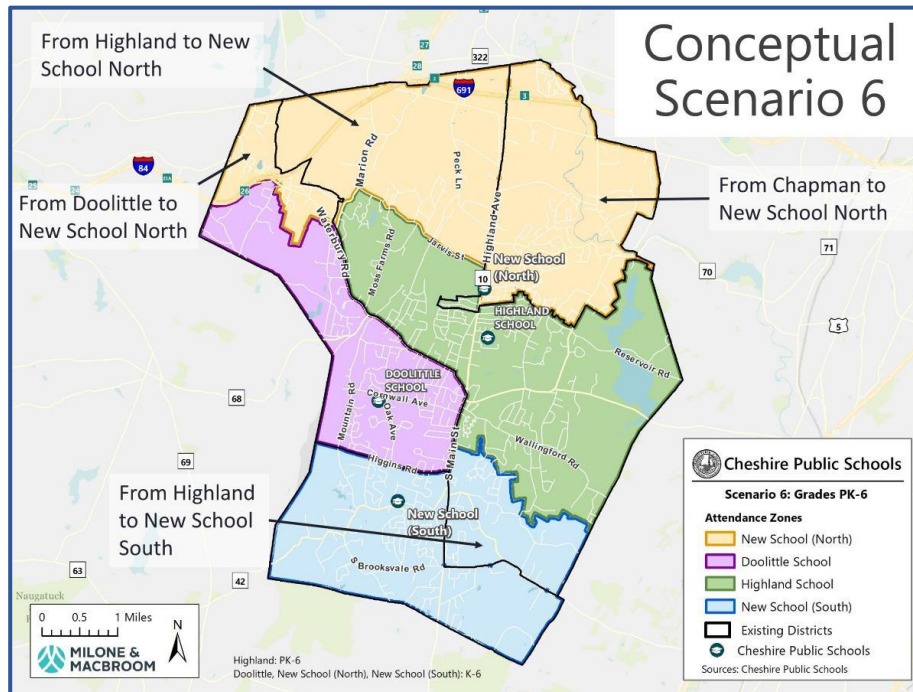


Figure 5-7

VI. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS – SCENARIO 2A (ALTERNATE)

As a reminder, the proposed scope of work and phasing for Scenario 2A is as follows:

Modified Scenario 2A

- **Phase 1**
 - New 6-8 Middle School
 - New K-5 Elementary School to replace Chapman (potentially on the existing site, based on a test fit)
 - Existing Darcey building is taken offline and the existing Chapman is demolished
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
- **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle, Highland, and Norton (as K-5)*
 - Renovations to the High School*
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly relocated into vacant Dodd)

*(As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence)

The total estimated costs for Scenario 2A were also calculated. As a reminder, the estimated probable costs impact on this phase and the schools within this scenario were also established using the high and low gross square footage for the facility (based on the space standard from the state); the estimated high and low total budgets; as well as the estimated high and low district shares after factoring in the state reimbursements.

The estimated phased financial overview for the SMC's Scenario 2A:

Cheshire School Modernization Committee Scenario 2A New 6-8 Middle School, New Chapman, Renovate Remaining Elementary Schools Renovate High School Per Conceptual Re-Districting Values provided by SLR March 8, 2021 REVISED 3.18.2021							
	8-Year High Enrollment	Building Size		Total Budget		Estimated District Share	
		Low GSF	High GSF	Low Budget (\$M)	High Budget (\$M)	Low District Share (\$M)	High District Share (\$M)
New 6-8 Middle School*	1172	200,178	219,242	\$ 114.2	\$ 137.8	\$ 76.4	\$ 92.3
New Chapman ES (K-5)**	515	67,774	74,229	\$ 40.0	\$ 48.1	\$ 26.8	\$ 32.2
Estimated Total for Phase 1				\$ 154.2	\$ 185.9	\$ 103.3	\$ 124.5
Renovation of Remaining Elementary Schools							
Doolittle ES (K-5)	570	77,543	82,157	\$ 39.0	\$ 49.0	\$ 22.5	\$ 28.3
Highland ES (PK-5)	751	111,300	111,300	\$ 55.1	\$ 69.1	\$ 31.8	\$ 39.9
Norton ES (K-5)	463	61,005	66,815	\$ 31.1	\$ 42.5	\$ 18.0	\$ 24.5
Darcey EIS (Taken offline)							
Dodd (Taken offline?)							
Renovate HS (2030 - Midpoint)	1262	278,200	278,200	\$ 153.1	\$ 189.3	\$ 88.4	\$ 109.3
Humiston-TBD	30	14,800	14,800	\$ 4.40	\$ 14.00	\$ 4.40	\$ 14.00
Total Estimated Costs-exclusive of Maintenance Costs to Darcey and Dodd:				\$ 436.96	\$ 549.87	\$ 268.29	\$ 340.44

Figure 6-1

Following this exercise, the financial implications established by Colliers were then forwarded to the Town of Cheshire Finance Department for their assessment and establishment of the debt service summary and projected bond calculations to determine the estimated tax impact to the Town of Cheshire residents.

The Town of Cheshire Finance Department's estimated Projected Bonds based on Scenario 2A:

PROJECTED BONDS - SCENARIO 2A					
PHASE 1 (NEW 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL AND K-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)					
AND PHASES 2 AND 3 (RENOVATIONS OF REMAINING SCHOOLS)					
	Project Cash Flow	Less Grants	Add Humiston Renovations	Projected Bonds	Interest Rate Assumption
Feb-23	\$ 47,143,400	\$ (10,804,900)	\$ -	\$ 36,338,500	2.50%
Feb-24	83,550,600	(24,089,000)	-	59,461,600	2.50%
Feb-25	42,690,800	(13,866,800)	-	28,824,000	2.75%
Feb-26	7,253,500	(2,498,500)	4,000,000	8,755,000	2.75%
Feb-27	29,478,900	(9,378,500)	4,000,000	24,100,400	3.00%
Feb-28	46,972,200	(17,861,200)	4,000,000	33,111,000	3.00%
Feb-29	54,222,100	(18,388,000)	2,000,000	37,834,100	3.25%
Feb-30	35,091,200	(13,233,900)	-	21,857,300	3.25%
Feb-31	60,106,400	(22,012,000)	-	38,094,400	3.50%
Feb-32	69,456,700	(25,436,100)	-	44,020,600	3.50%
Feb-33	23,509,100	(8,609,500)	-	14,899,600	3.75%
	<u>\$ 499,474,900</u>	<u>\$ (166,178,400)</u>	<u>\$ 14,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 347,296,500</u>	

Figure 6-2

Projected Bonds based solely on Phase 1 of Scenario 2A:

PROJECTED BONDS - SCENARIO 2A					
PHASE 1 ONLY (NEW 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL AND K-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)					
	Project Cash Flow	Less Grants	Add Humiston Renovations	Projected Bonds	Interest Rate Assumption
Feb-23	\$ 47,143,400	\$ (10,804,900)	\$ -	\$ 36,338,500	2.50%
Feb-24	83,550,600	(24,089,000)	-	59,461,600	2.50%
Feb-25	42,722,900	(13,867,400)	-	28,855,500	2.75%
	<u>\$ 173,416,900</u>	<u>\$ (48,761,300)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 124,655,600</u>	

Figure 6-3

The Town of Cheshire Finance Department's estimated Debt Service Summary based on Scenario 2A:

COST SUMMARY - SCENARIO 2A					
PHASE 1 (NEW 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL AND K-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)					
AND PHASES 2 AND 3 (RENOVATIONS OF REMAINING SCHOOLS)					
Year End June 30	Debt Service	Total in Mills (1)	Annual Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	Monthly Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	
2023	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-
2024	832,757	0.2974	69.30	5.78	
2025	4,065,338	1.4516	338.31	28.19	
2026	7,806,314	2.7875	649.62	54.14	
2027	9,408,746	3.3596	782.97	65.25	
2028	10,349,874	3.6957	861.29	71.77	
2029	12,336,201	4.4050	1,026.59	85.55	
2030	14,969,264	5.3452	1,245.71	103.81	
2031	17,326,623	6.1869	1,441.88	120.16	
2032	19,364,403	6.9146	1,611.46	134.29	
2033	22,404,990	8.0003	1,864.49	155.37	
2034	24,787,167	8.8509	2,062.73	171.89	
2035	25,066,801	8.9508	2,086.00	173.83	
2036	24,540,927	8.7630	2,042.24	170.19	
2037	24,015,052	8.5752	1,998.47	166.54	
2038	23,489,177	8.3874	1,954.71	162.89	
2039	22,963,302	8.1997	1,910.95	159.25	
2040	22,437,427	8.0119	1,867.19	155.60	
2041	21,911,552	7.8241	1,823.43	151.95	
2042	21,385,677	7.6363	1,779.66	148.31	
2043	20,859,802	7.4485	1,735.90	144.66	
2044	20,333,928	7.2608	1,692.14	141.01	
2045	18,013,839	6.4323	1,499.07	124.92	
2046	14,597,471	5.2124	1,214.77	101.23	
2047	12,769,963	4.5599	1,062.68	88.56	
2048	11,971,740	4.2748	996.26	83.02	
2049	10,430,342	3.7244	867.99	72.33	
2050	8,481,322	3.0285	705.79	58.82	
2051	6,351,721	2.2681	528.57	44.05	
2052	5,069,459	1.8102	421.87	35.16	
2053	3,026,433	1.0807	251.85	20.99	
2054	758,948	0.2710	63.16	5.26	
	\$ 462,126,559	165.0146	\$ 38,457.03	\$ 3,204.75	
		5.1567	\$ 1,201.78	\$ 100.15	

(1) Based on FY 2021 value of a mill - \$2,800,520 (Oct 1, 2019 Grand List).
 (2) Based on FY 2021 taxes on average assessment (house and two cars) of \$7,742, 33.22 mills.

Figure 6-4

Debt Service Summary based solely on Phase 1 of Scenario 2A:

COST SUMMARY - SCENARIO 2A					
PHASE 1 ONLY (NEW 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL AND K-5 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)					
Year End June 30	Debt Service	Total in Mills (1)	Annual Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	Monthly Cost to Average Taxpayer (2)	
2023	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-
2024	832,757	0.2974	69.30	5.78	
2025	4,065,338	1.4516	338.31	28.19	
2026	7,807,108	2.7877	649.69	54.14	
2027	9,176,422	3.2767	763.64	63.64	
2028	9,016,996	3.2198	750.37	62.53	
2029	8,857,569	3.1628	737.11	61.43	
2030	8,698,143	3.1059	723.84	60.32	
2031	8,538,717	3.0490	710.57	59.21	
2032	8,379,290	2.9920	697.30	58.11	
2033	8,219,864	2.9351	684.04	57.00	
2034	8,060,437	2.8782	670.77	55.90	
2035	7,901,011	2.8213	657.50	54.79	
2036	7,741,584	2.7643	644.24	53.69	
2037	7,582,158	2.7074	630.97	52.58	
2038	7,422,731	2.6505	617.70	51.48	
2039	7,263,305	2.5936	604.43	50.37	
2040	7,103,879	2.5366	591.17	49.26	
2041	6,944,452	2.4797	577.90	48.16	
2042	6,785,026	2.4228	564.63	47.05	
2043	6,625,599	2.3658	551.37	45.95	
2044	6,466,173	2.3089	538.10	44.84	
2045	4,512,533	1.6113	375.52	31.29	
2046	1,462,613	0.5223	121.72	10.14	
	\$ 159,463,706	56.9407	\$ 13,270.18	\$ 1,105.85	
		2.3725	\$ 552.92	\$ 46.08	

(1) Based on FY 2021 value of a mill - \$2,800,520 (Oct 1, 2019 Grand List).
 (2) Based on FY 2021 taxes on average assessment (house and two cars) of \$7,742, 33.22 mills.

Figure 6-5

Note that costs for SMC's Scenario 6 are reflected within Section V of this report.

As part of the impact of Scenario 2A, the following maps by SLR reflect the existing school district attendance zones and one conceptual plan affecting approximately 15% of the elementary students:

Existing School District Attendance Zones

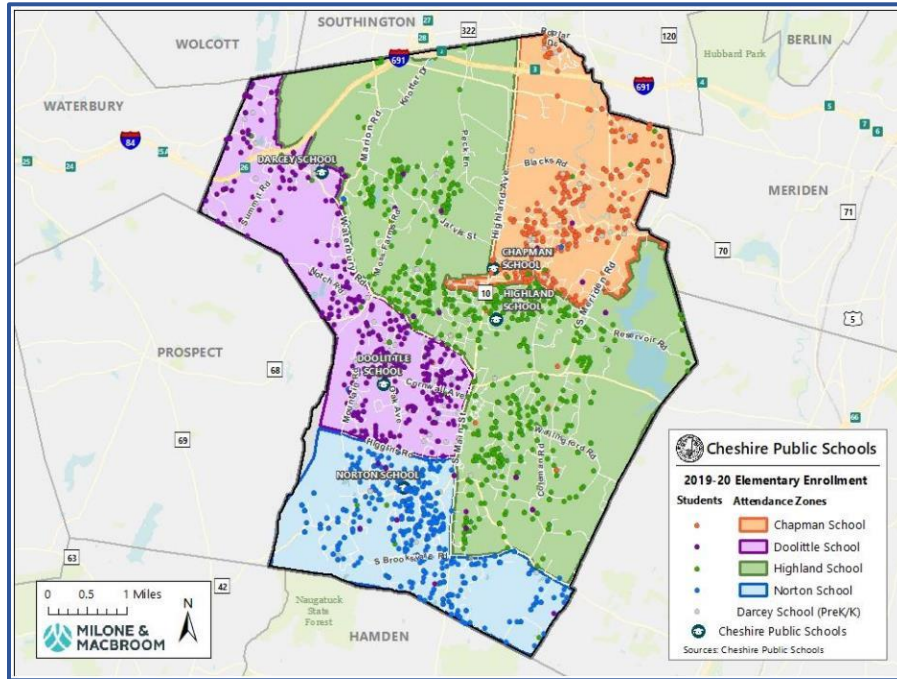


Figure 6-6

Conceptual School District Attendance Zones (impact to 15%)

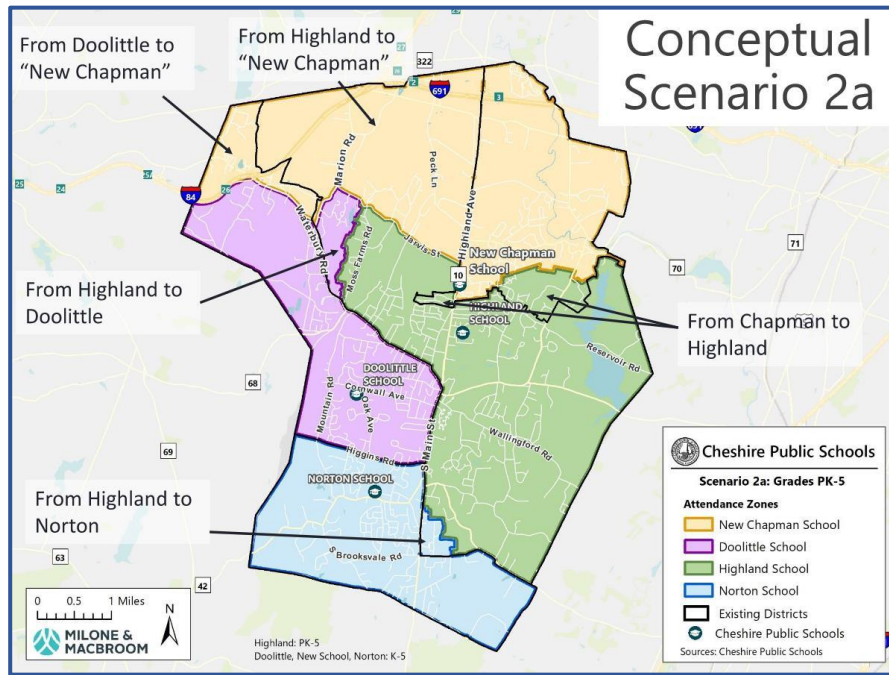


Figure 6-7

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following months of developing scenarios and further detailed discussions by the SMC to address their objective of providing a recommendation to the Cheshire Town Council and Board of Education, the SMC voted 9-3 at their meeting on March 17, 2021, in favor of recommending Scenario 6:

Scenario 6

- **Phase 1**
 - Two New K-6 Elementary Schools
 - (1) located at North end of Town and (1) located at South end of Town-possibly on the Norton site
 - Existing Darcey and Chapman schools are taken offline
 - Norton is demolished (pending South end school location)
 - Redistricting to be addressed as required
 - **Phases 2 and 3** (Note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle and Highland (as K-6)*
 - Renovations to Dodd Middle School*
 - Renovations to the High School*
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD (possibly addressed as CIP)
- *(As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence)

Comparison of Scenarios

As detailed below, the School Modernization Committee considered several factors to compare the final two scenarios:

- Redistricting impact between Scenario 6 (18%) and Scenario 2A (15%) are similar.
- Estimated district share for the Phase I projects identified in each scenario differ by approximately \$37M. Scenario 6: \$72.5M (low), \$87.4M (high); Scenario 2A: \$103.3M (low), \$124.5M (high).
- The tax impact for an average taxpayer for the Phase 1 projects over the next five years differs by approximately \$223 per household annually; Scenario 6: \$540.59, Scenario 2A: \$763.64.
- Projected enrollment for the two (2) new elementary schools in Scenario 6 is within guidelines provided by the State of Connecticut Office of School Construction Grants & Review - 653 & 669 projected enrollment; 400-700 is the recommended size.
- Projected enrollment for the new middle school in Scenario 2A is beyond the guidelines provided by the State - 1174 projected enrollment; 900 is the recommended size; projected enrollment for the new elementary school in Scenario 2A is within the guidelines provided by the State - 515 projected enrollment; 400-700 is the recommended size.
- Schools taken offline in both plans are similar which will allow the district to eliminate costly Capital Improvement Projects to several of the older school facilities. In Scenario 6, Darcey, Chapman, and Norton are taken offline. In Scenario 2A, Darcey, Chapman, and Dodd are taken offline.

- As-is, the current elementary school enrollment is unbalanced which creates different learning environments at each of the elementary schools. Highland Elementary School (746 enrollment) is much larger than the other schools (320, 403 & 433 enrollment). In Scenario 6, the 8- year high projected enrollment at the elementary schools are closer to balanced (653, 669, 612 & 780); In Scenario 2A, they remain unbalanced (515, 570 & 751).

Based on this information, the School Modernization Committee voted 9-3 in favor of Scenario 6.

VIII. APPENDICES

- a. **2021 Cheshire School Modernization Survey Results**
Prepared by The Center for Research & Public Policy, Inc.



2021 CHESHIRE SCHOOL MODERNIZATION SURVEY RESULTS

FEBRUARY 2021

Prepared for:
Cheshire School Modernization Committee

Prepared by:
The Center for Research & Public Policy, Inc.

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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND OWNERSHIP

All the analyses, findings and recommendations contained within this report are the exclusive property of the Town Council of the Town of Cheshire, Connecticut.

As required by the Code of Ethics of the National Council on Public Polls and the United States Privacy Act of 1974, The Center for Research and Public Policy maintains the anonymity of respondents to surveys the firm conducts. No information will be released that might, in any way, reveal the identity of the respondent.

Moreover, no information regarding these findings will be released without the written consent of an authorized representative of the Town Council of the Town of Cheshire, Connecticut.

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2 Methodology

Page 5



3 Highlights

Page 6

4 Summary of Findings

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History of School Use	Page 19
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5 Appendix

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Survey Instrument
Composite Aggregate Data
Crosstabulations

1 INTRODUCTION

The Center for Research & Public Policy (CRPP) is pleased to present the results to two surveys on behalf of the Town of Cheshire. The surveys were conducted to collect resident and business owner /manager input regarding the modernization of Cheshire’s Public Schools.

The research study included 400 completed random phone surveys among residents of Cheshire. A second, identical, survey was completed by 903 Cheshire resident respondents online. Within the two surveys, 132 respondents self-identified as owners and/or managers of a business located in Cheshire.

The phone survey (N=400) was conducted February 8-24, 2021. The online version of the survey (N=903) was conducted between February 1-24, 2021.

The survey included the following areas for investigation:

- Quality of life living in Cheshire;
- Current standard of living;
- Overall impression of Cheshire town services and public schools;
- Interest in the planning process for school modernization;
- Perceived importance of modernizing the Cheshire public schools;
- Awareness and knowledge levels for required needs identified by SMC;
- Overall support or opposition to modernizing Cheshire public schools;
- Reasons for support or opposition to modernizing the schools;
- Sources for information about the Cheshire school system and town;
- Personal history of Cheshire public schools use; and,
- Demographics.

Section 2 of this report discusses the Methodology used in the study, while Section 3 includes Highlights derived from an analysis of the quantitative research. Section 4 is a Summary of Findings from the survey.

Section 5 is an Appendix to the report containing the crosstabulations and the survey instrument employed.

METHODOLOGY

Using a quantitative research design, CRPP completed phone (cell and landline) surveys among 400 residents of the Town of Cheshire. An online survey was also completed among 903 Cheshire residents. A total of 132 respondents, between both surveys, self-identified as owners and/or managers of a business in Cheshire.

Survey design input was provided by CRPP as well members of the SMC.

Survey design is a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. Staff members, with years of survey design experience, edit out any bias. Further, all scales used by CRPP (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) are balanced evenly. Additionally, placement of questions is carefully accomplished so that order has minimal impact.

Telephone Survey

All telephone interviews were conducted during February 8-24, 2021. Residents were contacted by phone between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on the weekend. Respondents qualified for the survey if they were a resident of the town of Cheshire and 18 years of age or older.

All population-based surveys conducted by CRPP are approximately proportional to population contributions within states, towns, and known census tract, group blocks and blocks. This distribution ensures truly representative results without significant under-or-over representation of various geographic or demographic groups within a sampling frame.

CRPP utilized a “super random digit” sampling procedure, which derives a working telephone sample of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. This method of sample selection eliminates any bias toward only listed telephone numbers. Additionally, this process allows randomization of numbers, which equalizes the probability of qualified respondents being included in the sampling frame. A “mixed access” sample of both cell and landline phone numbers was utilized. English and Spanish speaking researchers were available.

Statistically, a sample of 400 completed surveys has an associated margin for error of +/- 4.9% at a 95% confidence level.

Online Survey

CRPP programmed an online version of the survey instrument. The online version was open to all residents town wide. Cheshire residents and business managers / owners were encouraged to go to the online link and complete the survey. All online surveys were completed between February 1-24, 2021.

The link was posted on various websites including the town of Cheshire site. Outreach to encourage participation included posting the link on town and committee social media pages, in the Cheshire community forum “Patch”, emailed to available distribution lists and more.

Overall

All facets of the study were completed and managed by CRPP's senior staff and researchers. These aspects included: survey design, sample plan design, pretest, computer programming, fielding, coding, editing, verification, validation and logic checks, computer analysis, analysis, and report writing.

Importantly, readers of this report should note that any survey is analogous to a snapshot in time and results are only reflective of the time in which the survey was undertaken. Should concerted public relations or information campaigns be undertaken during or shortly after the fielding of the survey, the results contained herein may be expected to change and should be, therefore, carefully interpreted and extrapolated.

Cross tabulations of data were developed and are included with this report. These compare core survey questions by demographic subgroups such as: number of years living in Cheshire, age, residents with /without children, likeliness to vote in referendum, income, school attendance zone, voting location, ownership / management of a business, and gender.

Each qualified resident who lives or manages / owns a business in Cheshire had an equal chance for participating in the phone survey. Statistical random error, however, can never be eliminated but may be significantly reduced by increasing sample size.

HIGHLIGHTS

ON QUALITY OF LIFE

Impressively, a large majority of survey respondents, 98.5%, reported their quality of life living in Cheshire as very good (65.8%) or good (32.8%).

Similarly, a strong majority of respondents, 91.3%, suggested their current standard of living, compared to two years ago, had either improved (22.8%) or there was no movement but is good (68.5%). Some noted their standard of living saw no movement and is not so good (3.5%) or has declined (3.5%).

A strong rating for town of Cheshire services was recorded. A large percentage of respondents (90.3%) rated town services positively – ratings of seven to ten on a ten-point scale.

Survey respondents offered similarly strong ratings for Cheshire public schools at 82.6% -- ratings of seven to ten on a ten-point scale.

MODERNIZING CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Over three-quarters of all phone survey respondents, 78.5%, indicated they were very interested or somewhat interested in the planning process for Cheshire public school modernization.

A large majority, 86.5%, indicated they consider the modernization of Cheshire public schools as very (54.3%) or somewhat (32.3%) important.

In a town-wide school modernization effort, the considerations respondents named as most important included (in declining order): improving IT technology (38.8%), improving air quality/ventilation (29.8%), modernizing the schools (29.8%), renovating facilities (27.0%), meeting ADA requirements (26.3%), becoming more energy efficient (25.5%) and designing schools for better teaching and learning (22.5%).

Fewer respondents named the following considerations as “most important”: improving driveway traffic patterns for cars/buses/pedestrians (10.3%), improved pick up/drop off traffic patterns ((9.8%), more athletic / sports programs (8.0%) and increased storage space (5.3%).

AWARENESS/KNOWLEDGE

The survey was designed to measure awareness of several needs identified by the Cheshire SMC that required attention. Strongest awareness (very and somewhat aware) was recorded for (in declining order): increasing operational costs (84.0%), older school facilities cost significantly more for upkeep (79.3%), and most Cheshire schools were built prior to the 1950’s (78.0%).

Lower awareness levels were recorded for: some schools not currently meeting ADA requirements (59.3%), and the potential for 15% public school enrollment growth before 2025 (48.0%).

STATEMENTS: MOVING FORWARD

Large majorities of survey respondents agreed (strongly or somewhat) that school modernization communication efforts should distinguish between required and desired upgrades in a modernization effort (93.8%).

Importantly, 90.3% of all survey respondents agreed (strongly or somewhat) that they could be convinced to support funding school modernization if they clearly understood the need.

Others agreed (strongly or somewhat) that modernized schools are important in preparing competitive students, important in maintaining home values, that modernized school facilities impact economic development positively, and education quality is impacted by the quality of school facilities – 88.5%, 87.3%, 82.3% and 81.8%, respectively.

SUPPORT AND OPPOSITION

There exists strong support (strongly or somewhat) for school modernization in Cheshire. In more than an eight-to-one result, 84.8% noted they would either strongly (50.7%) or somewhat support (34.1%) public school modernization. Others, 11.1% suggested they were strongly (6.3%) or somewhat opposed (4.8%) to school modernization.

While respondents were not, yet, presented with the costs to taxpayers for public school modernization, there is strong foundational support for such efforts. Communication of the need as well as delineation between required and desired needs will help residents make their respective decisions on support.

In an open-end format question, all respondents were asked why they supported or opposed public school modernization. A second open-end format question followed asking each respondent to name three or four things they would need to see, hear, or better understand before they would be likely or even more likely to support modernizing Cheshire public schools in a November 2021 referendum. Thousands of responses to these open-end format questions were collected and are presented within the appendix to this report.

COMMUNICATION

The leading sources for information about the Cheshire public school system and town included (in declining order): local print newspapers (51.2%), friends/family/neighbors/co-workers (33.3%), the internet (22.5%), directly from the schools/system (12.3%), the Cheshire town website (12.0%) and the Cheshire schools website (11.8%).

The leading social media platforms included (in declining order): Facebook (56.0%), Twitter (20.8%), Instagram (17.8%), YouTube (10.0%) and LinkedIn (6.3%).

HISTORY OF CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOL USE

Significant numbers of Cheshire residents report visiting and using Cheshire public schools over the years. Cheshire High School was visited/used the most (76.0%) followed by Dodd Middle School, Highland School and Doolittle School – 57.3%, 48.0%, and 39.5%, respectively.

The leading reasons for the visits or use included (in declining order): athletic field/sport events (52.4%), voting (51.6%), parent/teacher events/conferences (44.4%), student events (36.6%), and family events (33.6%).

SUMMARY ⁴ OF FINDINGS

Readers are reminded that the narrative throughout this report refers to composite aggregate telephone survey data – 400 residents. Text, tables and graphs throughout this report present these composite results. The online survey results (N=903) are also often displayed within tables and graphs held within this report. In addition, composite results (N=132) from respondents self-identifying as a business owner / manager in either the phone or online survey are displayed within the tables and graphs.

QUALITY OF LIFE

All respondents were asked to report their overall quality of life in Cheshire, Connecticut. A large majority, 98.5%, suggested their quality of life was very good (65.8%) or good (32.8%). Results are displayed in the following table.

Overall Quality of Life	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Very good	65.8	58.9	68.9
Good	32.8	40.0	29.5
Poor	1.3	0.9	0.8
Very poor	0.0	0.1	0.8
Unsure	0.3	0.1	0.0
Total Very good or Good	98.5	98.9	98.5

A large majority of respondents, 91.3%, see their standard of living as improved (22.8%) compared to two years ago, or no movement, but good (68.5%). Some, 7.0%, suggested their standard of living had either no movement or was not so good (3.5%) and has declined (3.5%). Results are displayed in the following table.

Standard of Living Compared to Past	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Improved	22.8	30.3	28.8
No movement, but good	68.5	60.1	58.5
No movement, and not so good	3.5	2.1	2.3
Has declined	3.5	6.4	7.6
Unsure	1.8	1.0	3.0
Total Improved or No movement, but good	91.3	90.5	87.1

Respondents were asked to rate their overall impression of the quality of Cheshire town services (such as policing, emergency, library, and parks and recreation) and public schools on a scale of one to ten where one is very poor and ten is very good. A large majority of respondents indicated a positive overall impression, with a seven to ten rating, of Cheshire town services (90.3%) and Cheshire public schools (82.6%). Results are displayed in the following table.

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS	PHONE PERCENT (7-10 RATING)	ONLINE PERCENT (7-10 RATING)	BUSINESS PERCENT (7-10 RATING)
Cheshire town services	90.3	88.0	90.1
Cheshire public schools	82.6	85.2	85.7

MODERNIZING CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Respondents were provided with the following brief description of the Cheshire SMC and goals.

A committee has been charged with collecting input from residents to assist town leaders in developing the plans for modernizing Cheshire Public Schools. The Cheshire School Modernization Committee (SMC), over the past year and a half, has been studying public school needs and associated costs for both new construction and renovation.

For the purposes of this survey, the term modernization is more than just new construction, refurbishing or renovation of buildings and may include adding modern technology, updating learning spaces, meeting building codes as well as Americans with Disabilities / ADA accessibility requirements.

Interest

Respondents were asked how interested they were in the planning process for Cheshire Public School modernization. Over three-quarters of respondents, 78.5%, indicated they were very (37.0%) or somewhat interested (41.5%). Results are displayed in the following table.

Interest in Public School Modernization	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Very interested	37.0	49.2	49.2
Somewhat interested	41.5	42.3	43.9
Somewhat uninterested	8.3	4.1	0.8
Not at all interested	11.0	3.3	5.3
Unsure / Don't know	2.3	1.1	0.8
Total Very or Somewhat interested	78.5	91.5	93.2

Respondents were asked how important it is that Cheshire Public Schools are modernized. A large percentage, 86.5%, indicated modernization was very (54.3%) or somewhat important (32.3%). Results are displayed in the following table.

Importance of Public School Modernization	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Very important	54.3	66.8	65.2
Somewhat important	32.3	25.9	26.5
Somewhat unimportant	5.3	3.3	2.3
Not at all important	6.3	2.9	5.3
Unsure / Don't know	2.0	1.1	0.8
Total Very or Somewhat important	86.5	92.7	91.7

Respondents were asked to name the most important considerations in the town modernization effort. Highest considerations included improving IT or technology (38.8%), schools should improve air quality / ventilation (29.8%) and modernization of schools (29.8%). Results are displayed in the following table.

Important Considerations	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Improving IT or technology	38.8	54.3	45.5
Schools should improve air quality/ventilation	29.8	73.2	56.1
Modernization of schools	29.8	59.1	53.0
Renovation of school building facilities	27.0	44.0	48.5
School buildings should meet Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements	26.3	64.5	51.5
Schools should improve energy efficiency	25.5	55.3	46.2
Schools that are better designed for teaching and learning	22.5	74.9	54.5
Schools need to prevent overcrowding and meet space needs	21.8	60.4	46.2
Ensuring schools are built to codes	21.5	57.1	46.2
New school construction	21.5	38.4	37.9
Schools that are safe and secure for students, faculty and staff	20.8	80.5	59.1
Increasing services and spaces for students with special needs	20.0	40.3	31.1
Efforts to ensure our students graduate with competitive skills	17.8	60.2	37.9
Improved climate control and air conditioning	15.8	60.0	41.7
Other	15.8	2.7	4.5
Schools that are better designed to attract new families to town	14.8	25.7	25.0
Increasing test scores	13.5	14.7	15.2
Improved athletic fields/playgrounds	11.3	32.3	22.0
More arts programs	11.3	33.2	31.1
Improve traffic patterns for cars, buses and pedestrians	10.3	38.0	28.0
Improve driveway traffic patterns for pick up/drop off	9.8	42.6	33.3
All of the above	8.5	--	5.3
More athletic / sports programs	8.0	19.6	12.1
Increase storage space	5.3	10.7	9.8
None – no need for modernizing Cheshire Public Schools	4.3	2.8	2.3
Unsure/no suggestions	2.5	0.2	1.5

Other responses included: addressing mold and other repairs, more diverse teaching staff and materials, teach basics for integration into adult world, no improvements needed, wider range of classes, fewer funds for athletics, better teachers, consider decline of student enrollment, use of school bus GPS tracking, maintain K-6 programs, bullying to stop, new lockers for high school students, increased opportunity to walk / bike to schools, cost analysis or new building vs. renovation, life skill programs needed, more tech programs, elementary bathroom upgrades, schools to better share space, modify school start times for Dodd and CHS, new high school, inclusion of people with disabilities, improve education, safety and security, general repairs, focus on curriculum, alternative programs, and more space for social distancing.

Awareness/Knowledge

Respondents were presented with several needs that have been identified by the Cheshire SMC that require attention. Needs that respondents were most aware of included: demand for school services and operational costs are increasing (84.0%) and older Cheshire public school buildings cost significantly more for maintenance and keep (79.3%).

Lower awareness was indicated for: some school buildings that do not currently meet Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements (59.3%) and there is potential for 15% public school enrollment growth between 2020 and 2025 which will result in accelerated overcrowding (48.0%).

The following table holds the cumulative totals, in declining order, for those indicating they were **very or somewhat aware** of the required attention.

Required Needs	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Demand for school services and operational costs are increasing	84.0	94.5	92.4
Older Cheshire school buildings cost significantly more for maintenance and upkeep	79.3	84.7	84.8
Most Cheshire public schools were built in the 1950's	78.0	85.8	90.2
In 2014, the Kindergarten classes became full-day programs. This change utilized additional classrooms	73.5	83.9	82.6
Improvements for safety and security within the schools has been identified as a need	72.0	83.4	81.8
Outdated Cheshire schools make it difficult to allow access to or install newer technology	71.5	83.8	82.6
The last public school built was in the 1970's	65.8	78.3	82.6
To more effectively serve our special education students and more efficiently provide services, additional special education classes have been created in town	64.8	60.0	64.4
State funding provided to Cheshire for schools is stagnant	62.3	64.3	68.2
Some school buildings do not currently meet Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements	59.3	59.5	62.1
Based on projections, there is potential for a 15% public school enrollment growth between 2020 and 2025 which will result in accelerated overcrowding	48.0	58.3	61.4

Statements: Moving Forward

Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with several statements related to Cheshire Public Schools. Respondents held the strongest agreement for the statements: public communication of modernization needs should distinguish between required and desired upgrades (93.8%), and I could be convinced to support funding school modernization if I clearly understood the need (90.3%).

The following table holds the cumulative totals, in declining order, for those indicating they **strongly or somewhat agreed** with the statement.

Statements on Moving Forward	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Public communication of modernization needs should distinguish between required and desired upgrades	93.8	94.5	93.2
I could be convinced to support funding school modernization if I clearly understood the need	90.3	89.3	86.4
Modernized public schools in Cheshire are important to preparing and graduating competitive students	88.5	86.3	83.3
Modernized public schools in Cheshire are important to maintaining home property values	87.3	88.2	86.4
Having modern school facilities in Cheshire will impact economic development in a positive way	82.3	83.2	78.8
Education quality is impacted by the quality of school facilities	81.8	83.6	80.3

Support and Opposition

Respondents were provided with the following statements:

An independent study has projected an increase in Cheshire enrollment at the K-6 level of more than 650 students and an increase in enrollment at the grade 7 – 8 level of 200 students over the next decade which will exceed the system’s student capacity.

The Cheshire School Modernization Committee has studied various scenarios for updating the schools and providing the needed additional space to meet projected future needs.

While the final details and associated costs are not yet available, respondents were asked, generally and overall, how likely they are to support or oppose the modernization of Cheshire Public Schools in a referendum.

A large majority (84.8%) suggested they would either strongly support (50.7%) or somewhat support (34.0%) school modernization in a referendum. Others noted they would be somewhat or strongly opposed (11.1%). A few said, “it depends” (2.5%) or were unsure (1.8%).

Support for / opposition to public-school modernization	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Strongly support	50.7	65.4	62.1
Somewhat support	34.0	17.4	18.9
Total Support	84.8	82.8	81.1
Somewhat oppose	6.3	4.2	3.8
Strongly oppose	4.8	4.1	7.6
Total Oppose	11.1	8.3	11.4
Depends	2.5	6.9	6.8
Unsure / Don’t know	1.8	2.0	0.8

In an open-end format question, all respondents were asked why they supported or opposed public school modernization. A second open-end format question followed asking each respondent to name three or four things they would need to see, hear, or better understand before they would be likely or even more likely to support modernizing Cheshire public schools in a November 2021 referendum.

Over one thousand responses to these open-end format questions were collected and are presented within the appendix to this report.

COMMUNICATION

Respondents were asked where they usually get information about the Cheshire public school system and town. The leading sources included local print newspapers, friends/neighbors/family/co-workers, and websites.

Sources for Information	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Local newspapers: printed	51.2	44.0	47.7
Friends / Family / Neighbors/ Co-workers	33.3	39.8	39.4
Internet / Websites	22.5	57.1	50.0
Other	14.0	2.7	9.8
Directly from schools / school system	12.3	38.2	32.6
Cheshire Town Website	12.0	17.3	15.9
Cheshire Schools Website	11.8	33.3	25.0
Local newspapers: Online	11.5	15.9	16.7
Social Media such as Facebook	11.0	49.1	34.8
Cheshire Town communication	9.0	34.9	26.5
Emails	8.5	32.4	18.9
TV	5.5	5.9	2.3
The Cheshire School Modernization Committee FaceBook page	5.5	15.5	14.4
Cheshire School Modernization Committee website	5.0	16.3	15.9
DK	2.5	0.9	1.5
Flyers / Brochures	2.3	1.9	2.3
Radio	1.8	1.1	1.5
Employer	1.8	5.2	3.8
Nextdoor or similar community forum	1.8	5.3	3.8
State news outlets (papers, radio, TV)	1.5	4.4	2.3
Direct mail	1.3	3.0	3.0
Cheshire School Modernization Committee Twitter page	1.0	3.7	4.5
Blogs	0.8	0.4	0.8

Other responses included: Personal visits to the school, students, serving in government, town committee members, watching meetings, PTO meetings, CPS teachers and administrators, employees, local coffee shops, word of mouth, going to Town Hall, The Cheshire Podcast, and BOE members.

Respondents were asked which, if any, social media platforms they use. The following table depicts the results collected.

Social media platforms used	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Facebook	56.0	79.5	75.8
Don't Use Social Media	33.5	9.7	15.2
Twitter	20.8	28.0	28.0
Instagram	17.8	45.8	37.9
YouTube	10.0	42.3	34.1
LinkedIn	6.3	26.1	24.2
Pinterest	4.8	21.4	15.2
Other	4.8	1.3	2.3
Snap Chat	3.8	8.9	6.1
Tik Tok	2.0	8.5	8.3
Nextdoor or similar community forum	1.8	7.6	2.3
Parler	1.3	1.0	1.5
WeChat	1.3	0.6	1.5
Yelp	1.0	7.9	3.0
Vero	1.0	0.4	0.8
Tumblr	1.0	0.8	0.0
WhatsApp	1.0	9.3	6.1
Foursquare	0.8	0.3	1.5
Gab	0.8	.3	0.8

Other responses included: Email, Reddit, Tumblr, Telegram, and MeWe.

HISTORY OF CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOL USE

Respondents were asked which, if any, Cheshire Public Schools (inside or fields) they had visited or used over the years for any reason. Results are displayed here in declining order by phone data.

Public School Usage History	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Cheshire High School	76.0	87.8	88.6
Dodd Middle School	57.3	71.7	78.8
Highland School	48.0	70.3	75.8
Doolittle School	39.5	55.5	58.3
Norton School	38.5	55.0	68.2
Chapman School	35.3	52.0	52.3
Darcey School	32.8	52.0	54.5
Humiston School	21.5	27.5	35.6
None/Have not visited/use any	5.0	1.7	0.8
Unsure/ Don't know	2.0	0.3	0.0

Respondents who have visited school facilities were asked to indicate the reasons for the visits or usage. Results are presented here in declining order by phone data.

Reasons for visit	Percent Phone	Percent Online	Percent Business
Athletic fields/sport events	52.4	69.4	65.6
Voting	51.6	74.5	71.0
Parent/teacher events or conferences	44.4	75.6	63.4
Student events or productions	36.6	69.0	64.9
Family events	33.6	30.7	26.0
Inside sporting events	27.2	47.5	47.3
Community meetings / events	26.1	51.4	51.9
Other	22.8	12.2	17.6
Volunteering	16.4	31.0	32.1
Adult education	10.5	15.4	15.3
Exercise using school facilities	9.4	13.9	16.0
Shelter / Emergency facility use	2.4	2.6	3.1
Don't know / Unsure	1.6	0.2	0.0

Other responses included: Substitute teacher, early intervention program, current employee, past employee, past student, professional activities, Scouts, driving children to/from school, YMCA Summer Camp, Cheshire Train Show, member of town and state government, kindergarten orientation, playground, tour of school, adult league sports, SAT testing, Ion bank half marathon, holiday events, religious school classes, musical competitions, tutoring, and business interactions.

DEMOGRAPHICS

YEARS LIVED IN CHESHIRE	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
Less than 5	8.8	13.8
5 to less than 10	10.8	15.1
10 to less than 20	23.8	24.8
20 years or more	54.8	45.0
Don't know / Unsure	1.0	0.1
Refused	1.0	1.2
AVERAGE	24.1	22.7

AGE	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
18-24	6.8	1.4
25-34	10.8	6.2
35-44	16.8	33.0
45-54	22.0	28.7
55-64	24.5	15.0
65 or older	19.3	13.8
Refused	-	1.9

CHILDREN	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
No children	20.5	7.0
Children not yet of school age (pre-school or younger)	7.5	14.4
Children of school age currently attending Cheshire schools	30.0	57.1
Children of school age not attending Cheshire schools (private school, home school, etc)	2.0	3.1
Children who started in the Cheshire schools but left for private or other schools	3.3	4.2
Older (over 18) children who attended Cheshire schools in the past	34.0	31.1
Older (over 18) children who did not attend Cheshire schools (such as didn't live in Cheshire / attended private)	8.5	3.9
Unsure / Don't know	1.0	0.1
Refused	1.3	1.2

LIKELINESS TO VOTE IN A SCHOOL MODERNIZATION REFERENDUM	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
Very likely	76.0	86.0
Somewhat likely	14.2	9.2
Somewhat unlikely	3.5	1.2
Not at all likely	2.8	1.4
Unsure	3.5	2.1

INCOME	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
Under \$50,000	6.0	2.8
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	7.8	4.3
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	11.3	7.2
\$100,000 to less than \$175,000	18.0	28.7
\$175,000 to less than \$200,000	6.3	11.0
\$200,000 to less than \$225,000	5.0	6.6
\$225,000 to less than \$250,000	2.5	5.2
\$250,000 to less than \$300,000	1.5	4.9
\$300,000 or more	4.8	7.4
Unsure	7.5	.3
Prefer not to answer / refused	29.5	21.6

ATTENDANCE ZONE	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
Chapman School	17.5	16.6
Doolittle School	22.3	26.0
Highland School	31.3	34.6
Norton School	19.3	20.3
Don't know/ Unsure	9.8	2.5

VOTING LOCATION	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
District 1: Cheshire High School, 525 South Main Street	19.5	24.0
District 2: Chapman School, 38 Country Club Road	11.3	11.4
District 3: Artsplace, 1220 Waterbury Road	11.3	10.9
District 4: Norton School, 414 N. Brooksvale Road	19.8	19.7
District 5 and 5.3: Doolittle School, 735 Cornwall Avenue	11.0	11.3
District 6: Highland School, 490 Highland Avenue	13.8	13.5
District 7: Dodd Middle School, 100 Park Avenue	7.5	6.0
Don't know / Unsure	6.0	3.2

OWN / MANAGE BUSINESS?	PERCENT PHONE	PERCENT ONLINE
Yes	9.5	10.4
No	90.5	89.6

GENDER	PERCENT PHONE (by observation)	PERCENT ONLINE
Man	48.3	27.2
Woman	51.7	66.2
Transgender man	-	0.1
Non-binary	-	0.2
Prefer not to answer	-	6.1
Other	-	0.1

5

APPENDIX

INTERPRETATION OF AGGREGATE RESULTS


The computer processed data for this survey are presented in the following frequency distributions. It is important to note that the wordings of the variable labels and value labels in the computer-processed data are largely abbreviated descriptions of the Questionnaire items and available response categories.

The frequency distributions include the category or response for the question items. Responses deemed not appropriate for classification have been grouped together under the “Other” code.

Each frequency distribution includes the absolute observed occurrence of each response (i.e. the total number of cases in each category). Immediately adjacent to the right of the column of absolute frequencies is the column of relative frequencies. These are the percentages of cases falling in each category response, including those cases designated as missing data. To the right of the relative frequency column is the adjusted frequency distribution column that contains the relative frequencies based on the legitimate (i.e. non-missing) cases. That is, the total base for the adjusted frequency distribution excludes the missing data. For many Questionnaire items, the relative frequencies and the adjusted frequencies will be nearly the same. However, some items that elicit a sizable number of missing data will produce quite substantial percentage differences between the two columns of frequencies. The careful analyst will cautiously consider both distributions.


The last column of data within the frequency distribution is the cumulative frequency distribution (Cum Freq.). This column is simply an adjusted frequency distribution of the sum of all previous categories of response and the current category of response. Its primary usefulness is to gauge some ordered or ranked meaning.

b. SLR Presentation on Scenario 6, dated March 12, 2021




Cheshire Public Schools Conceptual Elementary Redistricting Scenario 6

March 17th, 2021


MILONE & MACBROOM 

1



Redistricting Charge

Cheshire SMC requested SLR (formerly MMI) to develop Conceptual Redistricting Boundaries for "Scenario 6," a variation of Scenario 1a: maintain the PK-6 configuration, consider two new elementary buildings with greater parity in size across buildings

MILONE & MACBROOM 

2



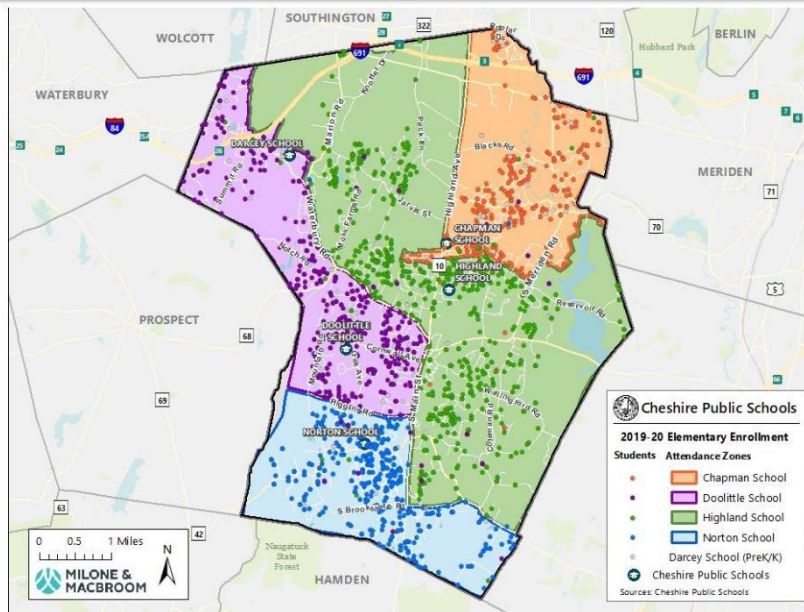
Redistricting Assumptions

- Existing School District Attendance Zones were the starting point for the Conceptual Redistricting Scenarios
- The 2019-20 Geocoded Student Enrollment was used as the starting point for each Conceptual Scenario
- The existing Functional Capacity (Max) for each elementary school was used to guide the scenarios
- Concept Boundaries were prepared to right size school attendance zones to enrollment projections and determine an enrollment planning target for new school construction
- Redistricting Scenarios are the first stage in planning and are silent to Educational Specifications and Future Physical Space Needs due to increased enrollment or PreK shifts
- School Construction Grant Space Standard is based on the highest projected enrollment over the ensuing eight year period and Educational Specifications. However, the district Functional Capacity will inform our facility scenario planning

Existing Capacities	
School	Current Functional Capacity
Darcey	180
Chapman	411
Doolittle	606
Norton	494
Highland	827
Total Elem.	2,518



Existing Districts

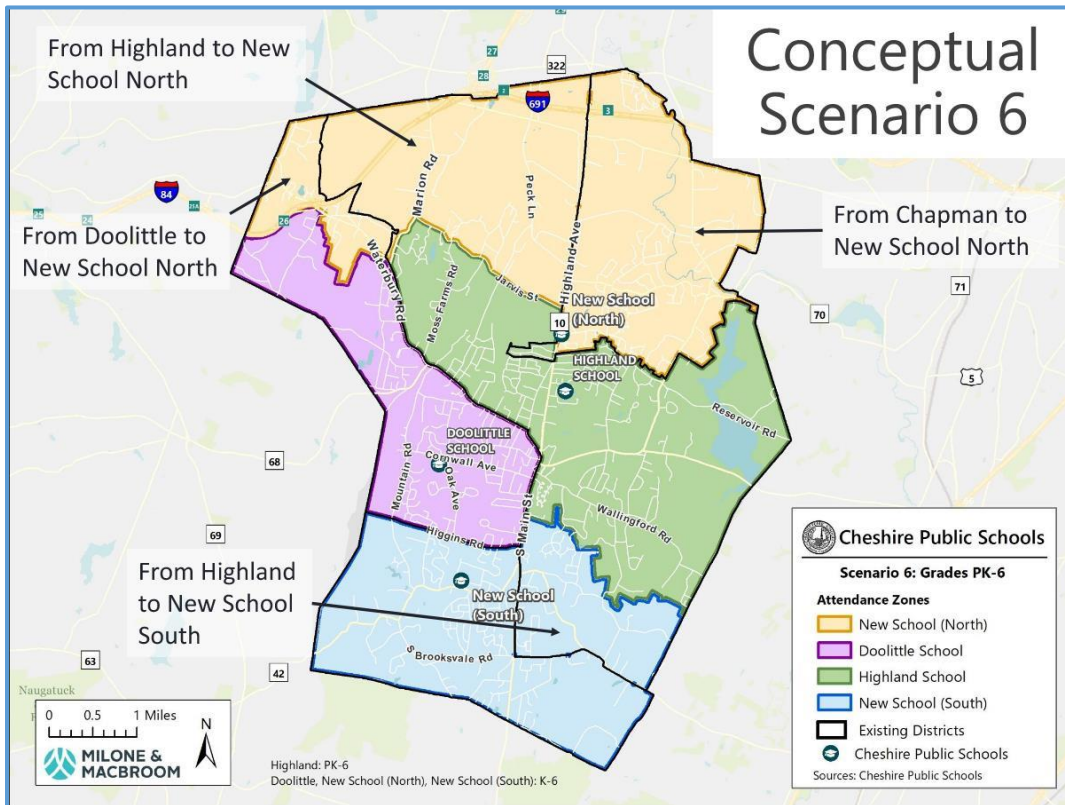




Scenario 6

- 6th Grade Remains in Elementary Schools
- Close Darcey, Chapman and Norton School Buildings
- Build two New Elementary Schools at about 680 students each
 - New School (North end)
 - New School (South end)
- Darcey PreK Programs move to Highland

Scenario 6	
School	Current Functional Capacity
Darcey	Consolidated
Chapman	Consolidated
Doolittle	606
Highland	827
New Elementary (South)	682
New Elementary (North)	682
Total Elem.	2,797





Scenario 6 Projections

Scenario 6 PK-6 Enrollment

School	8-Year Projection Window for Construction Grant										Peak Enrollment Over Next 8-Years	
	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29		29-30
New School (North)	469	483	511	531	558	556	590	613	628	631	653	631
Doolittle	433	442	456	487	521	530	566	586	605	612	609	612
Highland	657	652	659	669	688	698	711	734	760	774	780	774
New School (South)	533	532	557	576	583	601	603	636	659	663	669	663
Total	2,092	2,109	2,183	2,263	2,350	2,385	2,470	2,569	2,652	2,680	2,711	

- New School North peak projected enrollment is ~631 students
- New School South peak projected enrollment is ~660 students
- With inclusion of Darcey's PreK program, Highland grows to ~775 students
- Overall elementary enrollment growth is spread across the 4 schools



Scenario 6 Utilization

Scenario 6 PK-6 Utilization

School	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	Functional Capacity
New School (North)	71%	75%	78%	82%	82%	87%	90%	92%	93%	96%	682
Doolittle	73%	75%	80%	86%	87%	93%	97%	100%	101%	100%	606
Highland	79%	80%	81%	83%	84%	86%	89%	92%	94%	94%	827
New School (South)	78%	82%	84%	85%	88%	88%	93%	97%	97%	98%	682
Total	75%	78%	81%	84%	85%	88%	92%	95%	96%	97%	2,797

*Note – New schools assumes a loading level of 22 students per class x 4.5 sections per grade x 7 grades = 31 CRs or 682 estimated functional capacity.


- Overall elementary utilization averages 87% over the next 8-years for the PK-6 elementary system. All schools fully utilized towards the end of the planning horizon with a range of 93%-101%
- The Enrollment for both New Schools is roughly 650-670 students. Educational Specifications will need to be developed to determine Programmatic Capacity and ultimately the size for construction planning
- An architectural study of Highland will need to be conducted to determine space needs, fit and resulting capacity with the inclusion of Darcey's PreK



Scenario 6 Considerations

- Overall average utilization would be about 96% over the last 3-years of planning horizon
- **Need to understand space implications of relocating PreK to Highland to better estimate overall capacity needs** relative to projected enrollment growth
- Would change attendance zones for approximately 18% of elementary student body

c. SLR Presentation on Scenario 2A, dated February 25, 2021




Cheshire Public Schools Conceptual Elementary Redistricting Scenario 2a

February 25, 2021

MILONE & MACBROOM the part of SLR

1



Redistricting Charge

Cheshire SMC requested SLR (formerly MMI) to develop Conceptual Redistricting Boundaries to understand enrollment impacts and changes to school attendance zones for elementary school construction Scenario 2a.

MILONE & MACBROOM the part of SLR

2



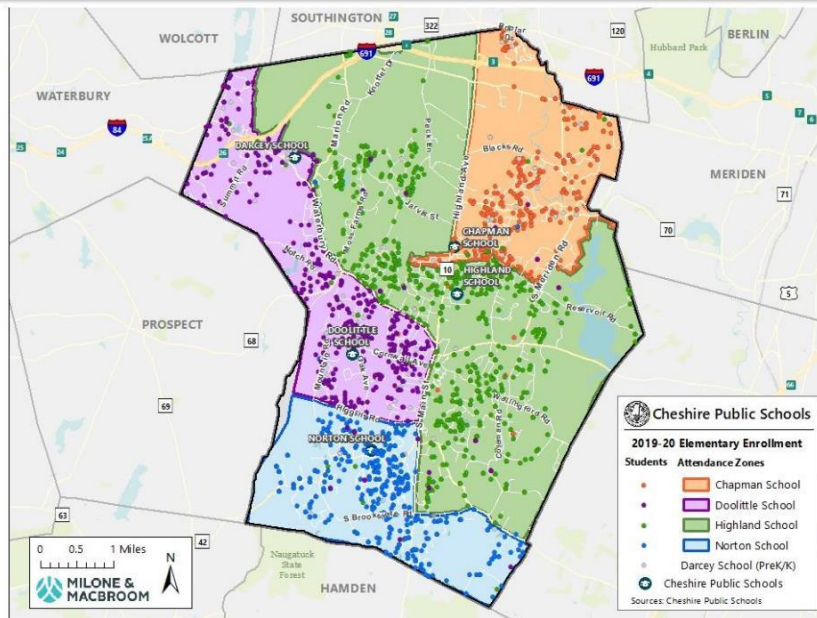
Redistricting Assumptions

- Existing School District Attendance Zones were the starting point for the Conceptual Redistricting Scenarios
- The 2019-20 Geocoded Student Enrollment was used as the starting point for each Conceptual Scenario
- The existing Functional Capacity (Max) for each elementary school was used to guide the scenarios
- Concept Boundaries were prepared to right size school attendance zones to enrollment projections and determine an enrollment planning target for new school construction
- Redistricting Scenarios are the first stage in planning and are silent to Educational Specifications and Future Physical Space Needs due to increased enrollment or PreK shifts
- School Construction Grant Space Standard is based on the highest projected enrollment over the ensuing eight year period and Educational Specifications. However, the district Functional Capacity will inform our facility scenario planning

Existing Capacities	
School	Current Functional Capacity
Darcey	180
Chapman	411
Doolittle	606
Norton	494
Highland	827
Total Elem.	2,518



Existing Districts



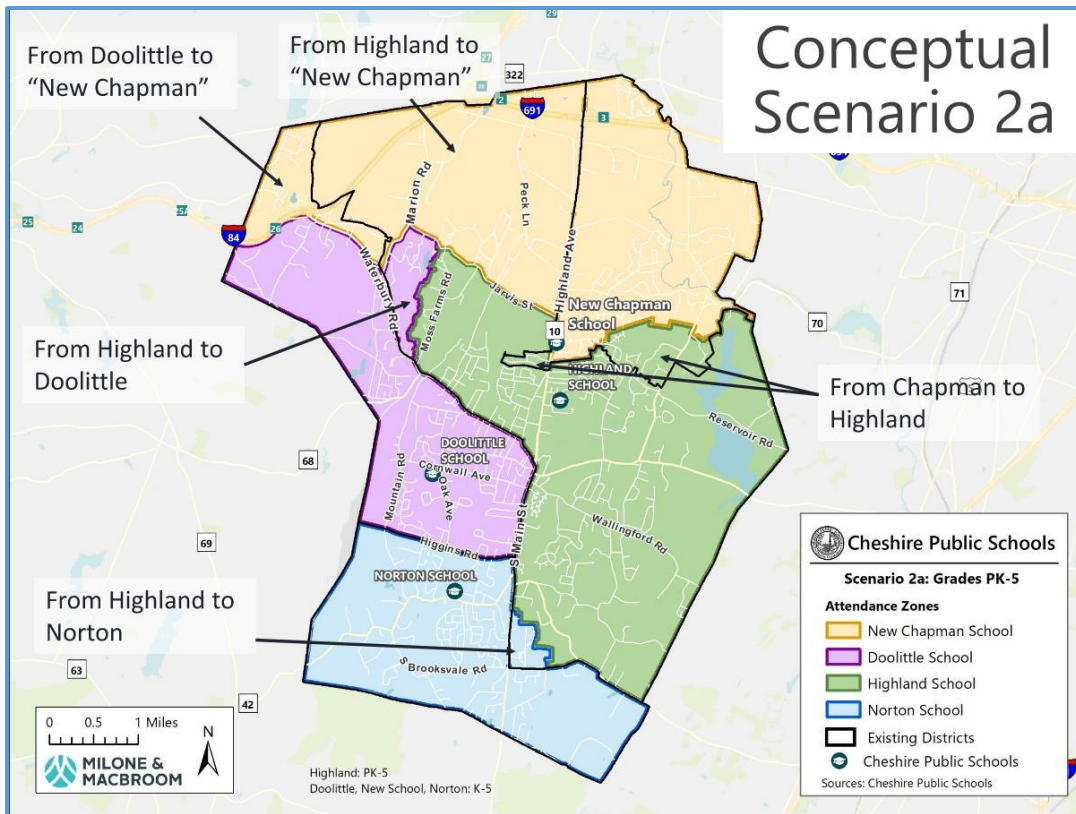


Scenario 2a

- 6th Grade is removed from elementary to create a 6th-8th middle school
- Close Darcey School Building
- Doolittle & Norton remain K-5
- Darcey PreK Programs move to Highland
- Size new K-5 at Chapman accordingly to enrollment needs

Scenario 2A	
School	Current Functional Capacity
Darcey	Consolidated
Doolittle	606
Norton	494
Highland	827
New Chapman	?

* 180 out of Darcey school capacity





Scenario 2a Projections

Scenario 2a PK-5 Enrollment

School	8-Year Projection Window for Construction Grant										Peak Enrollment Over Next 8-Years	
	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29		29-30
New Chapman	373	392	417	433	442	461	478	498	495	515	516	515
Doolittle	422	421	433	476	492	511	531	557	570	563	571	570
Highland	628	620	639	653	678	680	709	735	745	751	761	751
Norton	374	384	395	411	420	406	432	455	458	463	480	463
Total	1,797	1,817	1,884	1,973	2,032	2,058	2,150	2,245	2,268	2,292	2,328	

- “New Chapman School” peak projected enrollment is ~515 students
- With inclusion of Darcey’s PreK program, Highland grows to ~750 students
- Overall elementary enrollment growth is spread across the 4 schools



Scenario 2a Utilization

Scenario 2a Utilization (PK-5)

School	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	Functional Capacity
New Chapman	74%	79%	82%	84%	87%	91%	94%	94%	98%	98%	528*
Doolittle	69%	71%	79%	81%	84%	88%	92%	94%	93%	94%	606
Highland	75%	77%	79%	82%	82%	86%	89%	90%	91%	92%	827
Norton	78%	80%	83%	85%	82%	87%	92%	93%	94%	97%	494
Total	74%	77%	80%	83%	84%	88%	91%	92%	93%	95%	2,455

*Note – assumes a loading level of 22 students per grade x 6 grade groupings x 4 sections for each grade = 528 estimated functional capacity.

- Overall utilization averages 84% over the next 8-years for the PK-5 elementary system. All schools well utilized towards the end of the planning horizon with a range of 89%-98%
- The Enrollment/Capacity for the “New Chapman” School is enrollment derived. Educational Specifications will need to be developed to determine Programmatic Capacity and ultimately the size for construction planning.
- An architectural study of Highland will need to be conducted to determine space needs, fit and resulting capacity with the inclusion of Darcey’s PreK at Highland School



Scenario 2a Considerations

- Overall average utilization would be 84% with a range of 71% to 94% between schools
- Provides sufficient capacity to accommodate enrollment growth of the 8-year projection horizon
- Would change attendance zones for approximately 15% of elementary Student body
- Creates three elementary schools of roughly the same size. Highland will continue to have the greatest enrollment
- Requires "test-fit" of Chapman site to support the construction of a school for approximately 515 students
- Cheshire will need to explore feasibility and impacts of adding Darcey's PreK programs to Highland. Functional Capacity of Highland may be impacted.