A Three School Solution for Cape Elizabeth

A responsible, cost-effective plan that fully funds all three schools—delivering brand-new classrooms for 6th–8th grade while preserving vital investments in the High School and Pond Cove.

Developed by Larry Benoit & Michael Hussey, Former Members of the SBAC
Committed to Smart, Sustainable Solutions for Cape Elizabeth

Presented to the Cape Elizabeth School Board and Town Council

March 10, 2025

	The "Three School Solution"	Revised "Middle Ground"
Total Cost	~$64M bonded	~$86.5M bonded plus ~19M in future unbonded costs
Tax Impact	~8.3% increase*	~12% increase* plus future tax increases
New Classrooms	New 6th, 7th, 8th Grade Classrooms (8 classrooms per grade)	New 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th Grade Classrooms (8 classrooms per grade)
Critical Repairs	**100% Funded** Across All Three Schools	Leaves ~$15M in critical investments at the ES and HS **unfunded**.
Pond Cove Investments	Dedicated cafeteria + STEM room + secure entrance	Secure entrance only**
High School Investments	$11mm in critical upgrades, including HVAC & electrical systems, new gym floor, cafeteria upgrades, + more***	None
Performing Arts Space	Dedicated Performing Arts Center	Another Cafetorium
Ball Fields and Gym	Fully Preserved (& creates new fields)	Likely Smaller Gym and Soccer Fields
Student Disruption	Minimal (two portables, max)	Minimal
1934 Building	Preserves for Future Use (saves $4.8M)	Cuts Water, Heat, Electric
Future Investments	Stabilizes future budgets to support next Pond Cove build	Strains Future Budgets with CIP for a generation

*Assuming 4% 30-year AAA municipal bond rates
** STEM room seemingly removed from most recent PC plans
***From original SBAC Option A

Opportunities to Strengthen the Plan & Address Unfunded Needs

Proposed Scope Reductions and CIP Shifts in the School Board's Revised Plan

- **Higher Costs Without Addressing Critical Needs**
  - Despite an $85MM+ budget, the latest plans leave up to $15MM in critical needs at the high school and elementary school unfunded.
  - Preservation of the original 1934 school building, which under the School Board plan will be cut off from heat, water, electricity, and sewer. Saves ~$5M.

- **Missed Opportunities**
  - Fails to address logistical inefficiencies in dining, learning spaces, and campus flow for ES.
  - No room for critical investments in the HS.
  - Leaves little to no room for future investments in ES for a generation because CIP impacts.
  - And we can do better than another cafetorium.

Potential Scope Reductions at MS and ES for Consideration

PROGRAM SPACE	DESCRIPTION OF REDUCTION	APPROX. SF	APPROX. CONSTRUCTION COST	TOTAL COST (INCL. 15% SOFT COST)	JUNE 2025 (4%) TOTAL PROJECT
Gymnasium	Reduce to MS Size (seats on floor reduced from 510 to 480)	~~1,500 SF~~	~~$257,349~~	~~$295,951~~	~~$307,789~~
	Reduce Bleachers by 50% (from 300 to 150 seats)	~~364 SF~~	~~$121,923~~	~~$140,211~~	~~$145,820~~
Locker Rooms	Reduce Shower Area & Lockers by 50%	430 SF	$172,000	$197,800	$205,712
Band Room	Reduce by 1,000 SF	~~1,000 SF~~	~~$245,000~~	~~$281,750~~	~~$293,020~~
Chorus/Music Instruction	Reduce by 250 SF	~~250 SF~~	~~$61,250~~	~~$70,438~~	~~$73,255~~
Band/Music Instruction	Reduce by 175 SF	~~175 SF~~	~~$42,875~~	~~$49,306~~	~~$51,279~~
Allied Arts Classroom	Reduce by 100 SF (can't remove whole room as needed for health program)	~~100 SF~~	~~$10,000~~	~~$11,500~~	~~$11,960~~
Cafeteria	Size for 3-4 Lunches Instead of 2 (Reduce by 1,000 SF)	~~1,000 SF~~	~~$295,000~~	~~$339,250~~	~~$352,820~~
Classrooms	Reduce by 25 SF to 775 SF	~~850 SF~~	~~$85,000~~	~~$97,750~~	~~$101,660~~
MS Team Space	Reduce size of team space and other plan efficiencies (still built in)	2,800 SF	$686,000	$788,900	$820,456
MS Team Space	(or) Reduce size of team space by 600 sf (still built in)	600 SF	$147,000	$169,050	$175,812
STEM Classroom Addition	Remove From Scope	1,317 SF	$543,235	$624,720	$649,709
Backup Heat	Remove From Scope		$914,415	$1,051,577	$1,093,640
VRF Attic Stock	Add to project		$64,000	$74,000	($77,000)

SUBTOTAL: $2,047,873 to $ 2,769,517

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Potential Items to move to CIP Maintenance and Repair

School	Items	Total Project Cost	JUNE 2025 4% Escalation
Pond Cove	Replacement of Flooring	$1,226,995	$1,276,075
Pond Cove	Classroom Finishes	$1,347,500	$1,401,400
Pond Cove	Commissioning of New HVAC systems	$118,085	$122,808
Pond Cove	Relocate Kindergarten EF.	$28,375	$29,510
Pond Cove	Photocopier EF.	$4,375	$4,550
Pond Cove	Kindergarten roof hood. (qty 2)	$13,750	$14,300
Pond Cove	Kindergarten gooseneck:	$5,800	$6,032
Pond Cove	Replace unit heaters:	$18,750	$19,500
Pond Cove	Replace cabinet unit heater.	$20,000	$20,800
Pond Cove	Replace EFs.	$106,250	$110,500
High School	CUH Wall temp Sensor	$725	$754
High School	Firestop at the top of the wall	$58000	$60320
High School	Unit Ventilators	$318,750	$331,500
High School	Replace Roofing	$725,969	$755,008
High School	Address ADA items in restrooms	$80,000	$83,200
High School	Corridor Penetrations	$43500	$45240
High School	Acoustic Transfer Guidance	$40000	$41600
High School	Acoustic Transfer Classrooms	$151688	$157756
High School	Study to Evaluate Lead Paint	$75000	$78000
High School	Abatement	$609,375	$633,750
		SUBTOTAL:	$5,192,603

- Utilize existing CIP, Maintenance and Repair budget over approximately a 12 year period to address previous and new items.
- *We continue to work closely with facilities to prioritize the CIP, maintenance and repair.*
- *If you moved items in chart to CIP, Maintenance and Repair existing budget , along with items on previous page the project would be approximately $85.5-86.25M.*

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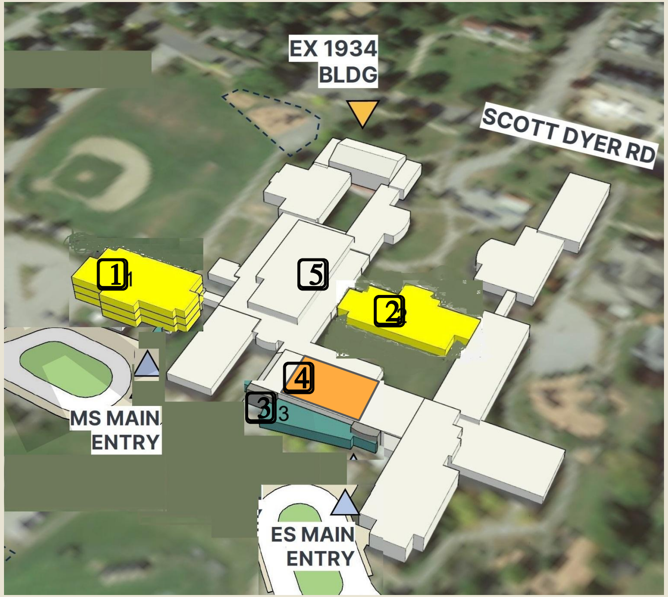
A Smarter, More Complete Plan—For ~$64MM



The 'Three School Solution' delivers great schools for the next generation—without unnecessary sacrifices—resetting the clock on all three schools for at least $20M less.

New construction costs conservatively assumed to be $700/sq ft (higher than the ~$680/sq ft in the revised Middle Ground).

1 A Brand-New 6th, 7th, 8th Grade Wing (36K sq ft – ~$25.2M)

✅ A **modern, future-ready** middle school wing tailored to today's needs
✅ **36,000 sq ft**— eight 800 sq ft classrooms per grade
✅ **Flexible learning spaces** for collaboration, STEM, and special education needs.

2 A New Cafeteria & Kitchen Serving Both MS & PC (14K sq ft – ~$9.8M)

✅ **Efficient, shared kitchen** reduces operational costs while improving meal service.
✅ **Dedicated cafeterias** for both schools eliminate overcrowding and scheduling issues.
✅ Saves students **valuable learning time** by ensuring smooth, quick meal transitions.

3 Secure Entrances & Modern Admin Spaces (3K sq ft – ~$2.1M for ES)

✅ **Front-facing administration offices** improve visibility and visitor management.
✅ **Upgraded security features** ensure safer schools for students and staff.
✅ Designed to meet **modern school safety standards**—a long-overdue upgrade.

4 A Dedicated Performing Arts Center—Not a Cafetorium (~$2M – $3M ROM)

✅ A **true performing arts venue**—not another substandard "cafetorium."
✅ Features **retractable stage seating** for flexible use (theater, music, school events).
✅ Strengthens Cape Elizabeth's commitment to **music, drama, and the arts.**
✅ A **community asset** that will serve students and residents for generations.

5 Fully Funds ALL Critical Needs—No Kicking the Can Down the Road (~$24M)

✅ **$21M in essential investments** across the HS ($11M) and PC ($10M), & other MS-related investments (up to $3M).
✅ **No Band-Aid Fixes**—this plan **fixes everything upfront**, preventing costly emergency repairs down the road.

1. Brand New Three-Story 6th, 7th, 8th grade

$25.2 million -- Three story addition 36,000 sq ft @ $700/sf - from Harriman's Option D

The new addition serves as a nearly new middle school, solving for daily logistical challenges, connecting the schools and providing modern facilities for students and staff and special education.

- **New Middle School Wing:** Provides a modern, state-of-the-art learning environment tailored to the needs of 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade students, effectively functioning as a new middle school without unnecessary demolition and costs.
- **Efficient Space Utilization:** Features 8 classrooms per grade (6 general, 1 World Language, 1 Flex/SPED), with 5,600 sq ft per floor dedicated to collaborative spaces, Music, STEM, SPED, Art, bathrooms, navigation and storage.
- **Future-Proof Design:** Creates a centralized footprint that connects to the rest of the campus efficiently, streamlines student movement, and sets the stage for future campus improvements.
- **Minimizes Disruption:** The only modular classrooms required during construction are for the music & tech ed program, significantly reducing the impact on daily student activities compared to previous proposals.
- **Supports Special Education Needs:** Incorporates ample room for SPED classrooms and breakout spaces, ensuring inclusivity and adaptability for all students.

2. Revolutionizing Campus Dining: Dedicated Cafeterias with Shared Kitchen

$9.8 million – new Middle and Elementary School cafeterias with shared kitchen @ $700/sf – From Harriman's Option B & C

The new addition serves as a central hub, solving for daily logistical challenges, connecting the schools and providing modern facilities for students and staff.

- **Seamless Efficiency:** A single shared kitchen reduces operational costs while serving two separate cafeterias tailored for Middle and Elementary Schools.
- **Improved Student Experience:** Reduces travel time and ensures students can enjoy meals at appropriate times, enhancing focus and learning readiness.
- **Streamlined Schedules:** Facilitates smoother meal times and less congestion during lunch hours.
- **Future-Proof Investment:** Optimized layout supports scalability and growth, minimizing sprawl and preserving green spaces.
- **Community-Centric Design:** Creates spaces that can double as venues for events, meetings, and extracurricular activities.

3. Safe, Secure, and Smart School Entrances

Elementary School = $2.1 million -- 3,000 sq ft @ $700/sf from Harriman's "Middle Ground" Proposal

✔ **Controlled entry points** improve school security, ensuring a single, monitored access for all visitors.

✔ **Front-facing admin offices** allow staff to oversee entry points in real time, strengthening safety.

✔ **Meets the latest school security standards**, ensuring a safer, more efficient campus environment.

✔ **New middle school wing includes separate secure entrance**, seamlessly integrating security across all schools.

✔ **A small but critical investment**: $2.1M secures both schools, protecting students and staff every day.

Front-Facing Admin Offices

The Forecaster Southern Forecaster

Cape Elizabeth threats prompt new look at school security

Posted March 24, 2016 Updated March 24, 2016 Kate Gardner

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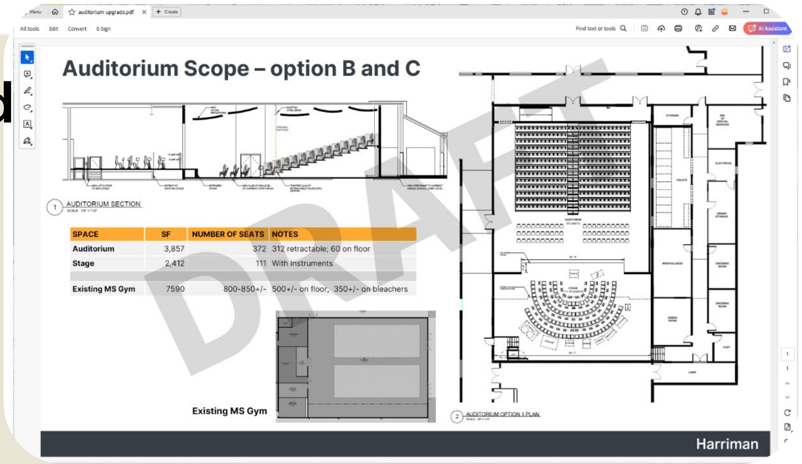
CAPE ELIZABETH — School officials hope to improve security and communications following a lockdown last week and a bomb threat Tuesday.

The School Board and Superintendent of Schools Meredith Nadeau met Tuesday night to

4. Inspiring Creativity: A Dedicated Performing Arts Center

State-of-the-Art Facility: A modern performance space designed to inspire creativity and foster artistic expression among students.
Flexibility in Use: Versatile space that accommodates music instruction, gym classes, and large school events.
Community Benefits: Provides a professional venue for theater, music, and community events, eliminating the need for a substantial "cafetorium."
Retractable Seating: Retractable stage seating to maximize flexibility for day-to-day use and performances.
Newly enlarged stage will serve as a dedicated band rehearsal space (see SoPo MS), featuring a soundproof retractable wall to separate it from the rest of the auditorium.



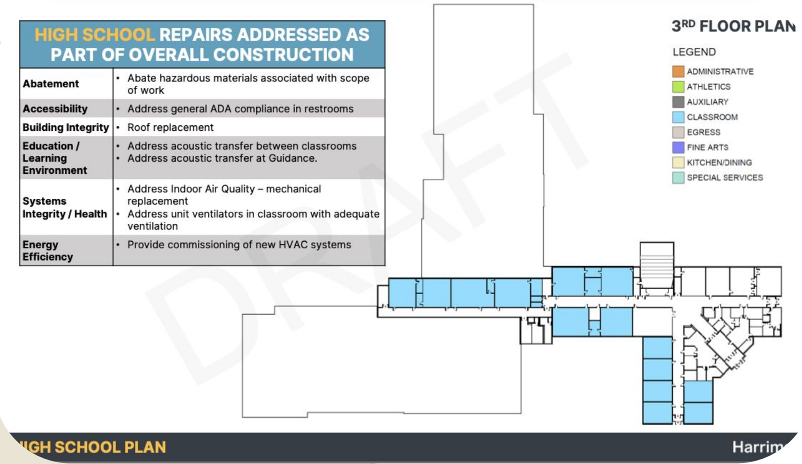
SPACE	SF	NUMBER OF SEATS	NOTES
Auditorium	3,857	372	312 retractable; 60 on floor
Stage	2,412	111	With Instruments
Existing MS Gym	7590	800-850+/-	500+/- on floor, 350+/- on bleachers

No more cafetoriums!

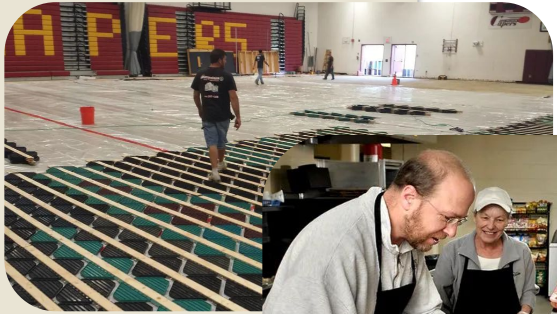
**Examples of retractable stage seating*

5. High School Investments

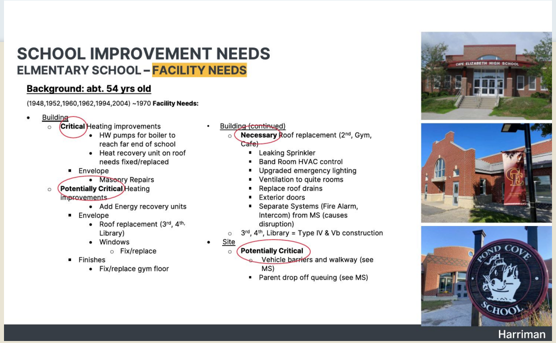
- **Full HVAC System Upgrade**
  Ensuring reliable, efficient heating, cooling, and ventilation for improved comfort and air quality.
- **Electrical System Modernization**
  Updating outdated electrical infrastructure to support current and future technology needs.
- **New Gym Floor**
  Replacing the current damaged floor with a high-quality, long-lasting surface suitable for athletics, school events, and community use.
- **Cafeteria Renovation and Upgrades**
  Enhancing kitchen and dining facilities to improve student lunch experiences and operational efficiency.
- **Structural and Building Envelope Improvements**
  Targeted roof repairs, new windows, and weatherproofing to protect the facility and improve energy efficiency.
- **Safety and Security Enhancements**
  Modernized building access controls and other security measures to better protect students and staff.


HIGH SCHOOL REPAIRS ADDRESSED AS PART OF OVERALL CONSTRUCTION

Abatement	• Abate hazardous materials associated with scope of work
Accessibility	• Address general ADA compliance in restrooms
Building Integrity	• Roof replacement
Education / Learning Environment	• Address acoustic transfer between classrooms • Address acoustic transfer at Guidance.
Systems Integrity / Health	• Address Indoor Air Quality – mechanical replacement • Address unit ventilators in classroom with adequate ventilation
Energy Efficiency	• Provide commissioning of new HVAC systems



Addresses 100% of Critical Needs at All Three Schools


SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT NEEDS
ELMENTARY SCHOOL – FACILITY NEEDS

Background: abt. 54 yrs old

(1948,1952,1960,1962,1994,2004) ~1970 **Facility Needs:**

- Building
  - **Critical** Heating improvements
    - HW pumps for boiler to reach far end of school
    - Heat recovery unit on roof needs fixed/replaced
  - Envelope
    - Masonry Repairs
  - **Potentially Critical** Heating improvements
    - Add Energy recovery units
  - Envelope
    - Roof replacement (3rd, 4th, Library)
    - Windows
      - Fix/replace
  - Finishes
    - Fix/replace gym floor
- Building (continued)
  - **Necessary** Roof replacement (2nd, Gym, Cafe)
    - Leaking Sprinkler
    - Band Room HVAC control
    - Upgraded emergency lighting
    - Ventilation to quite rooms
    - Replace roof drains
    - Exterior doors
    - Separate Systems (Fire Alarm, Intercom) from MS (causes disruption)
  - 3rd, 4th, Library = Type IV & Vb construction
- Site
  - **Potentially Critical**
    - Vehicle barriers and walkway (see MS)
    - Parent drop off queuing (see MS)

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Full Coverage of Critical Repairs at all three schools:

- Resolves up to $11M in urgent high school repairs (roofing, HVAC, energy systems).
- Addresses up to $10M in elementary school upgrades, including infrastructure, accessibility, and modernization.

Future-Proof Facilities:

- Ensures facilities are updated to meet modern safety, environmental, and operational standards.
- Incorporates advanced systems to reduce energy consumption and operational costs long-term.

Avoiding Deferred Maintenance:

- Eliminates the need to “kick the can down the road” on essential repairs, avoiding compounding costs and disruptions.
- Prevents reliance on emergency fixes that drain resources and disrupt students' education.

Smart Bonding for Long-Term Stability:

- Uses a fiscally responsible 30-year bond to secure affordable funding with predictable tax impacts (~9% increase).
- Keeps the town on track for future investments, including a $41M elementary school project within 10 years with minimal tax impact.

Comparison to School Board’s Plan:

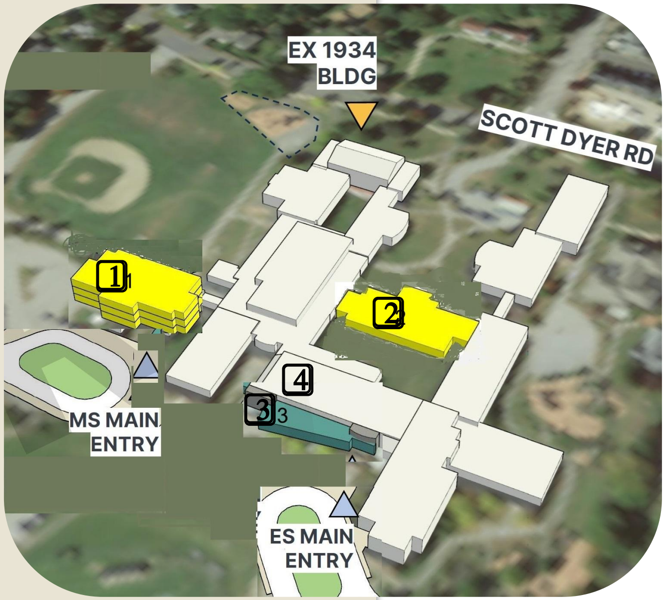
- The School Board’s plan prioritizes a single middle school project, leaving high school and elementary school critical repairs almost entirely unfunded.
- Risks costly emergency repairs and leaves students and staff to cope with aging, outdated critical systems.

Minimal Student Disruption

- The SBAC's proposed "Option B" involved two years of student disruption in portable classrooms and the school board focused heavily on this.
- This new plan only requires modular classrooms for the music and Tech Ed program.
- The updated school board proposal has permanent disruption in the form of smaller soccer fields, a smaller gym, another substandard "cafetorium" for performing arts, and a smaller cafeteria than originally recommended. We know from school visits how disruptive an undersized cafeteria is for students.

A Unified Campus for Greater Efficiency and Collaboration

- **Improved Efficiency:** Retains a consolidated campus design that reduces duplicated spaces and optimizes resource use.
- **Avoids Inefficiencies:** Prevents logistical and operational challenges caused by separating the elementary and middle schools.
- **Maximizes Green Space:** Preserves and enhances outdoor areas, providing room for future outdoor area growth and recreational opportunities.
- **Future-Ready Design:** Paves way for new school facilities for the majority of both the elementary and middle schools over the next 10 years. Demolish the oldest parts of MS after project is completed.
- **Community Cohesion:** Encourages collaboration and interaction between schools, students, and the broader community.



Phase 2: A New 3rd & 4th Grade Wing (10 Years from Now)

A smart, phased investment plan that delivers the best schools for generations—without undue financial strain on taxpayers

A New 3rd & 4th Grade Wing

✅ **Replaces the aging 3rd & 4th grade wing** with a **modern, 2-story addition**
✅ **Designed to connect to the heart of campus**, improving efficiency
✅ Provides **state-of-the-art learning spaces**, STEM classrooms, and sped areas
✅ Future-ready layout **ensures another 60+ years of educational excellence**

Removing Old 7th & 8th Grade Wings & Expanding Outdoor Space

✅ **Eliminates outdated, inefficient classroom wings**, repurposing space for community use
✅ **Returns valuable outdoor areas** for recreation, sports, and future expansion
✅ **Creates a more compact, walkable campus**, reducing sprawl and maintenance

Smart Bonding = Future Tax Impact Under 3%

💰 **Why This Works Financially:**
✅ Uses **debt consolidation** and **smart 30-year bonding** to keep tax impact minimal
✅ The **previously issued bonds (from Phase 1)** will be partially **paid down**, allowing for **low-cost refinancing**
✅ Ensures **predictable, stable school funding** while keeping household taxes low

Building New Schools: A Fiscally Responsible Phased Plan

- Ten years out, in 2036, target elementary school to replace existing space with a **40,000 square foot, two-story building**, connected at the heart of the consolidated campus footprint. Cost estimate: $41.7 million in 2036 based on 4% inflation per year.

- Refinance 30-year bonds at the 10th year, rolling remaining principal into new 30-year bonds

- Refinancing frees up revenue to finance $15 million of additional debt with ZERO tax increase in 2036.

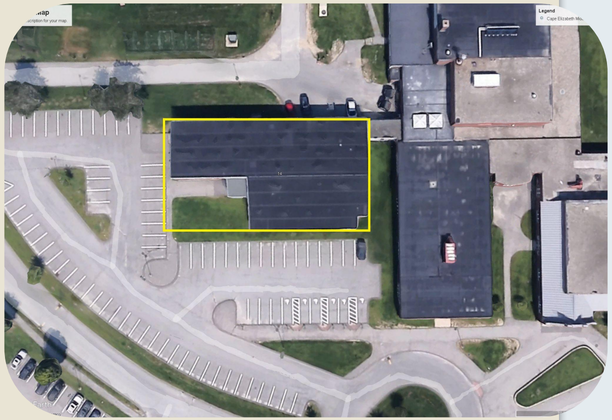
- Finance the remaining $26.7 million with **just a 2.5% tax increase ten years from now.** Assumes .5% growth in taxable property, 4% growth in town budget, 4% growth in construction cost

- Repeat in year 20 for the High School!

Appendix: Compact Footprint for New Middle School Wing

- **Total Size:** 36,000 sq. ft. (12,000 sq. ft. per floor)
- **New Construction:** Three-story addition replaces the outdated sections of the MS
- **Classroom Breakdown:**

  - **8 classrooms per grade (6th, 7th, and 8th) = 24,000 sq. ft.**
  - **Remaining space (~12,000 sq. ft.) for administration and special programming**



Key Benefits of Vertical Expansion:

✅ **Minimizes land use** – The new addition **displaces very little existing space**, preserving open areas

✅ **Strategic campus integration** – Located efficiently to improve student flow and connectivity

✅ **Minimal impact on parking** – Spaces lost from the new entrance drop-off loop can be **relocated to the current middle school loop area**

✅ **Modernized learning spaces** – Built for **flexible, 21st-century education needs**

About Us

Larry Benoit, a third-generation Cape Elizabeth resident, has a deep background in public service and political strategy. He served as Chief Field Representative for U.S. Senator George Mitchell, Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative John Baldacci, and later as Sergeant at Arms of the U.S. Senate, overseeing a $105 million budget and 800 employees. At Bernstein Shur, he established a public policy practice, advising clients on government affairs and regulatory issues. His wife, Mary Benoit, taught in Cape Elizabeth schools for over 35 years, reinforcing his long-standing commitment to public education.

As a community volunteer on the School Building Advisory Committee (SBAC), Larry contributed over 300 hours evaluating school infrastructure needs. He remains dedicated to ensuring Cape Elizabeth schools are well-supported and positioned for the future.

Michael Hussey is a technology entrepreneur and three-time founder, successfully exiting his first two companies before launching StatSocial, a leader in social media analytics and audience insights. He also created RateMyProfessors.com, a widely used platform in higher education. Raised in a public school family, Michael's mother taught public school art for 35 years, shaping his deep appreciation for public education and community investment.

Now a father of five daughters in Cape Elizabeth schools, Michael is committed to ensuring the town makes the best possible long-term investments in its schools. As an SBAC volunteer, he contributed over 300 hours studying school infrastructure and financial impacts. He continues to advocate for solutions that prioritize students and the future of Cape Elizabeth's schools.

If You Think This Plan Is Worth Consideration...

✔ **Email the School Board and Town Council** and let them know you support this plan (or at least that they should consider alternative options than the revised middle ground):

- 📩 cesb@capeelizabethschools.org (School Board)
- 📩 cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org (Town Council)

Share this plan with your neighbors, friends, and community members and attend upcoming meetings and speak up for a better path forward.