

# REFERENDUM MARCH 2026

## PROPOSED REFERENDUM PLAN

 **SOLUTIONS**  
ARCHITECTURE  
FRANK A. MESSINEO • AIA



**Norwood Public School**

*"Strong School, Strong Community!"*



# » THE REFERENDUM GOALS...

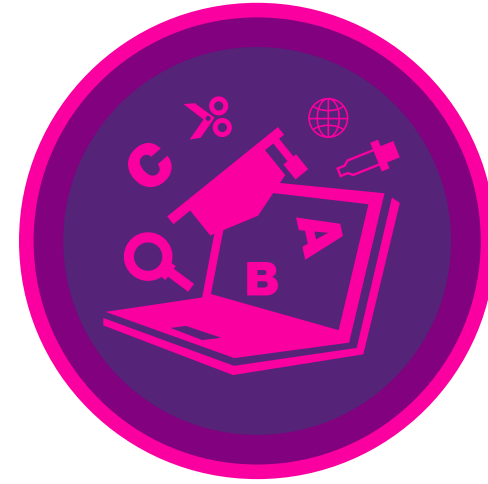
## SOLUTIONS ARCHITECTURE WAS ENGAGED TO...

- » Work with school administration and staff to **IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE** needed facility improvements.
- » **IMPROVE** the existing facility with projects that ensure safe and functional schools.
- » **IMPROVE** the student experience with projects that directly impact students.
- » Make the recommended improvements AND take advantage of **DEBT SERVICE ROLLING OFF = NET NEUTRAL TAX IMPACT** to the Community - **ZERO TAX INCREASE.**





# » REFERENDUM PRIORITIES



## ENHANCED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- » Educational Programs drive the need to update facilities.
- » The need to bring back out of district, special education placements and serve them in house.



## STUDENT & STAFF SAFETY

- » Ensure physical systems and technologies are in place to protect our students and staff.



## KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH OPERATIONS

- » Systems and infrastructure “behind the scenes.” Roofing, windows, and much more are at the core of keeping a building running. Although they go unnoticed in day to day use, it is crucial to keep these systems in good condition.



# » WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING?



The Norwood Public School District will request funding for a School Facility renovation program that includes **FACILITY UPGRADE PROJECTS: TOILET ROOMS, ROOFING SYSTEM REPLACEMENTS AND A TWO CLASSROOM MODULAR ADDITION** via a Referendum Vote on **MARCH 10th, 2026.**

**“STRONG SCHOOL, STRONG COMMUNITY”**



**FACILITIES SUPPORT LEARNING**



# » WHY NOW?



- » In spite of the 2% Tax Levy Cap, the Board of Education and Administration have successfully addressed many facility needs within the operating budget.
  - Roofing Systems Replacements - Various Sections
  - Door & Hardware Replacements
  - Mechanical Equipment Upgrades 1951 & 1994
  - Main Office and Business Office Renovations
- » We are dealing with an aging school building with the oldest sections dating back to 1952 & 1967 - with over 30 year-old roofing, windows and doors; items that have reached the end of their life expectancy.

**WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO DO MORE...**

*\*\*District cannot complete a significant amount of work out of their capital budget and still stay below the 2%.*

*\*\*Projects completed out of capital reserve are ineligible for state aid. They are paid at 100% of the cost.*



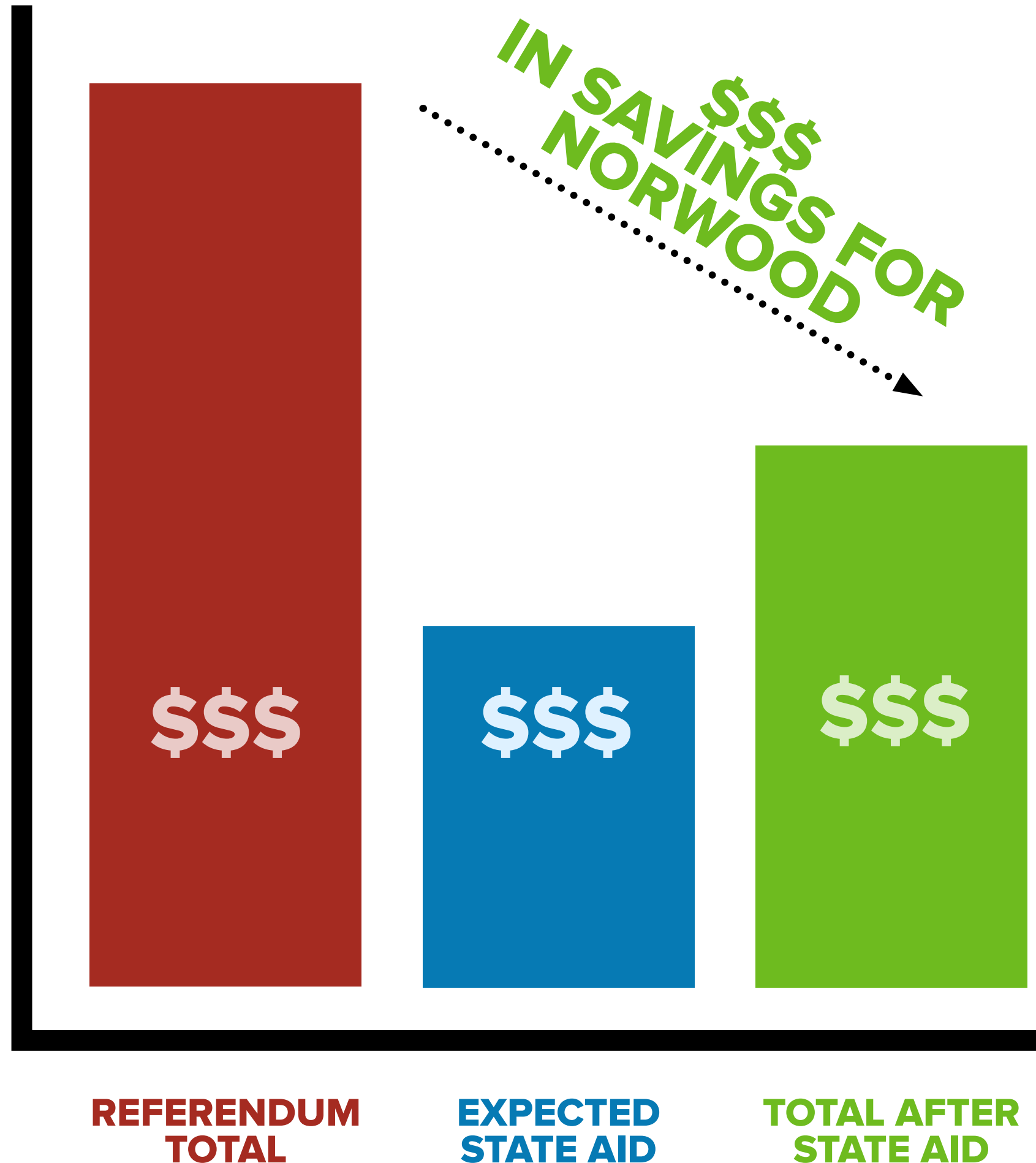
# » WHY NOW? - THE RIGHT TIME...



- » The District has **DEBT SERVICE ROLLING OFF** which could allow for significant work to be completed with a “**Net Neutral Tax Impact**” or **Zero** increase to the taxpayers.
- » Current **INTEREST RATES** have stabilized and we want to secure the lowest rate possible.
- » By allowing the School District to finance these substantial facilities improvements over many years, future families who benefit will also help pay.



# » STATE AID APPLIED FOR...



## CURRENT DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS WILL BE ENDING IN MARCH OF 2026

This can offset any new debt being assumed under a targeted March 2026 Referendum.

- » **UP TO 34% SAVINGS** on all ELIGIBLE projects  
(Could mean \$\$\$\$ in aid for Norwood Public School)
- » Must be funded through a **REFERENDUM**
- » Must be tied to **EDUCATION OR MAINTENANCE**
- » Debt Service Aid from the state helps to pay down the bond and this helps reduce the impact on the taxpayer.



# THE PROCESS



# » HOW DID WE GET HERE?



## » DECEMBER OF 2024:

The District broached the subject of a potential Referendum that would address needed projects and take advantage of retiring debt that would result in a net neutral or zero tax impact.

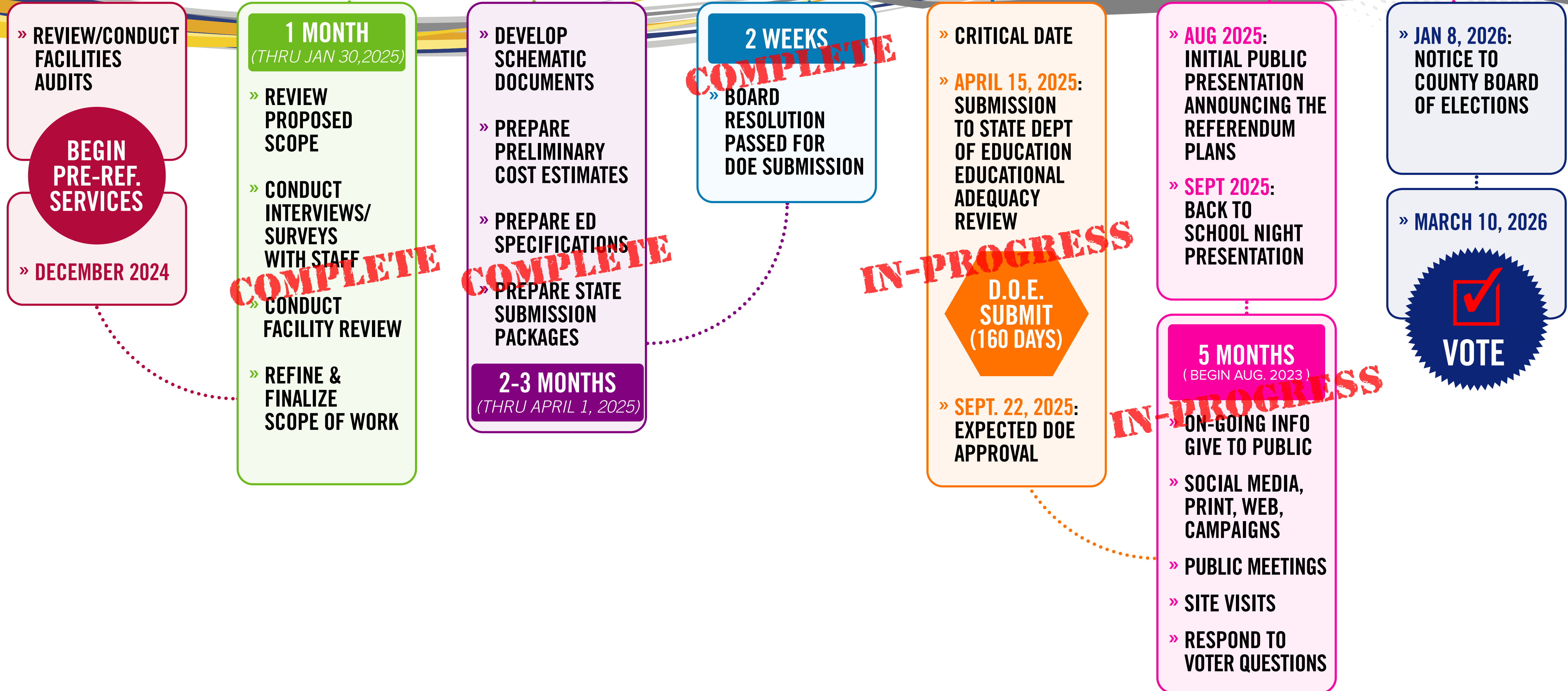
## » WINTER OF 2025

Solutions Architecture and Consultant Engineers, met with the Administration and reviewed facilities improvements to be entertained.

- Obtained District/Board approval of selected projects including an understanding of balancing costs that result in a net neutral Referendum for the Norwood Public School Community.
- Issued a Community Engagement Survey.
- We established Proposed Budget Costs for the proposed projects attempting to maximize Debt Service Aid and capitalize on the Debt Service Roll Off with ZERO TAX IMPACT.



# » PRE-REFERENDUM TIMELINE





# PROPOSED PROJECTS



# » PROJECT CATEGORIES



## Learning

ENHANCED LEARNING  
ENVIRONMENTS



## Safety

STUDENT & STAFF  
SAFETY



## Operations

KEEP UP-TO-DATE  
WITH OPERATIONS



# FACILITIES ENHANCE LEARNING



# PROJECT SCOPE - CAPITAL PROJECTS



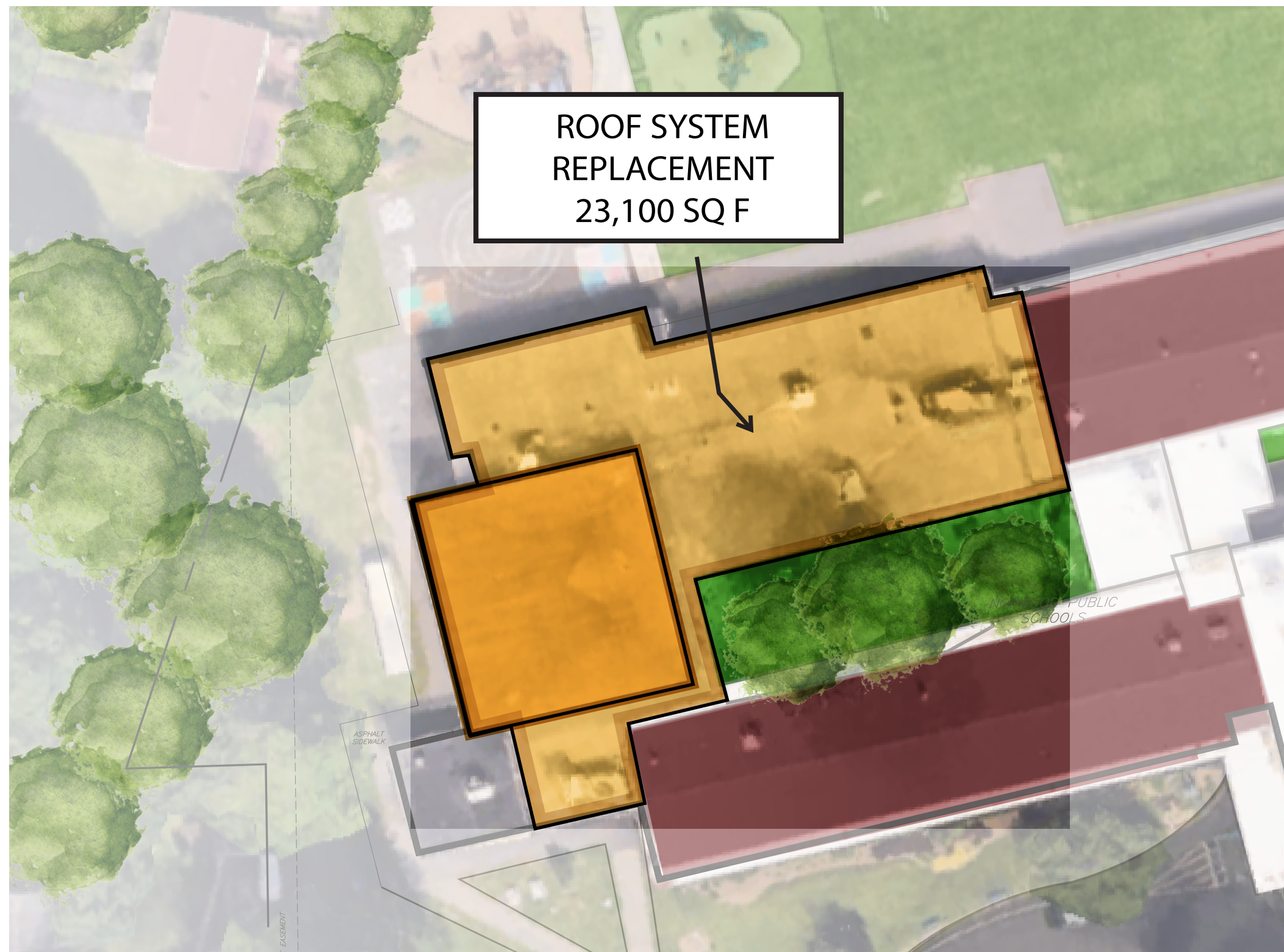
# » ROOFING SYSTEM REPLACEMENTS

SCHOOL  
REIMAGINED



## ■ WHY ROOFING SECTION REPLACEMENT?

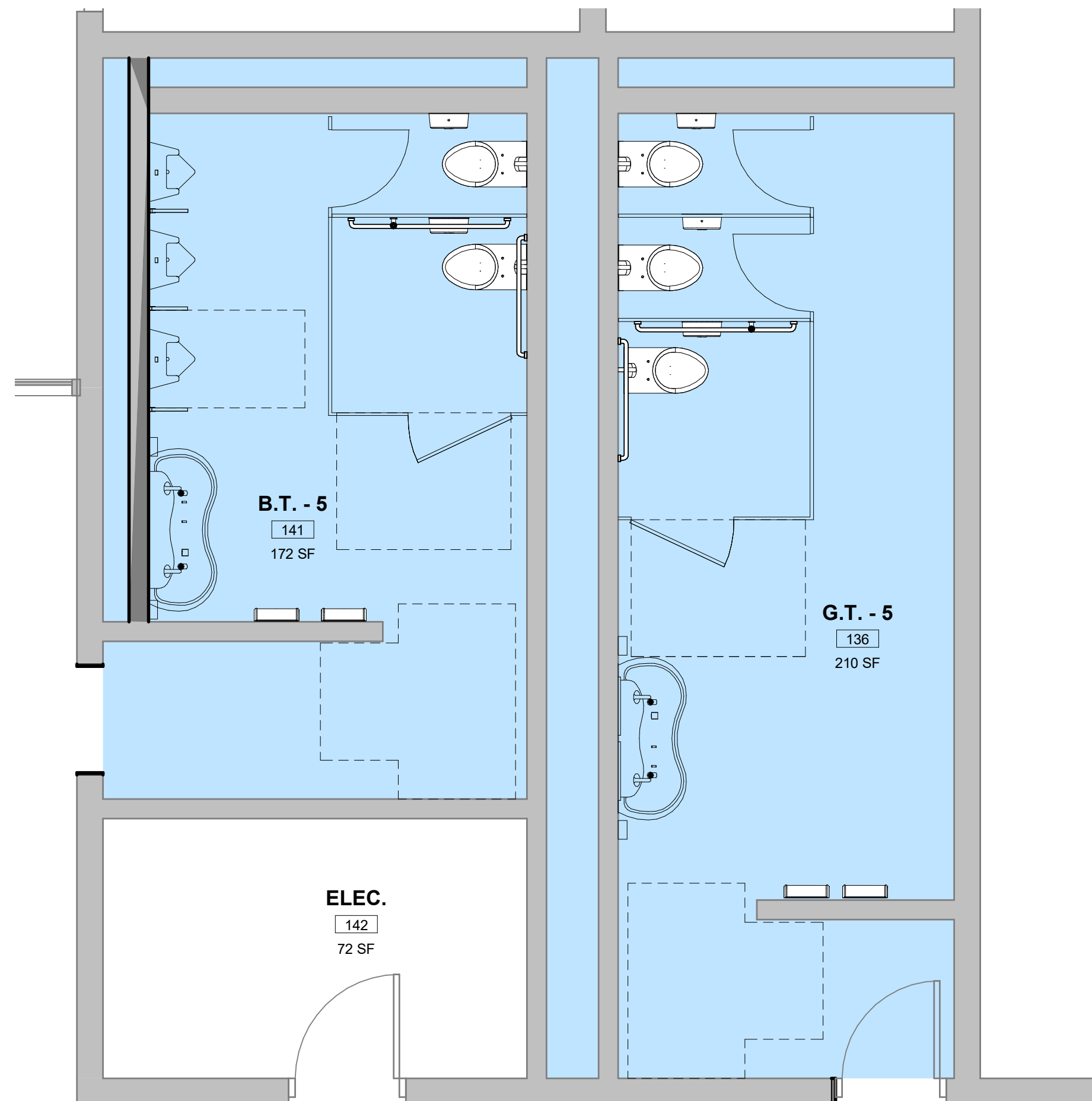
- The District is proposing to replace the aging 23,100 square foot roofing system over the 1967 section of the building, which is currently out of warranty and beyond its useful life. This roof replacement will head off failures that could result in leaks that disrupt the building's functionality and require costly ongoing maintenance.
- By upgrading these roof sections, the District will address water infiltration issues, improve energy efficiency, and upgrade the roof drainage system, ensuring long-term protection of the facility and more comfortable environment for students and staff.





# » UPGRADE EXISTING TOILETS

SCHOOL  
REIMAGINED



- WHY RENOVATE (2) EXISTING TOILET ROOMS NEAR GYM FOR PUBLIC USE?
- To expand equal access for all individuals, the District is proposing to renovate two existing general Toilet Rooms near the Gymnasium to meet current ADA accessibility standards.
- These upgrades will expand accessible facilities for students, staff, and community members with disabilities, further supporting inclusivity and reinforcing the District's commitment to upholding the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



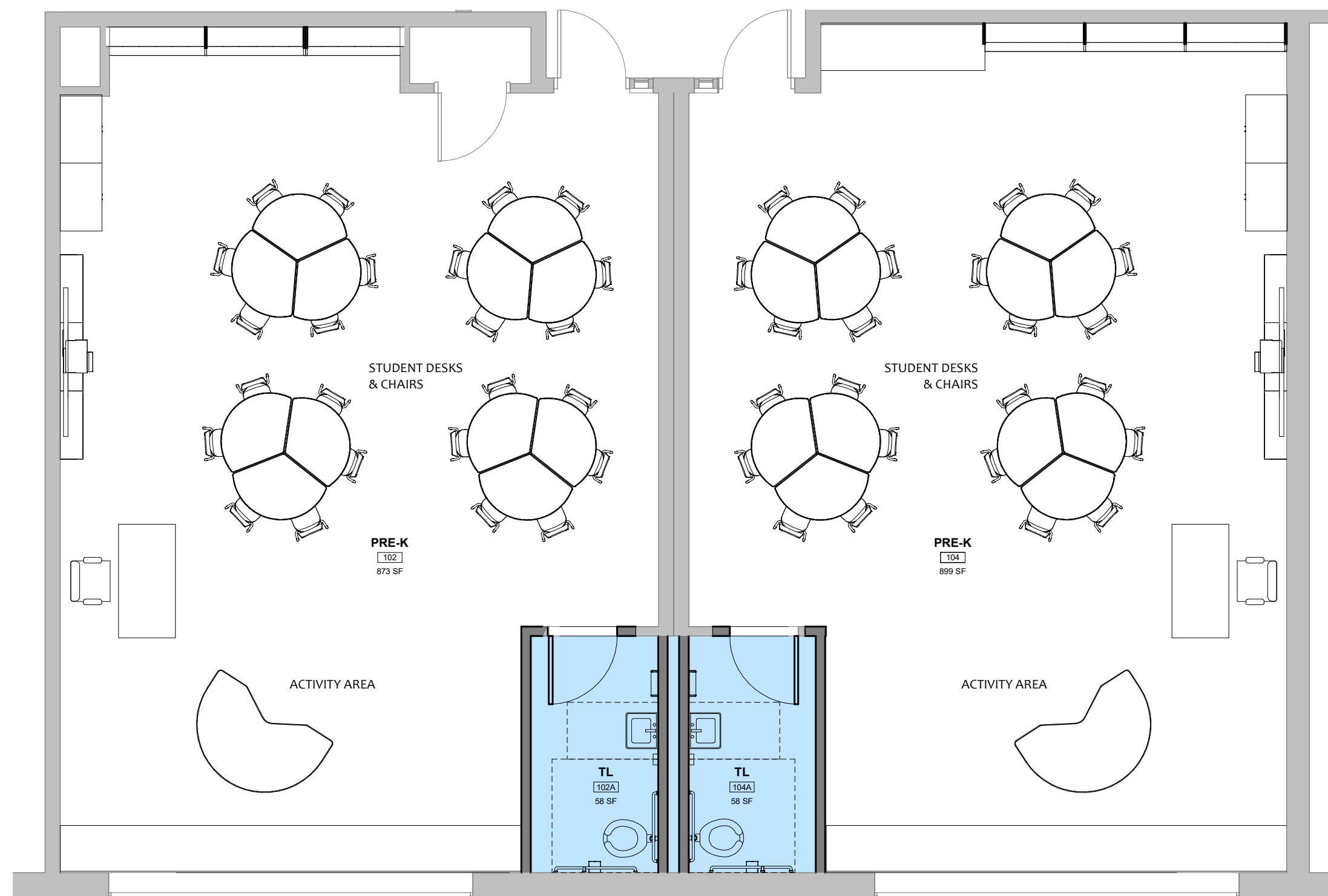
# » ADD CLASSROOM TOILETS

SCHOOL  
REIMAGINED



## ■ WHY CONSTRUCT (2) NEW CLASSROOM TOILETS FOR REASSIGNED PRE-K CLASSROOMS

- To meet state requirements for licensed Kindergarten and Pre-K classrooms, the District must reassign classrooms and construct individual toilet rooms within two rooms
- This essential upgrade enables the creation of two fully compliant Pre-K classrooms, expanding early childhood education opportunities within the District. By providing age-appropriate facilities, the project ensures a safe, accessible, and developmentally suitable environment for our youngest learners.





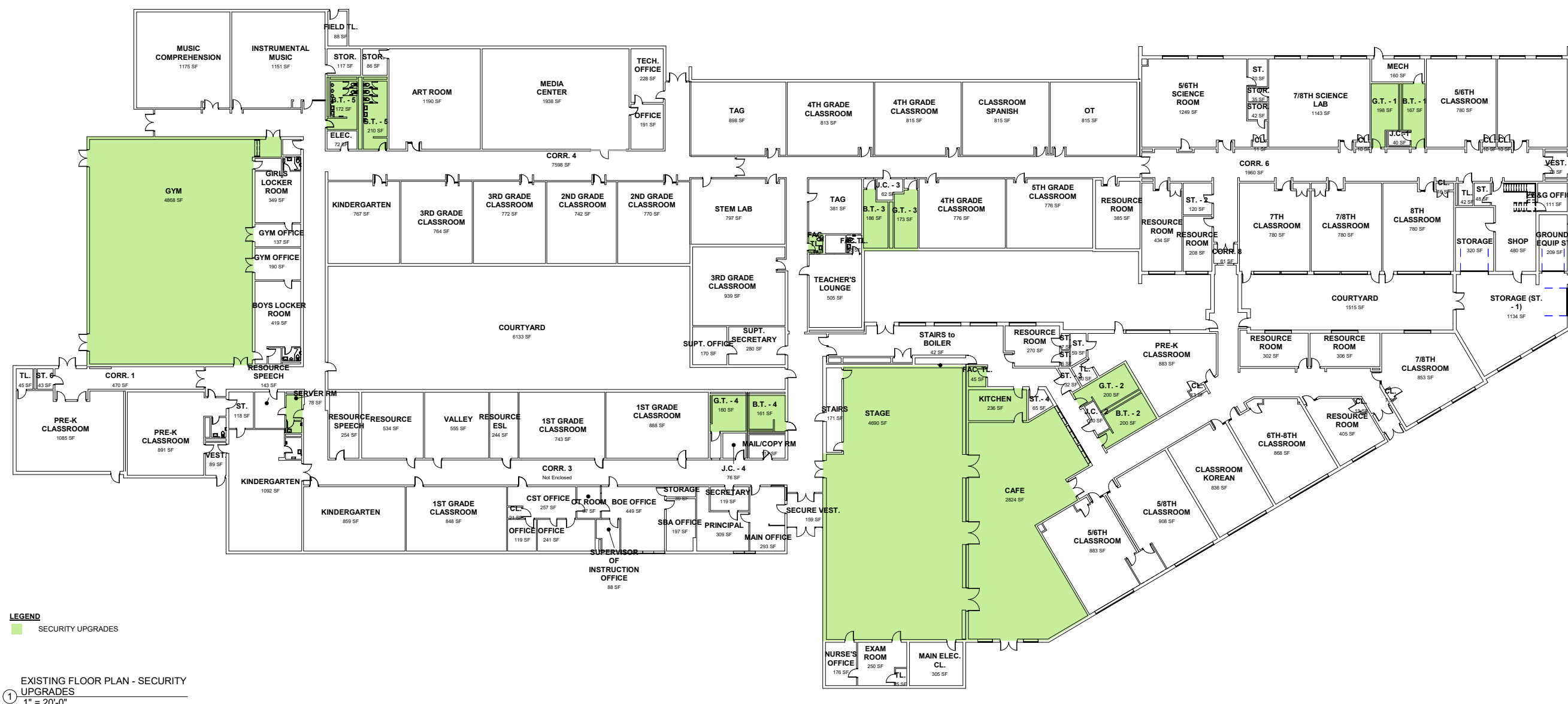
# » LOCKDOWN/ACCESS CONTROLS

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REIMAGINED



## ■ WHY PROVIDE LOCKDOWN/ACCESS CONTROLS FOR KEY SPACES IN THE BUILDING?

- To enhance the overall safety and emergency preparedness of the school facility, the District is proposing to install lockdown and access control systems for key areas of the building, including toilet rooms, the Multipurpose Room, and the Cafeteria.
- These systems will allow staff to secure and restrict access to these spaces during a critical incident, such as an active shooter event, thereby improving the District's ability to protect students, staff, and community members during emergencies.





# » ADD A FORMAL DROP OFF / PICK UP LANE ON TAPPAN ROAD

SCHOOL  
REIMAGINED



- **ADDING A SHORT-TERM DROP OFF LANE FOR PARENT DROP OFFS ON TAPPAN ROAD**
  - To improve safety, traffic flow, and delays with arrival and dismissal procedures, the District is proposing to construct a curb cut with parallel drop off spaces for parent drop off / pick up.
  - This new drop off lane will allow parents to do what they are currently doing, however in a safer manner than what is currently occurring - parking on the lawn area and walking students in. This enhances safety for students, staff, and the general public. Students will be required to walk around to the front of the building for entry.



# » CAPITAL PROJECT COSTS

## REFERENDUM CAPITAL PROJECTS - BUDGET ANALYSIS

CAPITAL / INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	ANTICIPATED DEBT SERVICE AID	FINAL COST AFTER DEBT SERVICE AID
ROOFING SYSTEM REPLACEMENT / UPGRADES	\$2,158,213.00	\$733,793.00	\$1,424,421.00
PRE-K TOILET ROOM - ADD RM 102 & 104	\$347,100.00	\$118,014.00	\$229,086.00
BOYS & GIRLS TOILET #5 ADA UPGRADES	\$408,450.00	\$138,873.00	\$269,577.00
LOCKDOWN / ACCESS CONTROL - MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, CAFETERIA, TOILETS	\$102,634.00	\$34,896.00	\$67,739.00
CONSTRUCT A CURB CUT WITH A SINGLE DROP OFF/ PICK UP LANE FOR PARENTS (APPROX. 15 CARS)	\$317,969.00	\$0.00	\$317,969.00
TOTAL PROJECTED COSTS	\$3,334,366.00	\$1,025,576.00	\$2,308,792.00



# PROJECT SCOPE -

## EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

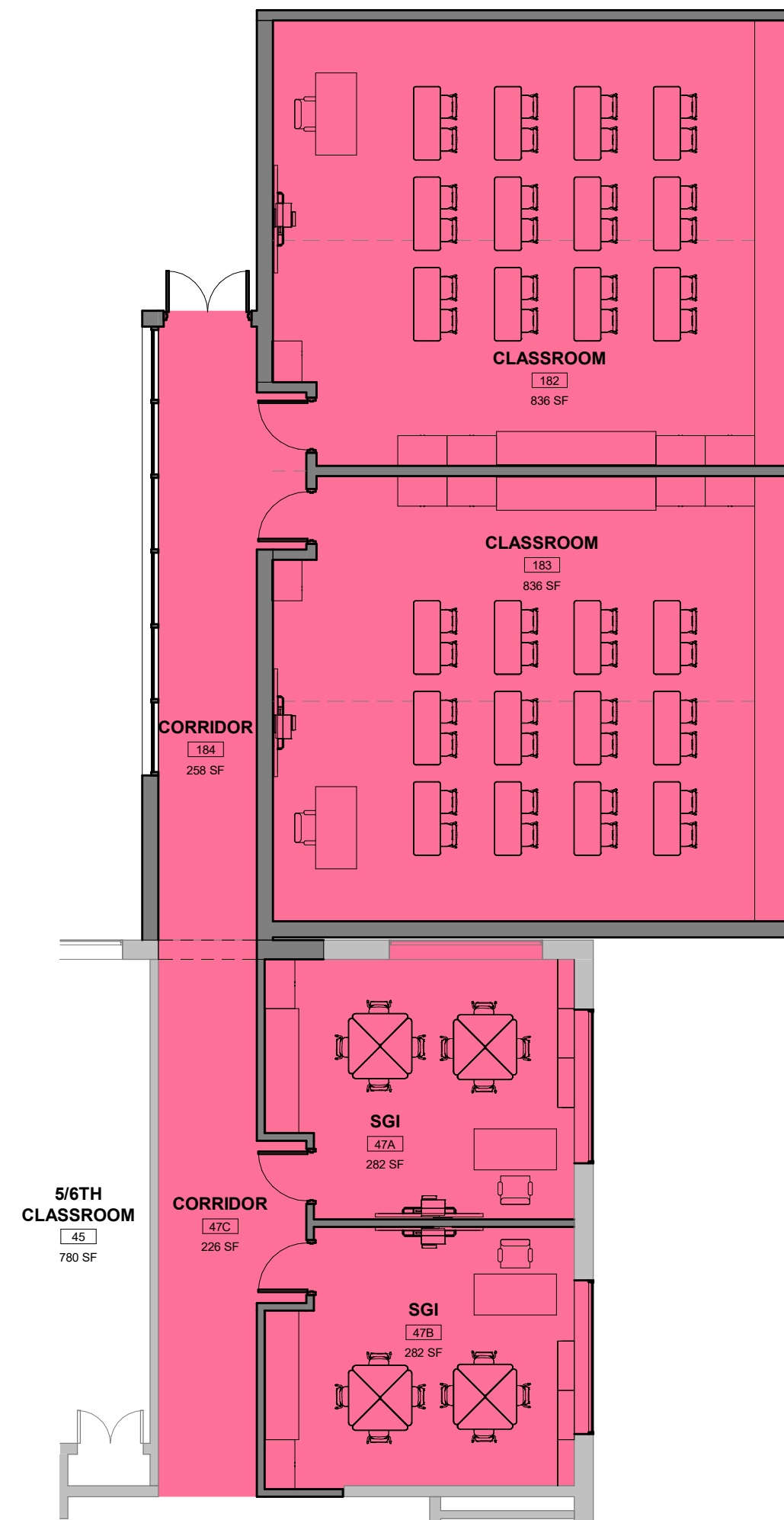
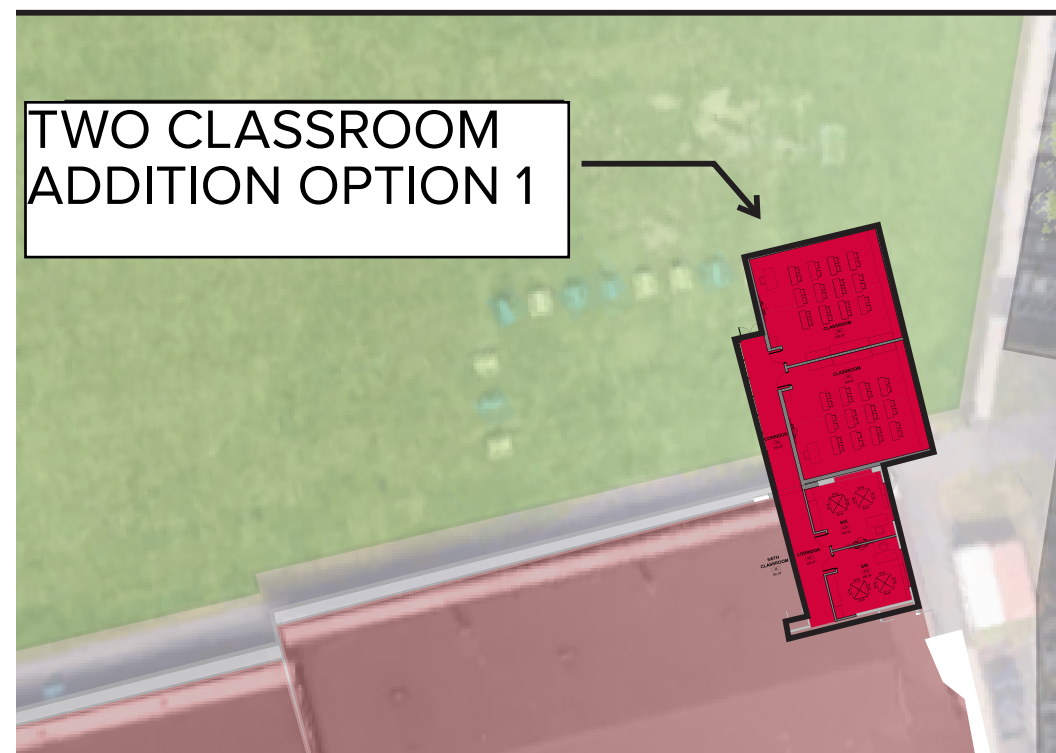
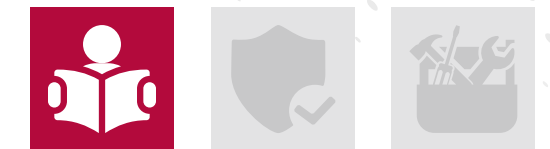


# (2) CLASSROOM ADDITION



# » WHY CONSTRUCT A MODULAR ADDITION?

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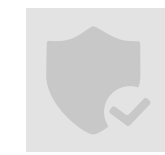


- **CONSTRUCTING A NEW (2) CLASSROOM MODULAR ADDITION - INTERIOR CORRIDOR THRU EXISTING CLASSROOM BUT ADDING TWO SGI CLASSROOMS**
- This two-classroom addition will allow the District to bring back out-of-district placements for Special Education, Least Restrictive Environment, creating a more inclusive learning environment and strengthening its educational offerings, while significantly reducing costly tuition payments to other districts.

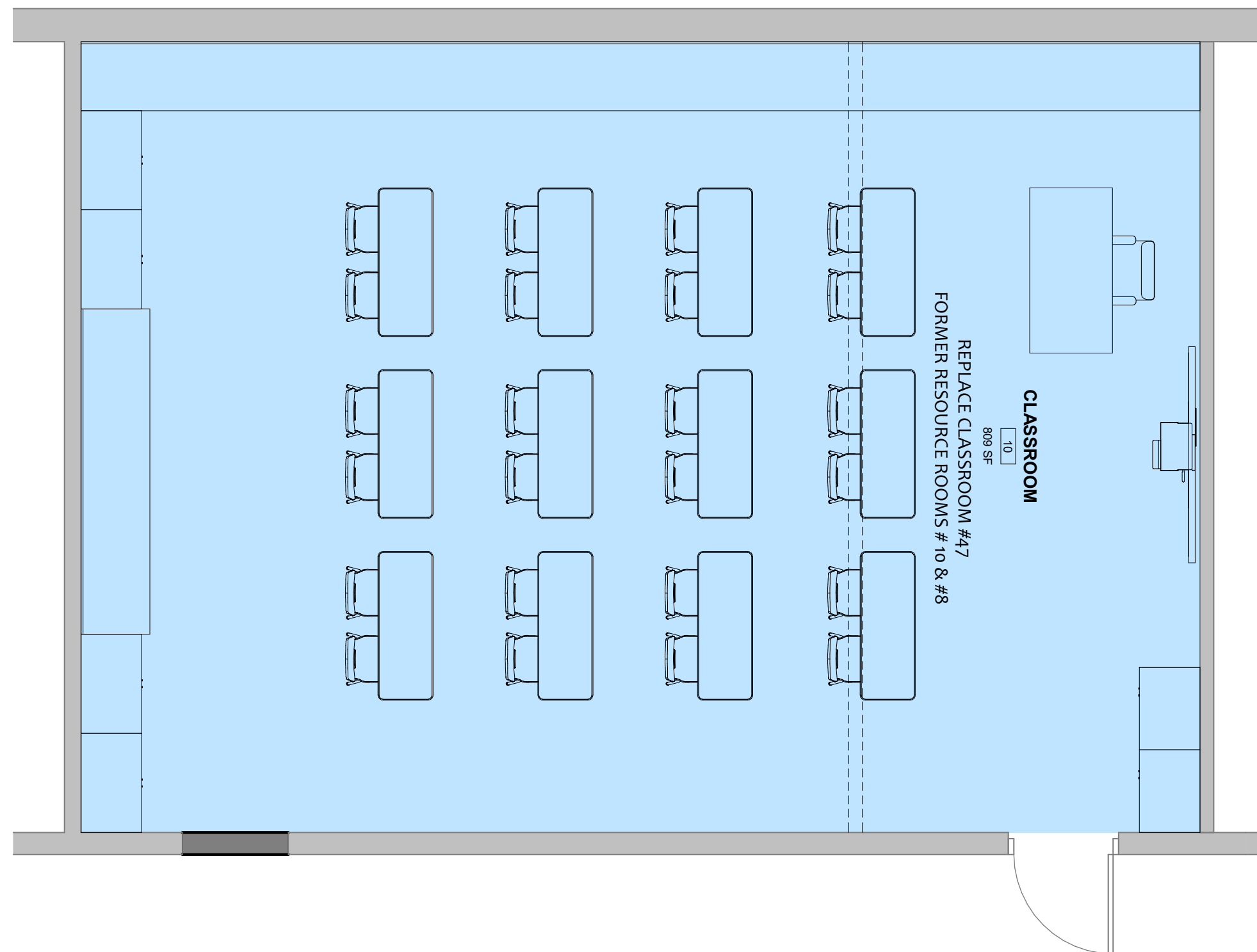


# » INTERIOR CLASSROOM RENOVATIONS

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ENLARGED FLOOR PLAN- CLASSROOM



- **CONSTRUCTING THE (2) CLASSROOM ADDITION - WILL SACRIFICE A FULL SIZE CLASSROOM**
  - The existing full sized classroom will become a corridor and (2) SGI Classrooms. We will reclaim that full sized classrooms by combining (2) existing SGI Classrooms 10 & 12 into a larger room.
  - The resulting room will be used for MD (Multiply Disabled) student instruction.



# » MODULAR APPEARANCES ...

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# » PROJECTED COSTS

## EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS - SCOPE / BUDGET ANALYSIS

(2) CLASSROOM ADDITION / INTERIOR RENOVATIONS	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	ANTICIPATED DEBT SERVICE AID	FINAL COST AFTER DEBT SERVICE AID
(2) CLASSROOM MODULAR ADDITION - INTERIOR CORRIDOR THROUGH CLASSROOM	\$ 1,406,495.00	\$0.00	\$ 1,406,495.00
INTERIOR RENOVATIONS - CR#47 TO CREATE CORRIDOR AND (2) SGI ROOMS +CR #10+#12 TO REPLACE CR#47	\$1,323,245.00	\$449,903.00	\$707,789.00
TOTAL PROJECTED COSTS	\$2,729,740.00	\$449,903.00	\$2,114,284.00

16.5% DSA



# OVERALL PROJECT COSTS

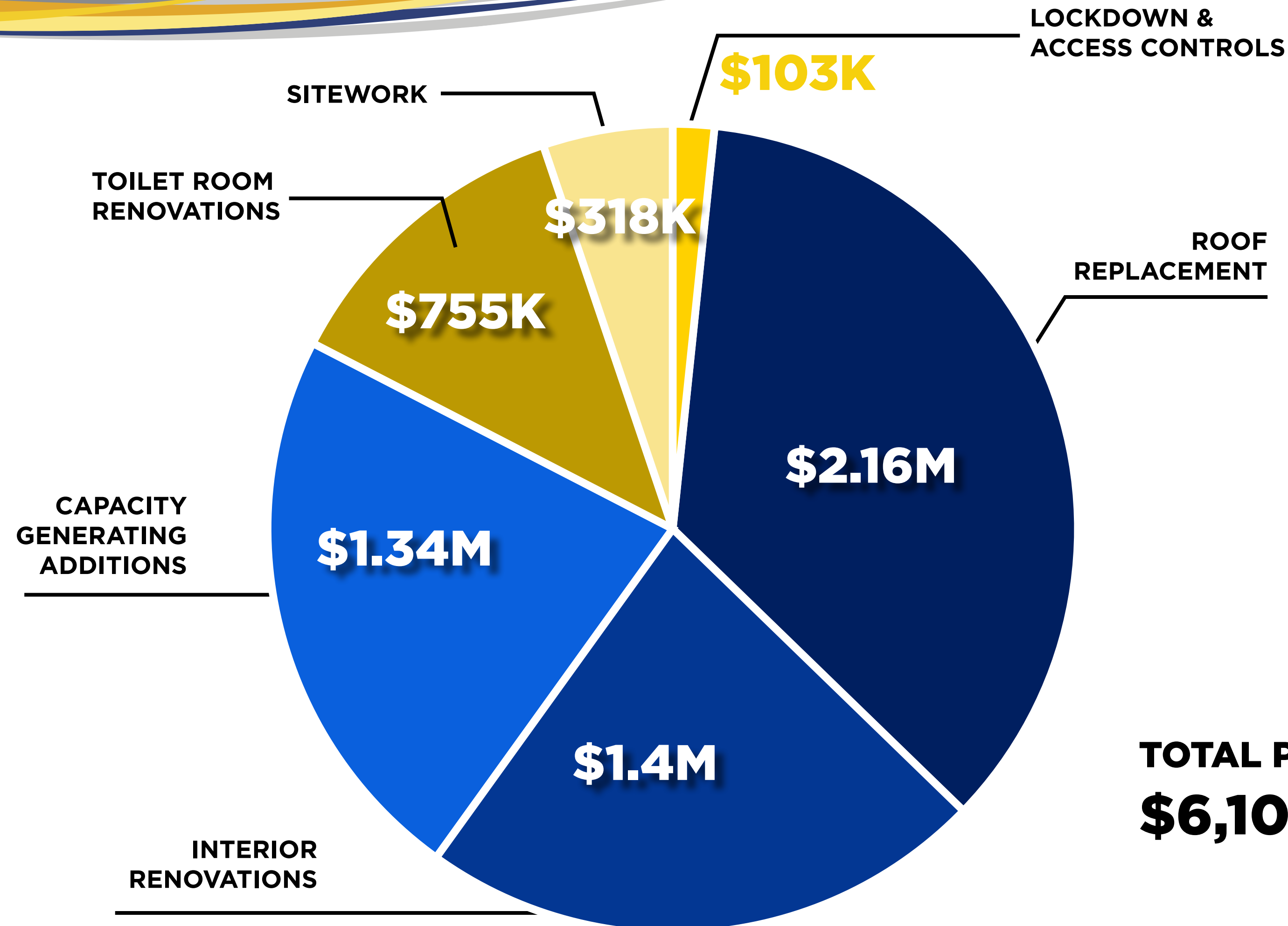


# » PROJECTED COSTS AT A GLANCE:

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TAXES WILL **NOT** GO UP  
AND DEBT SERVICE WILL  
ACTUALLY BE **REDUCED**



**TOTAL PROJECT COST =  
\$6,107,356**



# » PROJECTED COSTS - REFERENDUM

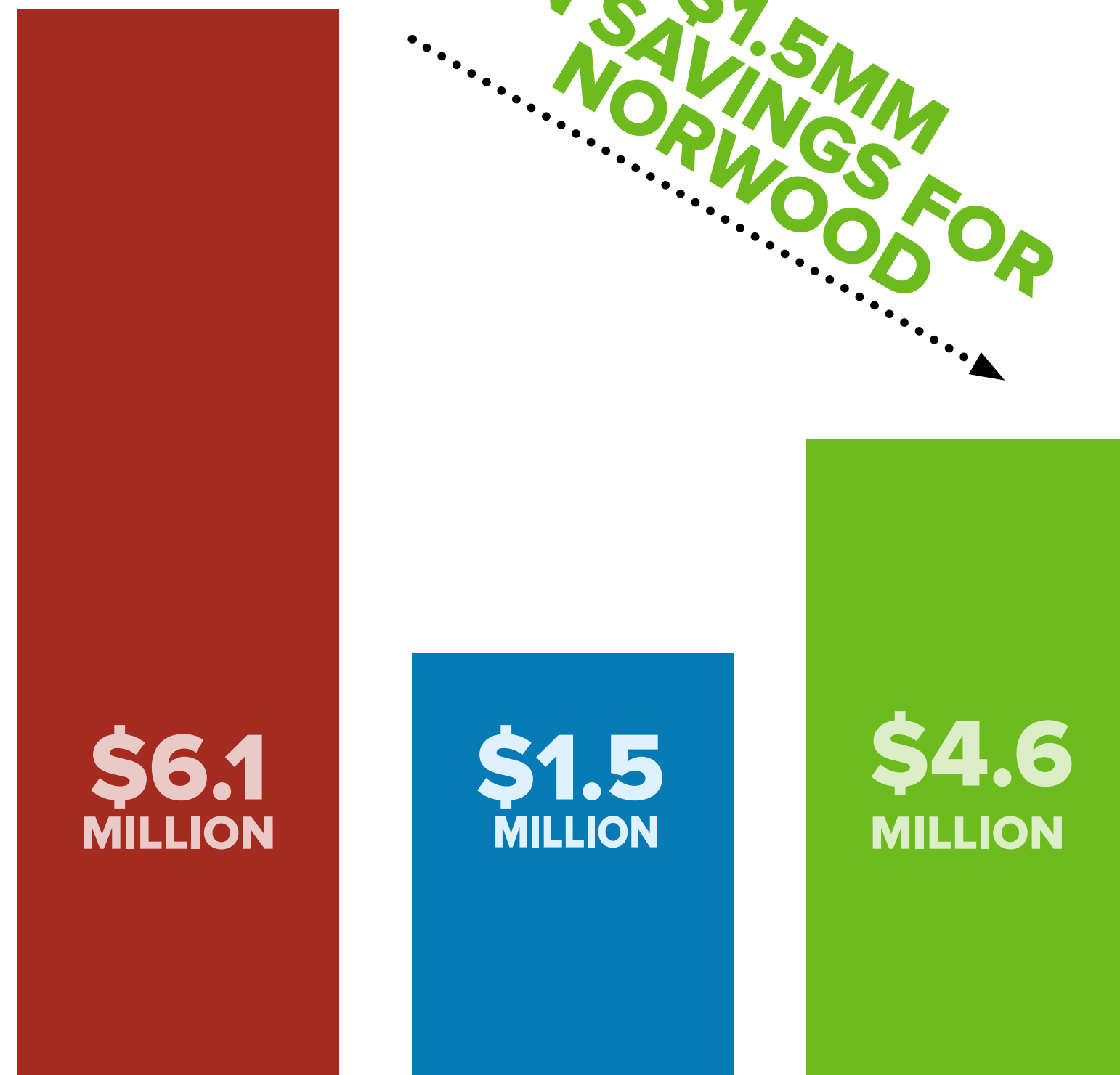
PROJECT COSTS - EDUCATIONAL + CAPITAL PROJECTS			
NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL	TOTAL EDUCATIONAL PROJECT COSTS	TOTAL CAPITAL / INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT COSTS	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS
TOTAL:  PROJECT COSTS  EDUCATIONAL + CAPITAL WORK	\$ 2,757,989.00	\$ 3,349,366.00	\$ 6,107,356.00



# » PROJECTED COSTS . . . APPROVAL PENDING

TAXES WILL **NOT** GO UP  
AND **DEBT SERVICE WILL**  
**ACTUALLY BE REDUCED**

**\$1.5MM  
IN SAVINGS FOR  
NORWOOD**



REFERENDUM  
TOTAL

ANTICIPATED  
STATE AID

TOTAL AFTER  
STATE AID

- » Project Reviews and any financial assistance are pending from the Department of Education we have requested about 24.16% in eligibility for included projects. They would be eligible because...
  - » We are funding the projects through a **REFERENDUM**
  - » They are tied to **EDUCATION OR MAINTENANCE**
- » **24.16% PROJECTED DEBT SERVICE AID** is REQUESTED for the eligible projects. (Based upon current calculations) (\$1.47MM in State Aid is pending **APPROVAL** for Norwood Public Schools).
- » Debt Service Aid from the state helps to pay down the bond and this helps reduce the impact on the taxpayer.



# » PROJECTED COSTS - THE FACTS

**TAXES WILL NOT GO UP  
AND DEBT SERVICE WILL  
ACTUALLY BE REDUCED**

- » *Current Debt Service Aid Calculations are estimated and subject to change during the DOE review process.*
- » All costs projections are based on an assumed a 4.1% interest rate over A 20 year term.
- » **The District was intent upon being fiscally responsible with this Referendum and made every effort to deliver a Net Neutral / ZERO TAX IMPACT scenario.**
- » **Ultimately, through their work with the Architect, Bond Counsel, and Financial Consultants, the Board of Education was able to include all of the needed scope and actually deliver a tax reduction to the taxpayers of Norwood.**



# ESTIMATED TAX IMPACT



# » TAX IMPACT SHOULD REFERENDUM PASS...

## ADDITION, RENOVATIONS, SITE WORK

Comprised of all Capital / Educational & Facilities Infrastructure projects including new addition, renovations and sitework.

**TAXES WILL NOT GO UP  
AND DEBT SERVICE WILL  
ACTUALLY BE REDUCED**

**TAX  
REDUCTION**  
FOR THE AVERAGE  
ASSESSED HOME  
(\$558,615)

TOTAL  
PROJECT COST:  
\$6,107,356.00  
STATE AID:  
\$1,475,479.00  
=  
\$4,631,876.00

**\$-26<sup>06</sup>  
PER YEAR**

- » The tax impacts have been calculated and result in a lower rate for debt service than currently paid.
- » Current Debt Service Aid Calculations are estimated and subject to change during the DOE review process.
- » All costs projections are based on an assumed 4.1% interest rate; costs may fluctuate slightly prior to vote.

# UNDERSTANDING DEBT SERVICE AID & FUNDING FORMULA IF REFERENDUM PASSES...

## CURRENT TAX IMPACT ROLLING OFF IN '25-'26

ON THE AVERAGE  
ASSESSED HOME:  
\$558,615

**\$171<sup>77</sup>**  
PER YEAR

## NEW TAX IMPACT RESULT

**\$145<sup>71</sup>**  
PER YEAR

## NEW DEBT SERVICE IS REDUCED

**\$-26<sup>06</sup>**  
PER YEAR

- » The 2006, 20-Year District Bond Issue will be paid off in the current 2025-2026 school year.
- » The School District has no other outstanding debt.
- » The decrease takes into consideration the current Debt Service Aid Roll-Off which offsets that Taxable impact for the Referendum.
- » Current Debt Service Aid Calculations are estimated and subject to approval by DOE.
- » Assumed interest rate is 4.1% for a 20 year term.
- » Projected Tax Impact considers the cost of the Referendum ONLY; IT DOES NOT CONSIDER OTHER POTENTIAL BOROUGH TAX INCREASES.

( IF THE COMMUNITY VOTES "YES" FOR THE CAPITAL/EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS )

**TAXES WILL NOT GO UP  
AND DEBT SERVICE WILL  
ACTUALLY BE REDUCED**





**Q: How will my taxes be impacted if I'm part of the NJ Senior Tax Freeze Program**

**A:** If you are currently participating in the NJ Senior Tax Freeze Program, your taxes will remain unaffected by this Bond Referendum.

- » If the Bond Referendum Passes - your taxes remain the same.
- » If the Bond Referendum Fails - your taxes remain the same.

**TAXES WILL NOT GO UP  
AND DEBT SERVICE WILL  
ACTUALLY BE REDUCED**



# » TAX IMPACT CALCULATOR

- You can obtain the ASSESSED value of your home from the tax assessor's office or your tax documents.
- **ASSESSED value of your home is NOT THE MARKET VALUE of your home. It is NOT what you can sell your home for.**
- If your home is reassessed in the future, the additional tax related to the Referendum will not change. The tax impact is locked after the Bonds are sold.
- If you are currently participating in the NJ Senior Tax Freeze Program, your taxes will remain unaffected by this Bond Referendum.

## Estimate Tax Impact Calculator: District Referendum



NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL

*Invested in continued Excellence!*

Assessed Home Value (\$)	Average Annual Impact (\$)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>

\* The above calculation assumes a XX% interest rate on the cost of the Net Taxable Project for a XX year amortization.

\* This calculator estimates the projected average annual tax impact of the debt service over the life of the bonds needed to finance the referendum projects, based on preliminary projections.

This calculator has been provided for estimating purposes only.  
Results are subject to change based on market conditions, interest rates, approved debt service aid and other factors that cannot be predicted.

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Scan the code or Visit  
<https://solutions-arch.com/taxcalc/norwood> to  
calculate your projected  
tax impact.






# » WHAT DOES MY VOTE MEAN?

F.A.Q.

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BOND PROPOSAL	IF YOU VOTE	YOU GET
<p><b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b></p> <p><b>\$6,107,356.00</b></p> <p><b>STATE AID:</b></p> <p><b>\$1,475,479.00</b></p> <p><b>=</b></p> <p><b>\$4,631,876.00</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>\$6.1 Million Dollars of Educational &amp; Capital Projects, Site Upgrades, Classroom Additions and Renovations at Norwood Public School as described herein, less \$1.48MM in pending State Aid.</b></p> <div><div><p>Learning</p></div><div><p>Safety</p></div><div><p>Operations</p></div></div>
	<p><b>NO</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>EXISTING FACILITY REMAINS AS IT IS...</b></p> <p><b>NO UPGRADES</b> will be made and the District will continue to make operational upgrades out of the capital budget.</p> <p><i>(and without any state funding, in this case \$1.48MM )</i></p>



# FACTS + F.A.Q.'s

## Frequently Asked Questions



# » SOME FACTS...



- » There have been significant increases in the construction industry due to material cost increases, shipping increases, material shortages, and expanded schedules – **we still need to work within the original budget numbers and will need to adjust accordingly.**
- » The designs shown within this presentation are conceptual only. We are simply providing an “idea” of what these spaces can look like at this time.
- » If and when the referendum passes, we will be conducting numerous meetings with the staff and administration to work on the detailed design of all of the individual spaces. Looking at needs, finishes, furniture, and overall “feel” of these rooms.



# » CAN MORE BE SPENT? | F.A.Q.



**Q:** Can more money be spent than the amount approved in the question?

**A:** No. The Cost of the Referendum Projects cannot exceed the amount approved by the voters. The amount approved by the voters includes a reasonable budget under which to complete the work as well as required contingencies to address unforeseen conditions and construction issues.





**Q:** What will happen to the children before, during and after construction work?

**A:** Safety, Security and superior education are just three of the variables we take into consideration when planning District operations. In most cases, construction and renovations will be scheduled to be completed during the summer months or at other times when students are not in the schools. When school is in session, students will be separated from work at all times, this way, students can attend classes with minimal disruption.



# » WHY WASN'T THIS WORK DONE BEFORE? | F.A.Q.



**Q:** Why hasn't the Board of Education done any of this work over the past 20 years?

**A:** It must be noted that this Board of Education and those that came before it, use Capital & Maintenance Reserve monies to conduct repairs and upgrades on an annual basis and have done so since the last Referendum in 2006.

It should be noted, however, that because of the District's 2% cap, it is impossible to complete the amount of work necessary out of the capital account. While some work has been completed, other work has been deferred and unfortunately that work continues to build up.

It's been nearly 20 years since the last referendum and the amount of work necessary to improve programs is significant - at least through the Referendum - \$1,475,479 in state aid is available for approval.



# » POTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE



**Q:** When would the work begin and when will it be completed?

- A:**
- » The schedule for implementation of the projects will be carefully reviewed & crafted into a detailed timeline that works best for the School District.
  - » While some projects could begin construction as early as summer of 2026, given the timing of a March Referendum, we would determine our ability to strategically bid projects at appropriate times.
  - » Projects that require more time to design & develop will begin later in the 2026 year or the summers of 2027 thru 2028.
  - » Allowing for flexibility of scheduling allows us to bid at the most appropriate times resulting in the best pricing for projects.





For further information and to keep updated on the District-wide Facilities Renovation Program Referendum, please scan the QR Code to the left or visit the district website:

**[www.wearenorwood.org/page/referendum](http://www.wearenorwood.org/page/referendum)**

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