

# Mattapoisett School Consolidation Study

## *Project Summary*

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Joint Select Board & School Committee Meeting

May 15, 2023

**EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**  
JOHN W. McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

## Discussion Topics

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# Overview of the Collins Center for Public Management

## ***Mission Statement***

*The Collins Center is dedicated to improving the efficiency, effectiveness, governance, responsiveness, and accountability of public sector organizations, with a particular focus on local and state governments.*

## ***Our Expertise***

- Cross-disciplinary team of practitioner-consultants with decades of experience working in municipal, regional, state governments, and public school districts
- Consult on all aspects of public governance and management
- As a member of the Mattapoisett School Consolidation Study Team, we bring expertise in:
  - Facility condition and reuse
  - Financial analysis
  - Educational operations
  - Public engagement

## The Study

*The Town of Mattapoisett approached the Collins Center with a request for assistance in assessing school facilities relocation and / or consolidation options. The Town, in partnership with the School District, sought an independent analysis to determine the financial and educational benefits and challenges of consolidating schools.*

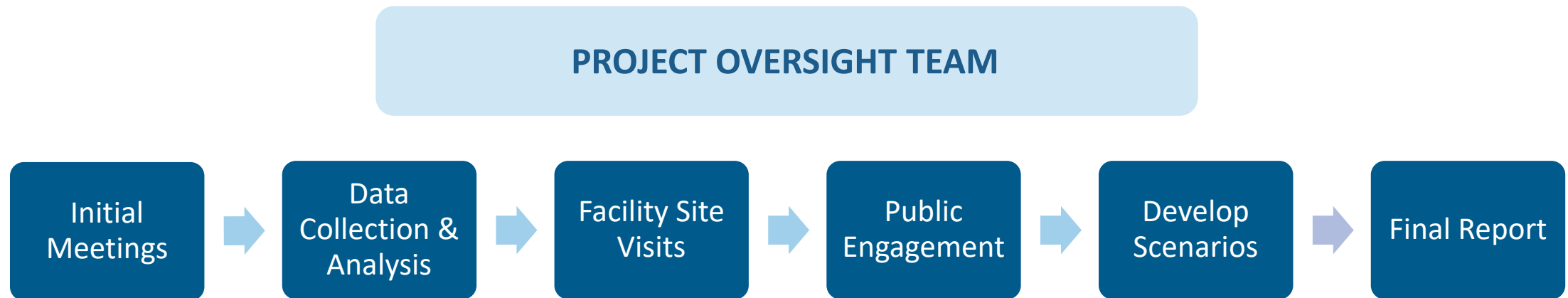


## *Our Role in this Study*

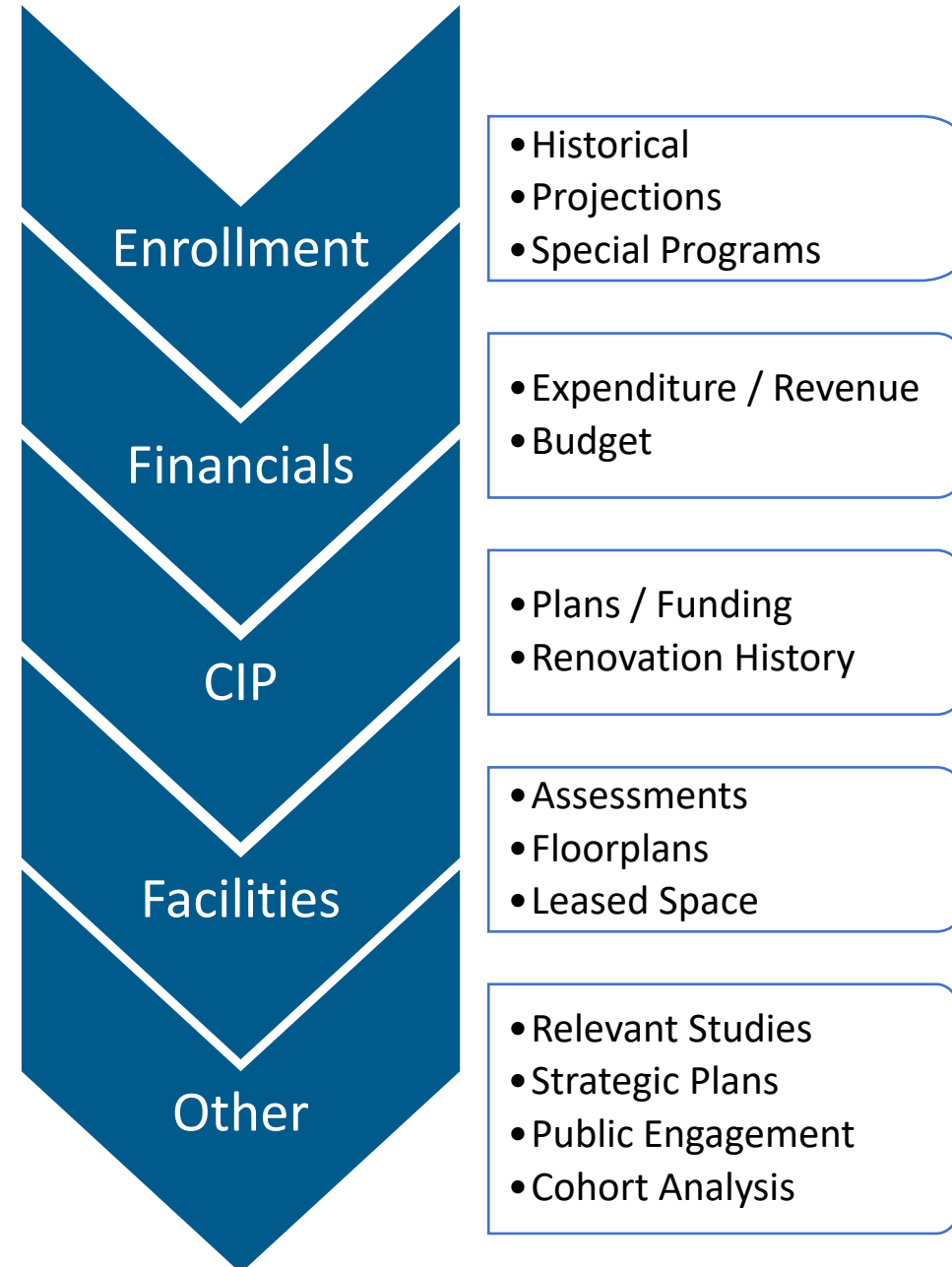
1. Document school facilities use options
2. Complete an independent analysis to determine the financial and educational benefits and challenges of school facilities use options

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## *Our Process*



# Methodology



## Final Report Topics

- Assembly and analysis of enrollment and financial information from the Town of Mattapoisett, DOR, DESE, and NESDEC.
- Review of facilities data, including previous assessments, floor plans, capital expenditure trends, and other information, supplied by facilities staff.
- Review of educational space utilization and needs based upon current program offerings.
- Cohort school analysis discussion.
- Documentation of public outreach trends.
- Overview of potential school consolidation alternatives.

## Overview: Key Takeaways

1. Mattapoissett's historic population trend depicts an aging pattern, with 27.4% of residents being 65 or older.
2. Historic school enrollment has declined since a peak in FY2014, however, between FY2017 and FY2023, the enrollment has held relatively steady.
3. Enrollment projections estimate a continually fluctuating enrollment over the next ten years, with a low in FY2026 and a high in FY2024. The end of the ten-year period in FY2033 denotes an anticipated rebound calculating just 6 students short of the highest school population.



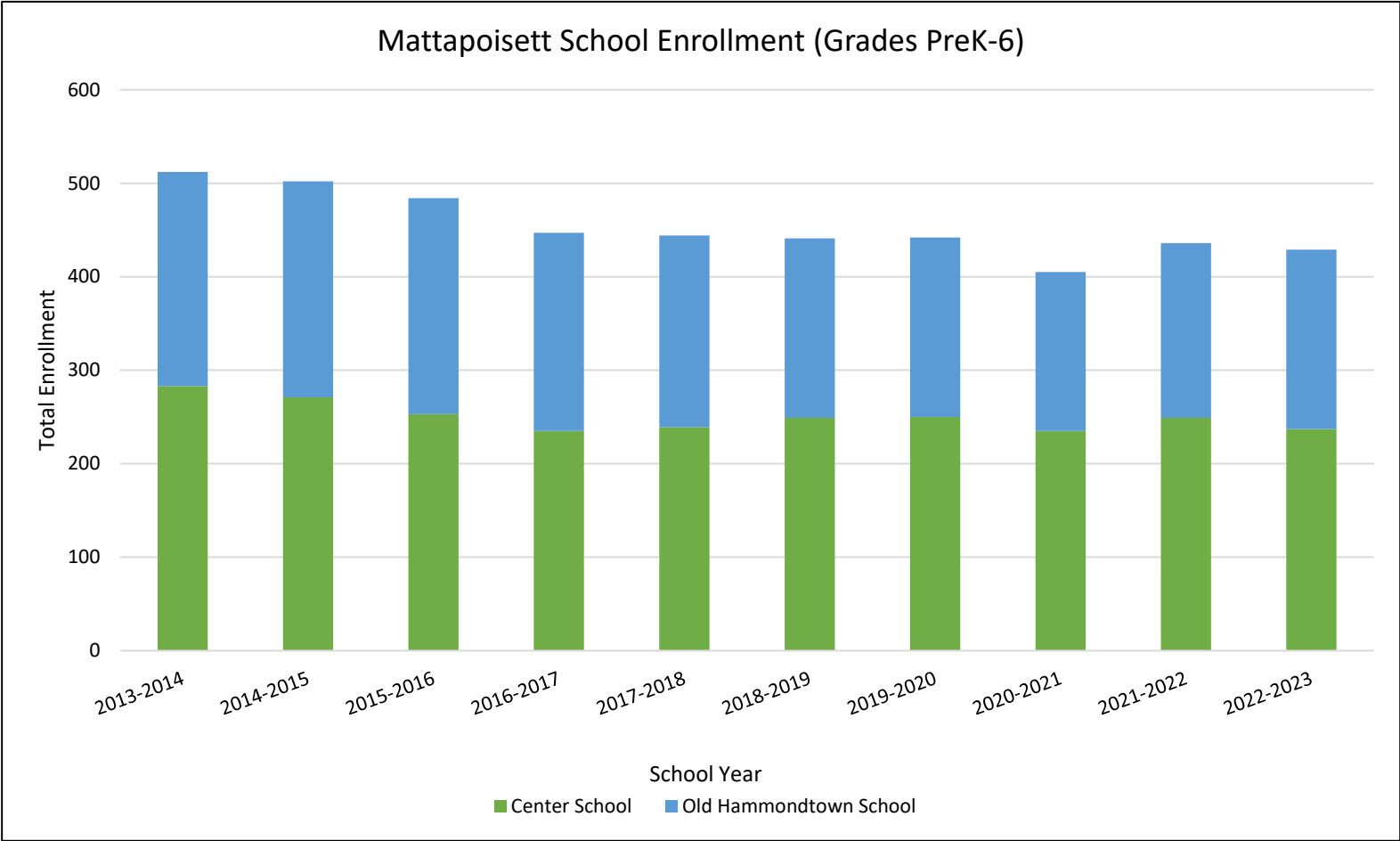


## Overview: Key Takeaways (cont.)

4. Comparative analysis with 8 similar districts found Mattapoissett's expenditure trends, particularly those on facilities and operations, to fall at the mid-point of the cohort consistently.
5. The overall condition of both school facilities is outstanding and supported by the MSBA condition assessment.
6. Given the present and projected student enrollment, neither school facility can accommodate a full consolidation without significant construction.
7. School Committee policies detail the process to adjust the use of current school facilities alongside a notification process to the MSBA regarding closure of a school building.



# Historical Enrollment



- Overall decline over 10-year period
- Between FY2018 and FY2023, average decrease amounted to -3.0 students, which symbolized a steady student population
- FY2023 established 3 sections per grade with an average of 18 students in grades KD-3 and 23 students in grades 4-6

*Note: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on enrollments in FY2021 depicted a loss of 37 students, however, in FY2022 31 students returned retaining the stabilization trend.*

## Historical Expenditures: *In-District Per Pupil Expenditure*

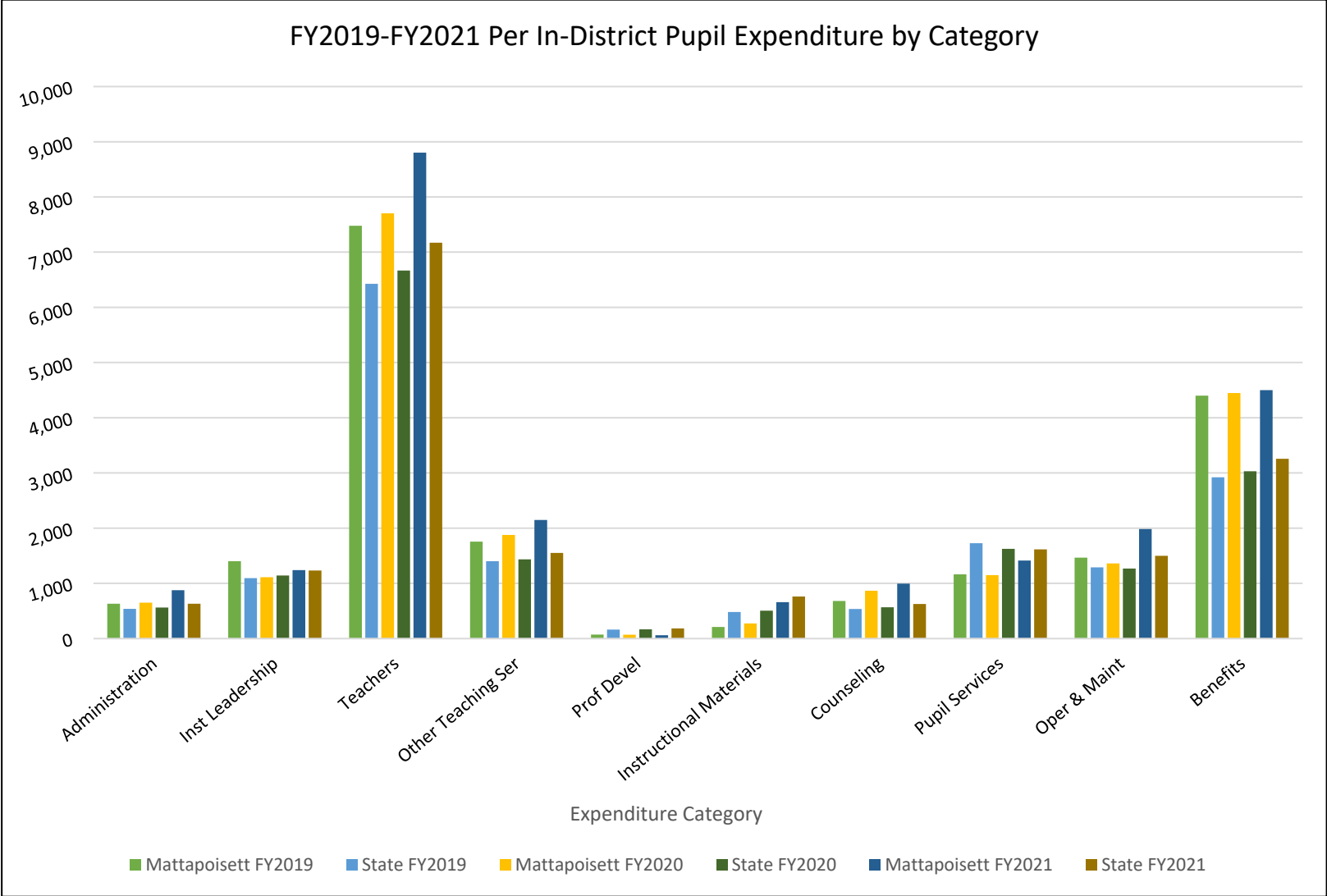
- Mattapoisett's financial support for education is consistently higher than state average.

School Year	In-District Expenditures per Pupil	Mattapoisett Annual % Increase	State Average	State Annual % Increase
2016-2017	\$18,149.09		\$15,349.97	
2017-2018	\$18,297.54	0.82%	\$15,952.76	3.93%
2018-2019	\$19,253.55	5.22%	\$16,576.90	3.91%
2019-2020	\$19,509.07	1.33%	\$16,966.79	2.35%
2020-2021	\$22,675.67	16.23%	\$18,521.88	9.17%

Source: DESE School and District Profiles

*Note: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on expenditures is considered an anomaly as significant variances from trend have been realized statewide.*

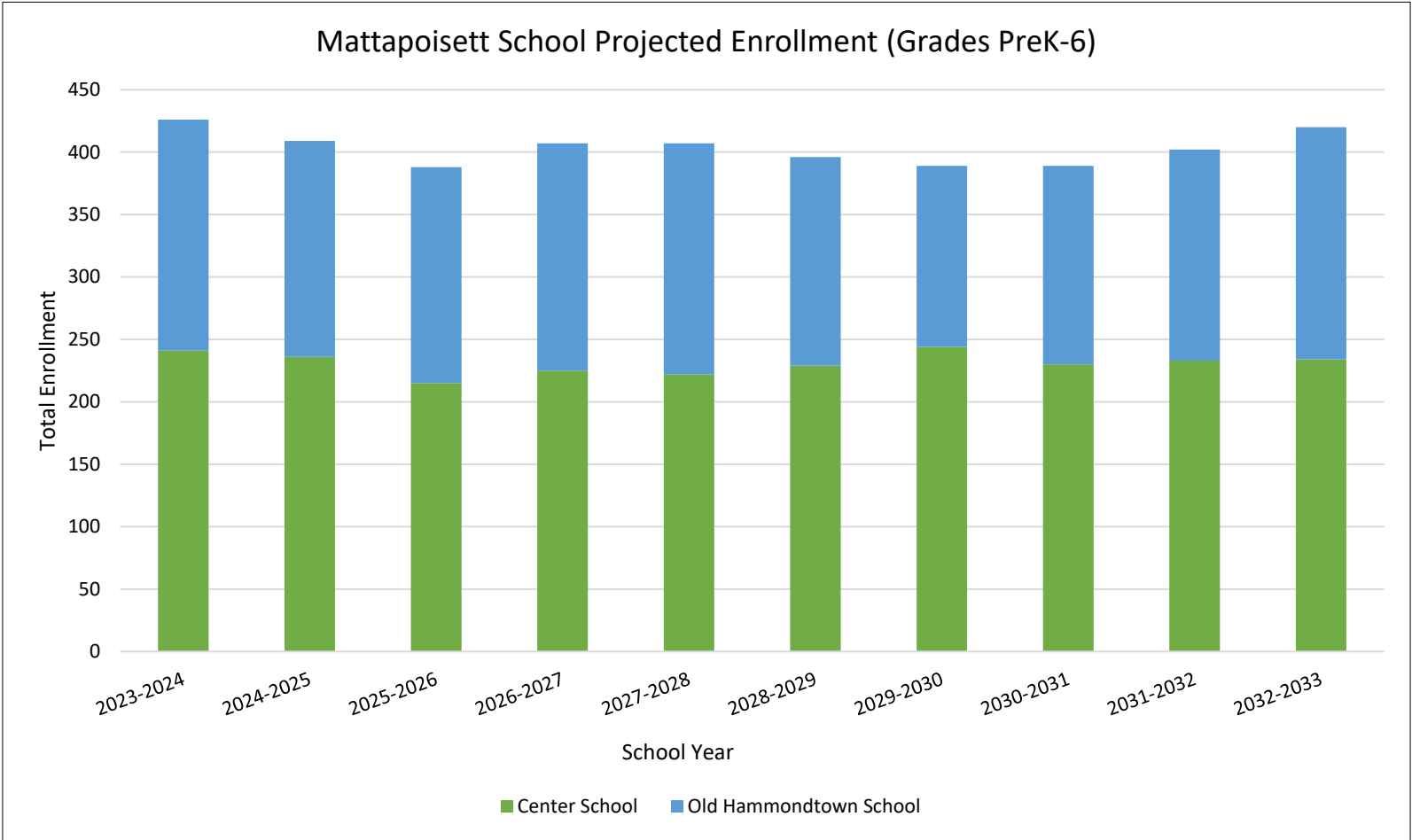
# Historical Expenditures: *Disaggregated*



- Highest expenditure on Teachers and Benefits.
- Operations & Maintenance expenditures trend closely between Mattapoisett and the State average.
- Mattapoisett spends less on Pupil Services than the State average.

# Enrollment Projections

- 10-year, FY2024-FY2033, enrollment projection compiled by NESDEC in February 2023 depicts a generally steady student population pattern.



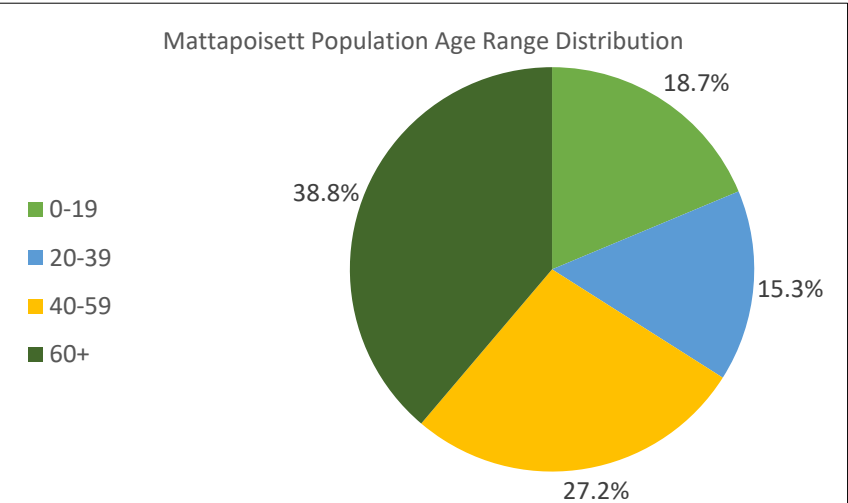
Source: NESDEC Enrollment Projection Report February 2023

# Population Projections

- Projection data compiled by the Donahue Institute at UMASS Lowell differs from actuals reported by the 2020 U.S. Census.

	Donahue Institute at UMass Population Projections										
Description	Census 2010	Census 2020	Projection 2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year
Mattapoisett	6,045	6,508	5,624	5,377	5,118	4,799	4,438	-4.4%	-9.0%	-14.7%	-21.1%
Plymouth County	494,919	518,508	518,508	527,813	534,464	537,977	539,424	1.79%	3.08%	3.75%	4.03%
State	6,547,629	7,029,917	6,933,887	7,094,087	7,225,472	7,313,149	7,380,399	2.31%	4.21%	5.47%	6.44%

Source: Donahue Institute at UMASS Population Projections

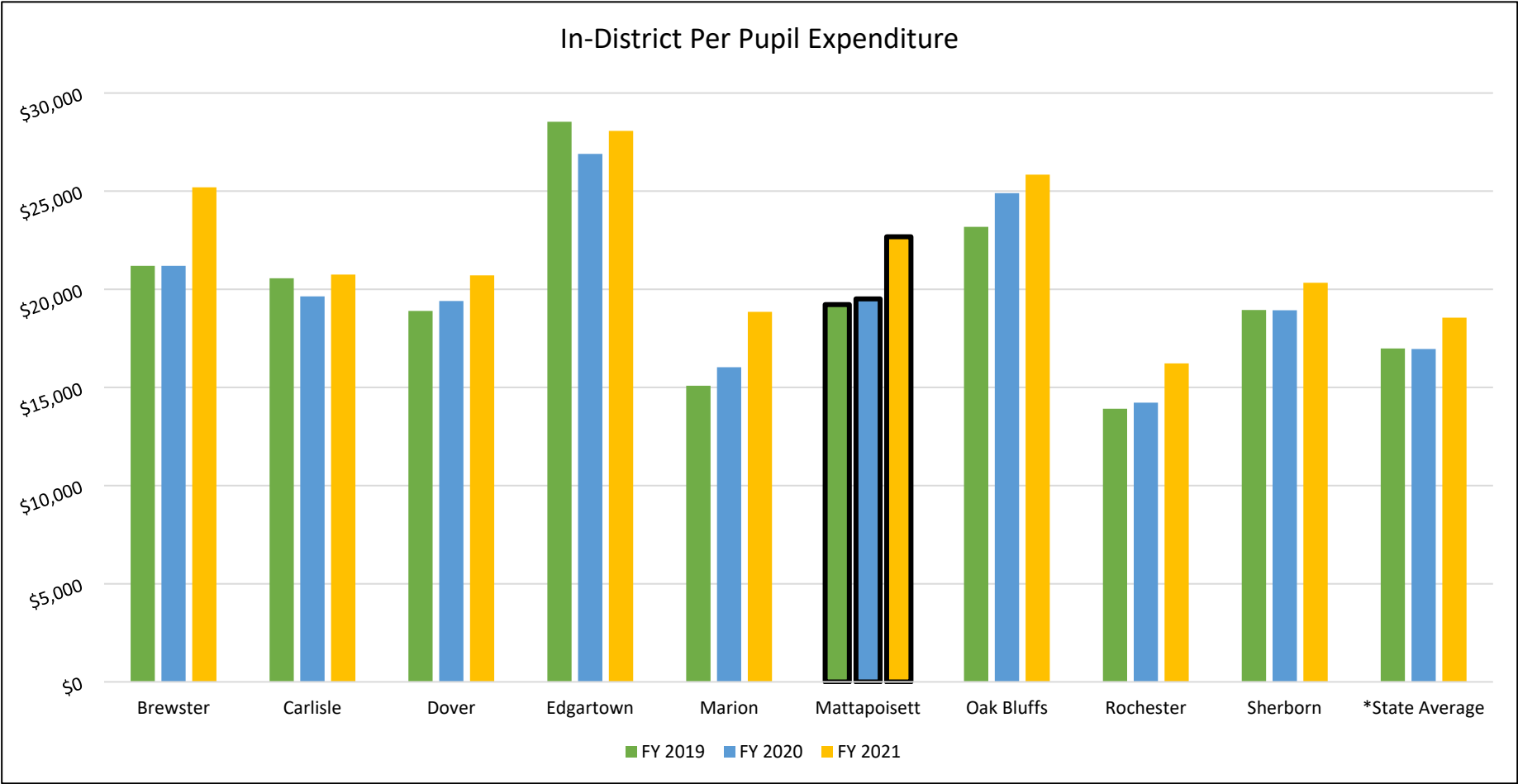


Source: 2020 U.S. Census

- 2020 U.S. Census age distribution depicts residents over the age of 60 being the highest percentage of the population.

# Cohort School Analysis: *In-District Per Pupil Expenditure*

- Mattapoisett In-District Per Pupil Expenditures fall at the middle of the cohort.



Source: DESE School and District Profiles

## Cohort School Analysis: *MSBA Capacity Rating*

- School facilities in Mattapoisett are rated by MSBA at an average capacity.

District	School	Grades Served	In District Enrollment FY2020	Founded	Renovation	Square Footage (GSF)	GSF per Student	Classroom Count	School Building Condition Rating	Capacity Rating
Brewster	Stony Brook	PK - 02	224	1976	2015	91,044	406	19	1	Average
Brewster	Eddy	03 - 05	246	1996	2014	57,915	235	17	1	Average
Carlisle	Carlisle School	PK - 08	597	1848	2012	139,337	233	47	1	Under
Dover	Chickering	PK - 05	490	2001		93,000	190	*	*	*
Edgartown	Edgartown ES	PK - 08	391	2003		78,055	200	*	*	*
Marion	Sippican	PK - 06	433	1937	2000	117,907	272	37	1	Under
Mattapoisett	Center	PK - 03	250	1898	2001	79,840	319	18	1	Average
Mattapoisett	Old Hammondtown	04 - 06	192	1966	2001	69,520	362	20	1	Average
Oak Bluffs	Oak Bluffs Elem	PK - 08	426	1996		177,000	415	31	2	Under
Rochester	Rochester Memorial	PK - 06	509	1954	2010	105,966	208	31	1	Average
Sherborn	Pine Hill	PK - 05	413	1957	1998	70,359	170	28	2	Average
Average							274			

Source: MSBA 2016 School Survey Report



# Public Engagement: *Public Forum Takeaways*

- High quality / safe / stable educational experience
- Mixed opinions on school consolidation
- Desire to preserve Center School as a functioning school
- Concerns about new growth impacting enrollment
- Concerns about attracting and retaining young families



## Public Engagement: *Online Survey Takeaways*

- Overall respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the general condition of the facilities
- Student / Teacher ratio, special education programming, health and wellness programming, and music and performing arts are among the most important attributes of the school system
- Participants were overall ambivalent towards options for adjusting the facilities so long as the educational needs are met
- Mattapoisett residents are willing to support a robust, high-quality education and are willing to make financial concessions to this end
- Respondents indicated they agree with sharing space in Center School with Town services



## School Facilities Alternatives: *Overview*

1. There is little to no sustained evidence to suggest that the trend of enrollment will reverse. The scenario suggested by the NESDEC data is a **stabilization over the next decade**, which would not produce the quantity of students required to fully utilize the capacity in the current District facilities, nor would it allow for a **full migration of the student body into one facility without expansion**.
2. New births, new home construction, and economic indicators all suggest the aging and population trends will continue. There are **no indications that these trends will reverse** or that a significant shift in population or economic growth is on the horizon.
3. District facilities have more capacity per student than most cohort districts included in the analysis, though **the District does not spend significantly more per student on costs associated with the physical plants**.



## School Facilities Alternatives: *Overview (cont.)*



4. Based on the comparative analysis and a review of District facilities expenditure trends, the District is unlikely to find significant cost savings outside of building consolidation. However, any **significant cost-saving opportunities are still rooted in the capital investment decisions** and the resulting capital or debt service assessment the Town and District adopt.
5. Presently, both Center School and Old Hammondtown School are in **excellent overall condition and support student programming successfully**. However, with extensive updates and renovations having been made at both schools over 20 years ago and based on aging of systems and components over time, **sizable and costly capital projects covering the envelope and systems in each school will need to be implemented in the coming years**.

## School Facilities Alternatives: *Overview (cont.)*

6. A separate consideration and observation documented by the Mattapoissett Master Plan, prepared by the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District in November 2022, noted that **the future use of the existing Town Hall needs to be determined**. According to the Mattapoissett Master Plan, in addition to previously being noted in the 2018 Mattapoissett Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan (MPV), the **1896 Town Hall building could be vulnerable to flooding and sea level rise due to climate change impacts**. The Master Plan remarked that \$15,000 in capital planning funds will be earmarked in 2025 to determine if municipal operations could be relocated to an existing facility or if a new building would need to be constructed. **Center School was an alternative documented by the Master Plan to possibly house Town Hall operations.**





## School Facilities Alternatives: *Process & Funding Considerations*



- School Committee Policies dictate procedures as they relate to facilities planning, renovations, and the retirement of buildings.
  - Policy FA – Facilities Development Goals
  - Policy FJ – Facilities Renovations / Improvements
  - Policy FCB – Retirement of Facilities
- MSBA Bulletin 07-01, School Closings, Sales, Leases or Other Removal From Service provides instructions for retiring a school building.
- MSBA funding is not guaranteed for any school construction project and requires compliance with a variety of factors when determining a potential award of funds.

## School Facilities Alternatives: *Estimated Cost Standards*

Description	Estimated Cost
Center School Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	\$274,151
Old Hammondtown School Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	\$292,000
MSBA New Construction per Square Foot Rate	\$700/sf
Estimated 14% Construction Fee Rate	\$100/sf

- Planned CIP for Center School and Old Hammondtown School applied to alternatives
- MSBA rate established as of 2022 averages
- \$800 per square foot applied to new construction estimates

## School Facilities Alternative #1: *Maintain Current Program*

- The alternative would continue the present classroom, grade patterns, and services at both Center School and Old Hammondtown School.

### ***Benefits***

- Supports the educationally successful status quo environment
- Provides comfortable space for potential enrollment growth
- Honors the community's feeling Center School is important

### ***Challenges***

- Issues presented by the Mattapoissett Master Plan persist without alternative space for Town offices

- Alternative #1 is the least disruptive to students and most cost-effective option



## School Facilities Alternative #1: *Estimated Cost*

Facility	Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	New CIP	Total
Center School	\$274,151	0	\$274,151
Old Hammondtown School	\$292,000	0	\$292,000
Estimated Total	\$566,151	0	\$566,151

- Ongoing funding for annual planned capital improvements
- Large capital funding likely necessary by FY2032, if not sooner, due to aging facilities and mechanicals
- The annual facilities budget will likely follow closely to historical averages

## School Facilities Alternative #2: *Renovate Center School*

- Center School would be renovated to accommodate a full consolidation of Grades PreK through 6 including all educational and administrative services required to support the full complement of students.

### ***Benefits***

- Possible savings through reduction in personnel
- Community support for maintaining Center School as a school

### ***Challenges***

- A space utilization study of Old Hammondtown is necessary
- Center School is a designated historic building which may require additional study and approvals for renovations and / or expansion
- A possible addition would reduce and / or eliminate open space for playgrounds and parking
- Town Departments would need to be relocated

- Alternative #2 poses likely significant construction challenges and has minimal expansion potential

## School Facilities Alternative #2: *Estimated Cost*

Facility	Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	New CIP	Total
Center School	\$274,151	0	\$274,151
Old Hammondtown School	0	0	0
New Addition / Remodel @ Center School	0	\$7,200,000	\$7,200,000
Estimated Total	\$274,151	\$7,200,000	\$7,474,151

- Estimate based on 9,000 square foot addition and absorption of all existing classroom areas to meet 12 classroom minimum for grades 4 – 6
- Scenario accounts for continued capital funding for planned expenditures through FY2031 at Center School
- Annual revenue of \$40,000 from SMEC lease would be eliminated
- The annual facilities budget would increase for Center School while utilities and capital needs would persist for Old Hammondtown School

# **School Facilities Alternative #3: Renovate Old Hammondtown School (Full)**

- Old Hammondtown School would be renovated to accommodate a full consolidation of Grades PreK through 6 including all educational and administrative services required to support the full compliment of students.

## ***Benefits***

- Possible savings through reduction in personnel
- Old Hammondtown campus is larger and likely more easily accommodates expansion options
- Existing partnership with the Recreation Department may provide desired options for additional programming

## ***Challenges***

- A space utilization study of Center School is necessary
- Specific design and construction would be necessary to support PreK and Kindergarten spaces
- Town Recreation Department needs must be contemplated into a plan
- Center School is located in a FEMA flood hazard area and may pose future challenges for Town operations if Town Hall adopts the location

- Alternative #3 is more friendly to new construction and expansion

## School Facilities Alternative #3: *Estimated Cost*

Facility	Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	New CIP	Total
Center School	0	0	0
Old Hammondtown School	\$292,000	0	\$292,000
New Addition / Remodel @ Old Hammondtown School	0	\$6,480,000	\$6,480,000
Estimated Total	\$292,000	\$6,480,000	\$6,772,000

- Estimate based on 8,100 square foot addition and absorption of all existing classroom areas to meet 13 classroom minimum for grades PreK – 3
- Scenario accounts for continued capital funding for planned expenditures through FY2031 at Old Hammondtown School
- Annual revenue of \$40,000 from SMEC lease would be eliminated, 4 classrooms absorbed
- The annual facilities budget would increase for Old Hammondtown School while utilities and capital needs would persist for Center School

## School Facilities Alternative #4: *Renovate Old Hammondtown School (Partial)*

- Old Hammondtown School would be renovated to accommodate a partial consolidation of Grades 1 through 6 including all educational and administrative services required to support the partial student population. Grades PreK and Kindergarten would remain at Center School.

### ***Benefits***

- Old Hammondtown campus is larger and likely more easily accommodates expansion options
- Existing partnership with the Recreation Department may provide desired options for additional programming
- Unique opportunity for multi-generational programming
- Maintains Center School as an early childhood facility which supports the Community's values

## School Facilities Alternative #4: Renovate Old Hammondtown School (Partial)

### *Challenges*

- A space utilization study of Center School is necessary
  - Sharing Center School with expanded Town Departments presents a school security challenge
  - No savings through reduction of personnel
  - Town Recreation Department needs must be contemplated into a plan
  - Center School is located in a FEMA flood hazard area and may pose future challenges for Town operations if Town Hall adopts the location
- 
- Alternative #4 is the least costly new construction option

## School Facilities Alternative #4: *Estimated Cost*

Facility	Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	New CIP	Total
Center School	\$68,538	\$250,000	\$318,538
Old Hammondtown School	\$292,000	0	\$292,000
New Addition @ Old Hammondtown School	0	\$3,600,000	\$3,600,000
Estimated Total	\$360,538	\$3,850,000	\$4,210,538

- Estimate based on 4,500 square foot addition and absorption of all existing classroom areas to meet 9 classroom minimum for grades 1 – 3
- Scenario accounts for continued capital funding for planned expenditures through FY2031 at Old Hammondtown School and 25% of Center School planned projects
- \$250,000 of new capital dedicated to school security measures at Center School
- Annual revenue of \$40,000 from SMEC lease would be eliminated, 4 classrooms absorbed
- The annual facilities budget would increase for Old Hammondtown School while utilities and capital needs would persist for Center School



## School Facilities Alternative #5: *Construct a New School*

- The alternative would construct a completely new PreK through 6 facility.

### *Benefits*

- Possible savings through reduction in personnel
- A holistic review of the Master Plan issues could be incorporated into planning stages

### *Challenges*

- Many unknowns exist, availability of land is a primary concern
- A space utilization study of both Center School and Old Hammondtown School is necessary

- Alternative #5 is the costliest and most time-consuming option

## School Facilities Alternative #5: *Estimated Cost*

Facility	Planned CIP (FY2023-2031)	New CIP	Total
Center School	\$274,151	0	\$274,151
Old Hammondtown School	\$292,000	0	\$292,000
New School Facility	0	\$80,000,000	\$80,000,000
Estimated Total	\$566,151	\$80,000,000	\$80,566,151

- Estimate based on 100,000 square foot new facility to meet the needs of grades PreK - 6
- Scenario accounts for continued capital funding for planned expenditures through FY2031 at Center School and Old Hammondtown School given the assumed length of time a new facility would take to become operational
- Annual revenue of \$40,000 from SMEC lease would be eliminated in the event of a new building opening
- This estimate excludes many factors such as land purchase, demolition, site development and more

## Final Thoughts

- None of the alternatives noted present a rapid solution to the various challenges facing Mattapoisett
- The School Committee and MSBA have existing policies and processes in place to support school facility changes and / or closures
- Neither Mattapoisett school facility can support the full student population without significant renovations and expansions
- External funding from MSBA to partially support school construction may be difficult to obtain
- The community values education, and the Center School facility specifically, as a part of the Mattapoisett culture
- Further study is encouraged to understand growth potential, climate impacts, and other influencing factors specific to coastal communities



# Thank you!



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