



Developing a Vision & Plan for Mansfield Public Schools & Facilities

Board of Education Meeting

September 19, 2017
Revised 2-23-18



District Management Group | Helping Schools and Students Thrive

Agenda

Superintendent's Introduction

What Were Our Objectives?

What Is Our Process?

What Is Our Vision for Our Learning Spaces?

What Is the Current State of District & It's Learning Spaces?

What Do We Need to Adjust to Achieve Our Vision?

Where Do We Go from Here?

Q & A



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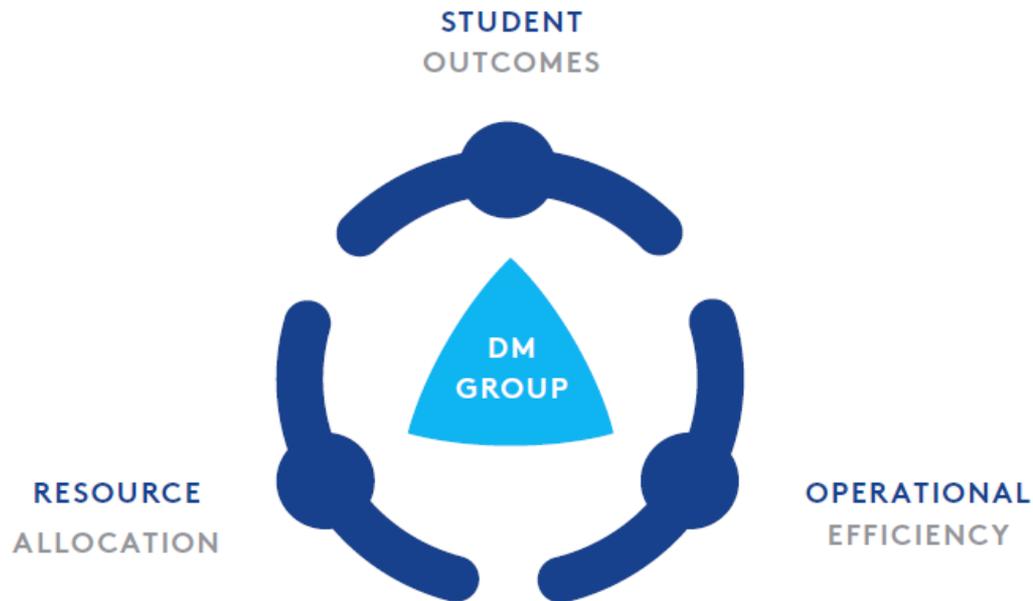


Superintendent's Introduction



The District Management Group's mission is to achieve systemic improvement in public education.

DMGroup's Mission



We believe that a district must focus on meeting all 3 of these objectives to achieve lasting results for students



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There were 4 major objectives for developing a vision and plan for Mansfield Public Schools' facilities and learning spaces.

Project Goals

- 1 Develop a detailed understanding of the district's current performance, needs, and facilities.
- 2 Develop a clear vision of long-term aspirational goals for the district's facilities and learning spaces supporting the district's strategic plan.
- 3 Communicate this vision with key stakeholders and the broader community for feedback.
- 4 Identify next steps for successful implementation of the vision and goals for the district and facilities.



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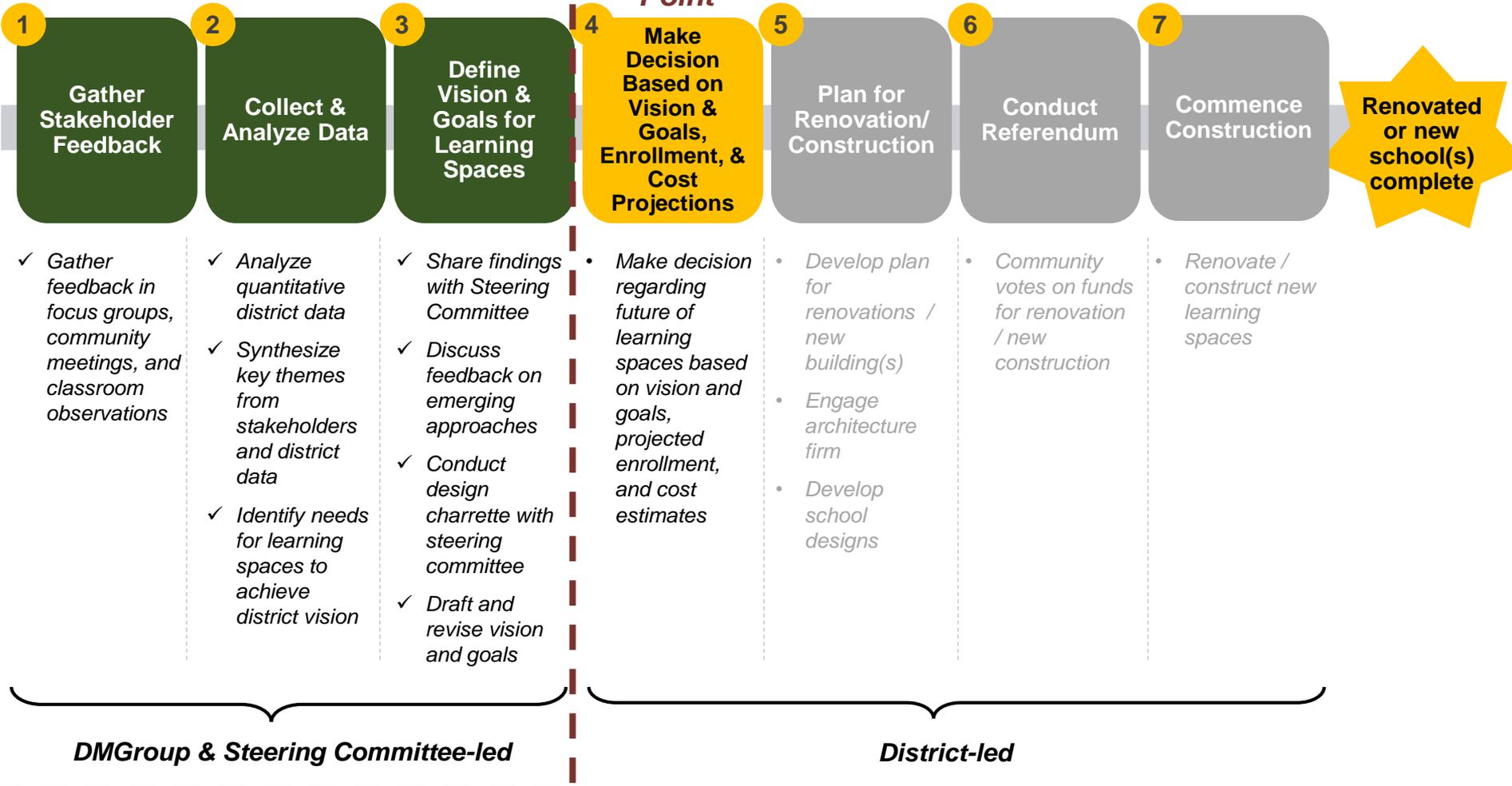


We are following a 7-step process to develop the vision and plan for the district's learning spaces; steps 1 – 3 have already been completed.

Overview of Process

Complete

Decision Point



A district and community-led steering committee analyzed district data and provided input on the draft vision and goals for the learning spaces.

Steering Committee Members

- **Joe Briody**, Community Stakeholder
- **Allen Corson**, Facilities Management Director, Mansfield Public Schools
- **Kathy Dorgan**, Community Stakeholder
- **Maggie Ferron**, Early Childhood Service Coordinator / Parent
- **Julie Hodgson**, 8th Grade Teacher- Mansfield Middle School / Parent
- **Karen LeFevre**, 1st Grade Teacher - Vinton Elementary
- **Kelly Lyman**, Superintendent, Mansfield Public Schools
- **Candace Morell**, Principal - Mansfield Middle School
- **Mike Seal**, Principal - Vinton Elementary
- **Paul Shapiro**, Mayor
- **Ravit Stein**, Parent
- **Lynn Stoddard**, Chair - Mansfield Sustainability Committee
- **Cherie Trahan**, Director of Finance, Mansfield Public Schools
- **Kathy Ward**, Chair - Mansfield Board of Education



The district has engaged with the Mansfield community at various points during this process; this engagement will continue in the fall and beyond.

Engagement Plan Overview



- **Focus groups and open community meetings** to solicit feedback on current state of learning spaces

- **2 online video communications** featuring emerging approaches to learning spaces
- **Video presentation** in library and community center
- **Social media** information sharing

- **Report** on vision and goals for learning spaces
- **Tri-fold boards and handouts**
- **Online Q & A**
- **Social media** campaign
- **Back-to-school faculty meetings**
- **Small group parent meetings**
- **Student backpack handouts**
- **Student focus groups**



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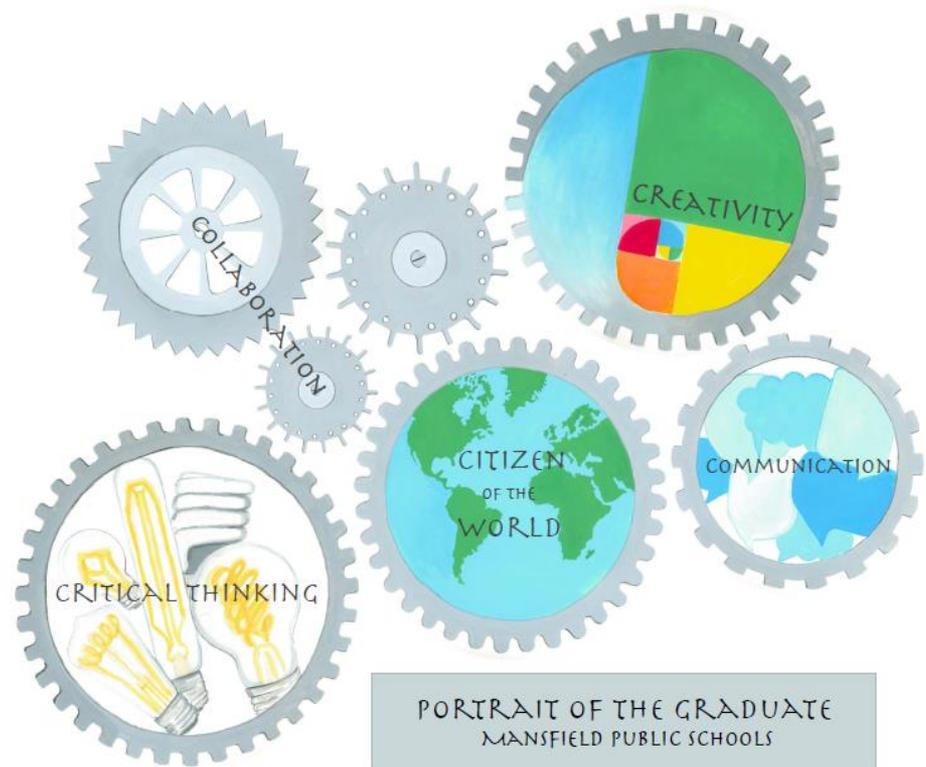


The district's vision for its learning spaces is grounded in the district's mission and goals for students, as depicted in "Portrait of the Graduate".

District Mission & Portrait of the Graduate

District Mission

It is the mission of the Mansfield Board of Education, in partnership with the Mansfield community, to ensure that all children acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes essential for personal excellence in learning, life, and work within our global community.



The Portrait of the Graduate includes the five key traits we aim to develop in all students to promote success in the 21st century.

Mansfield Public Schools’: “Portrait of the Graduate”

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD: Students recognize their role and responsibility in the larger world seeking understanding of others while demonstrating empathy and respect. They actively contribute to their community for the benefit of all.

COMMUNICATION: Students deliver coherent, organized messages through a variety of mediums tailoring their communication to the intended purpose and audience.

COLLABORATION: Students demonstrate the ability to interact within a group to set and achieve common goals.

CREATIVITY: Students exhibit originality, imagination, and inventiveness. Through the creative process, students engage in productive struggle and build resilience as they persevere to reach intended goals.

CRITICAL THINKING: Students engage in analysis, evaluation and reflection to build understanding, solve problems, and identify alternative solutions.



The vision for the learning spaces is rooted in the district mission and serves as a foundation for any future changes to the learning spaces.

Vision for Learning Spaces

Vision for Learning Spaces

Mansfield Public Schools' learning spaces will be...

Flexible, Inclusive, and Interactive

...to support the district's mission to develop

Global citizenship,

Communication,

Collaboration,

Creativity, &

Critical thinking

in **ALL** students.



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Feedback from district stakeholders and an analysis of district data revealed the district has a number of strengths to build upon.

Key Areas of Strength

- 1 Teachers and staff are talented, innovative, and dedicating to serving students well and promoting academic rigor.
- 2 Students have access to an abundance of opportunities to explore their interests and passions through courses and extracurricular activities.
- 3 At the elementary schools, some teachers have created more flexible classroom environments.
- 4 The middle school has a flexible schedule with a daily “X block” where students access personalized intervention and enrichment.
- 5 All schools have some environmentally sustainable systems and practices in place, including recycling, composting, and greenhouses.
- 6 The district is dedicated to building teacher capacity through an ongoing initiative of targeted professional development.



However, the current learning spaces also have three major limitations.

Limitations of Current Learning Spaces

1

The current learning spaces could be better equipped to prepare students for future success and support the development of the “5Cs”.

2

The current learning spaces are not environmentally sustainable.

3

The current learning spaces are not aligned with our current and future enrollment projections and fiscal reality.



In particular, the current learning spaces are not aligned with the district's fiscal reality and current and projected enrollment.

Limitations of Current Learning Spaces

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2

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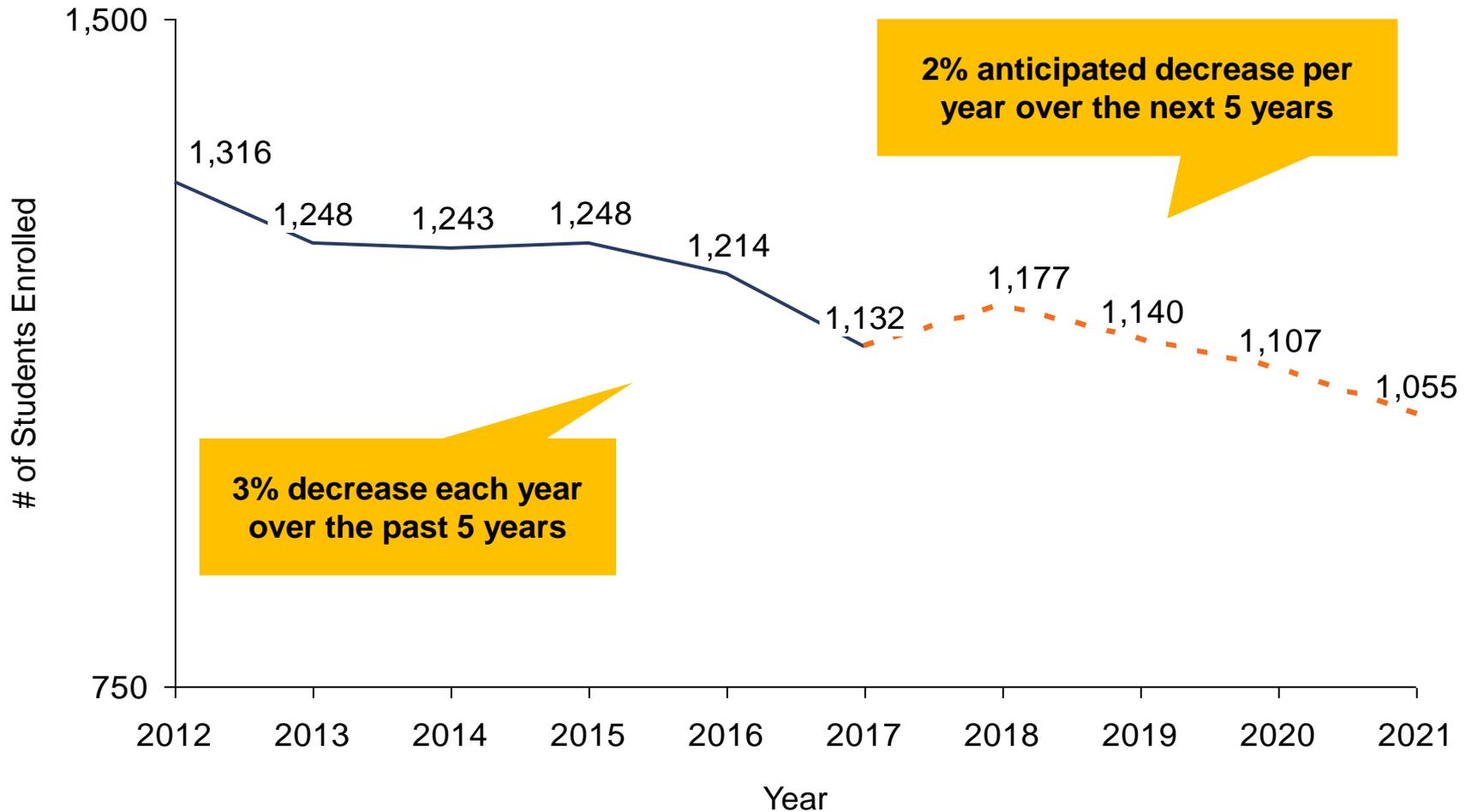
The current learning spaces are not aligned with our current and future enrollment projections and fiscal reality.



Total student enrollment has been declining by 3% annually in the last 5 years and is expected to further decrease 2% annually over the next 5 years.

Historic & Projected Student Enrollment
SY2011-12 to SY2020-21

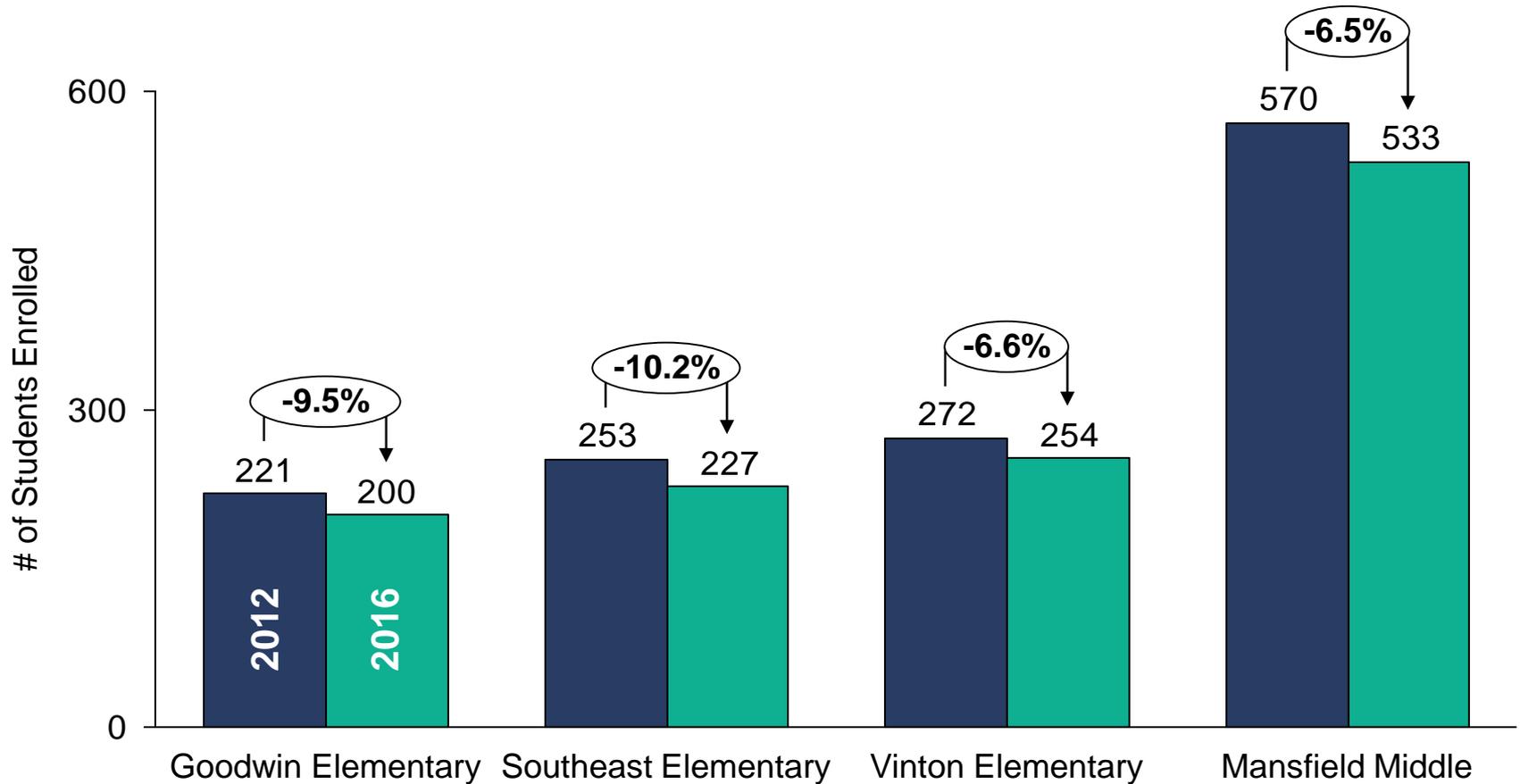
3



From SY2011-12 – SY2015-16, Goodwin and Southeast experienced a slightly larger enrollment decline than Vinton and Mansfield Middle School.

3

Historical Student Enrollment by School SY2011-12 and SY2015-16



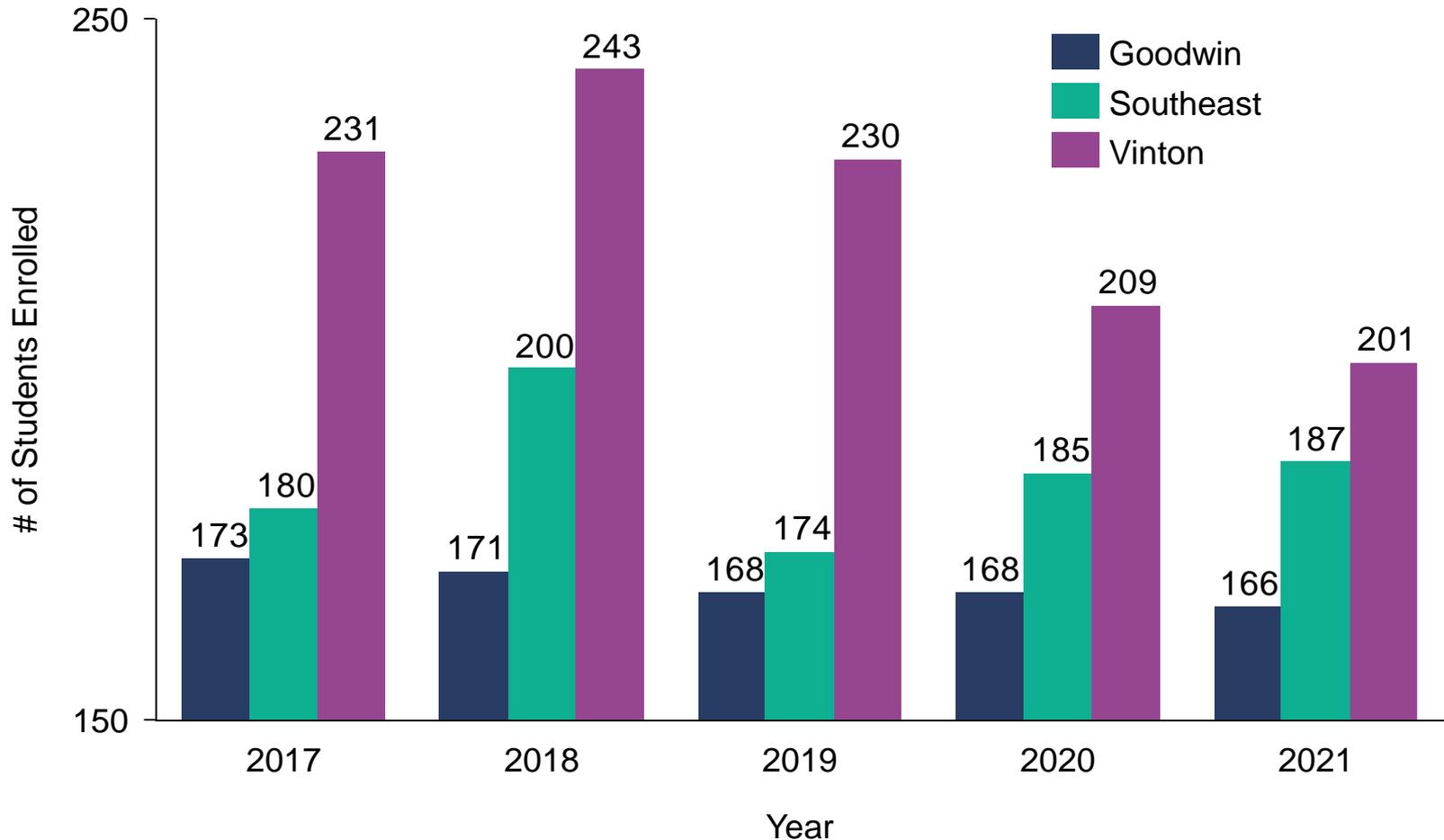
Source: Data provided by district



Overall enrollment at all three elementary schools is expected to continue to decline through SY2021-22.

Projected Student Enrollment (Elementary Schools) SY2017-18 to SY2021-22

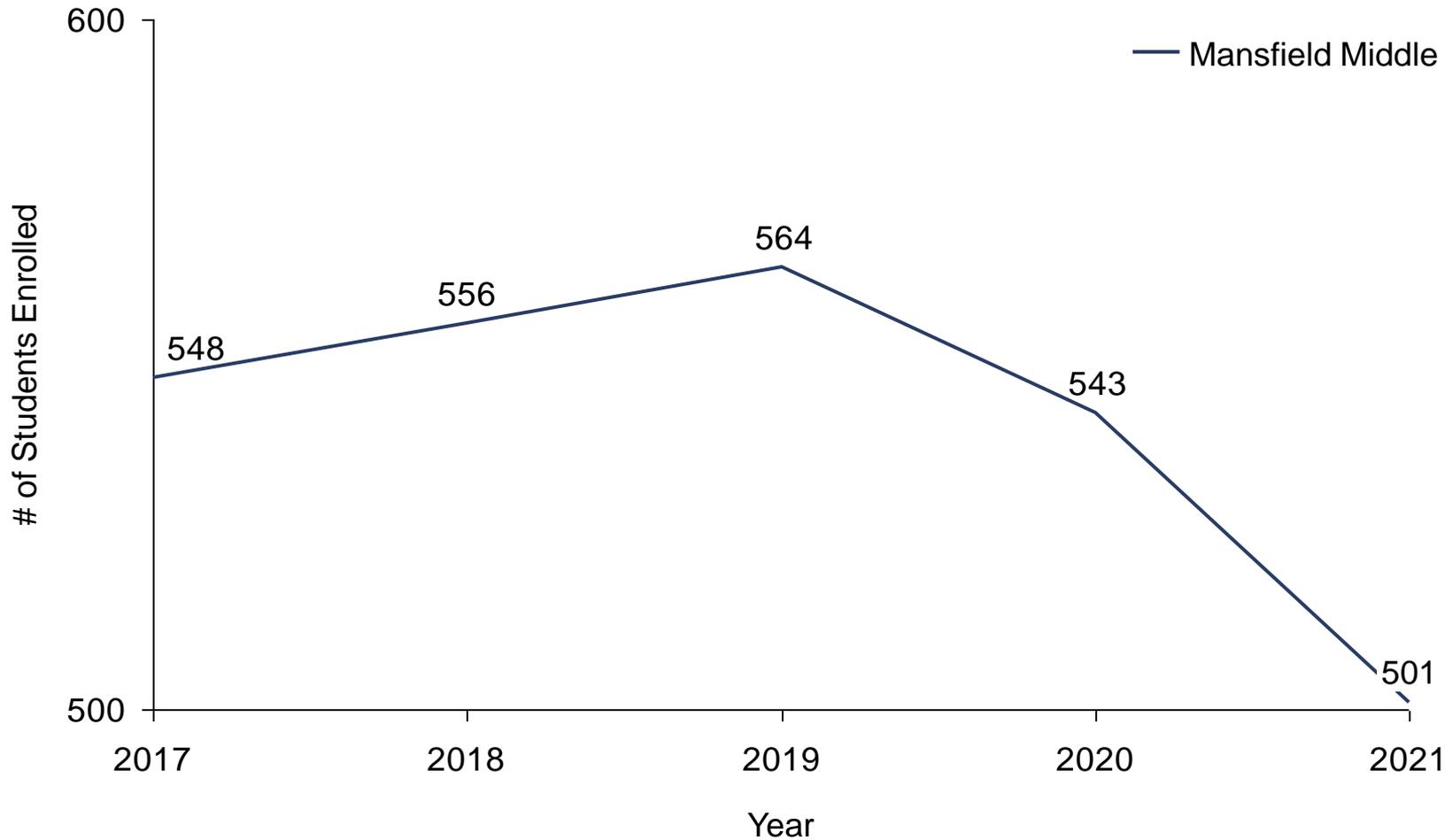
3



The overall decline in enrollment will eventually result in smaller student cohorts entering the middle school as well.

Projected Student Enrollment (Mansfield Middle)
SY2017-18 to SY2021-22

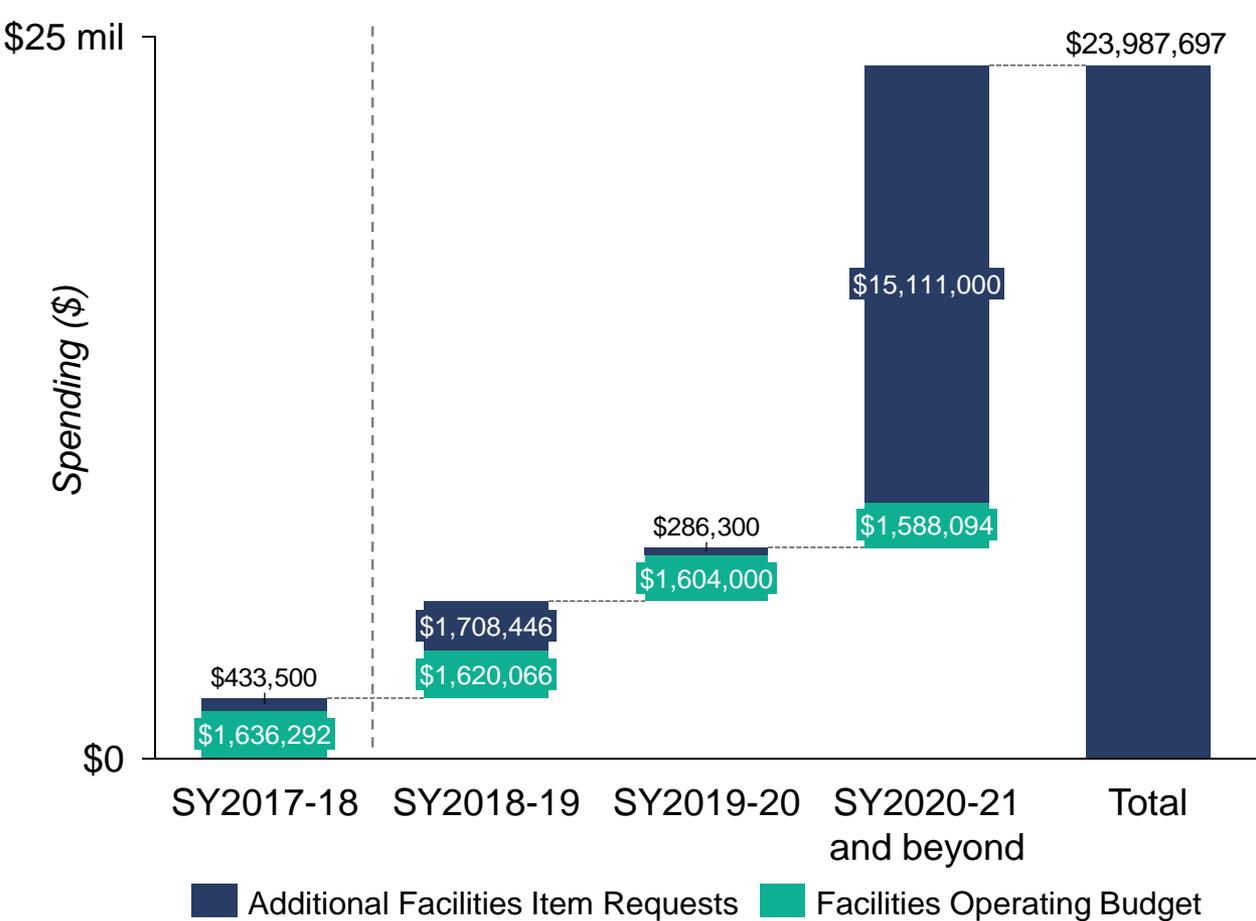
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The current facilities operating budget and additional facilities requests combined total over \$23 million for the next 4 years and beyond.

Facilities Spending: Three-Year Budget and Beyond Current Funding SY2017-18 to SY 2020-21 and beyond

3



What are some examples of the additional facilities item requests?

- 2017-18
 - Bathroom updates (Mansfield Middle)
 - Outdoor painting (Vinton)
- 2018-19
 - Roof replacement (Mansfield Middle)
 - Floor tile repair (Southeast, Goodwin)
- 2019-20
 - Electric and hot water heater replacement (Mansfield Middle)
- 2020-21 and beyond
 - Window replacement (Mansfield Middle)
 - New elevator (Mansfield Middle)
 - Sprinkler System (Mansfield Middle)
 - Air conditioning (Goodwin, Southeast, Vinton)
 - Window replacement (Goodwin, Southeast, Vinton)

Note: Projected facilities operating budget assumes a 1.0% decrease in facilities budget as occurred between SY2011-12 and SY2015-16



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These six goals will be used to guide the facilities planning process in a transparent and focused way.

Goals for Learning Spaces

We believe our learning spaces should include...

1 Common Spaces
Open, flexible common spaces that promote collaboration, teamwork, movement, and play

2 Classroom Spaces
Large, flexible classrooms that allow for project-based learning, collaboration, and movement

3 Quiet Spaces
Enclosed, soundproof spaces for individual reflection and quiet work time

4 Furniture & Seating
Multiple options for comfortable seating and standing which can be reconfigured to promote student agency in creating the environment that best meets their learning needs

5 Outdoor Spaces
Outdoor learning spaces which support the integration of the environment and academic learning

6 Accessible Resources
Accessible physical and digital resources, materials, and tools to facilitate student creativity and exploration



The district should make flexible, purposeful use of common spaces to promote collaboration, teamwork, and play.

Goal 1: Common Spaces

1

Common Spaces

Open, flexible common spaces that promote collaboration, teamwork, movement, and play

Common spaces may include:

- **Large, flexible spaces** with different configurations depending on the desired use, including:
 - Small and large group collaboration
 - Individual, quiet work time
 - Teacher planning
 - Open spaces for movement and play
- **Designed, welcoming spaces** for family and community engagement



Source: http://www.smithtracey.com.au/projects_portfolio/education/st_mary_s_primary_school_administration_buildin/



Across the country, innovative schools have begun to think differently about how classrooms can better support effective teaching and learning.

Goal 2: Classroom Spaces

2 Classroom Spaces

Large, flexible classrooms that allow for project-based learning, collaboration, and movement

Classroom spaces may include:

- More classrooms with **flexible formats** to accommodate:
 - Different student learning needs
 - Small group breakout sessions
 - Project-based learning
 - Quiet, independent work time
 - Open spaces for movement and play
- Further **integration of technology** into the classroom, combining online digital materials and face-to-face instruction



Source: <http://mrsknappsclassroom.weebly.com/blog/flexible-seating-update>

District Management Group

In addition to having large, flexible common spaces to support group collaboration, it is equally important to have designated quiet spaces.

Goal 3: Quiet Spaces

3

Quiet Spaces

Enclosed, soundproof spaces for individual reflection and quiet work time

Quiet spaces may include:

- **Designated spaces** within the school and classroom where students are able to focus on quiet, independent work, including:
 - Quiet enclosed spaces
 - Nooks
 - Partially enclosed chairs



Sources: <https://s-media-cacheak0.pinimg.com/originals/f4/7a/a8/f47aa8cbf9f6e1453ab75bce96d1da44.jpg>

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/gallery/2015/jan/08/school-libraries-world-books-gallery>



Across all our learning spaces, it is important that we provide multiple furniture options for comfortable seating and standing.

Goal 4: Furniture & Seating

4 Furniture & Seating

Multiple options for comfortable seating and standing which can be reconfigured to promote student agency in creating the environment that best meets their learning needs

Furniture & seating may include:

- **Flexible furniture** that is comfortable and promotes student agency, including:
 - Standing desks
 - Fidget chairs
 - Couches
 - Bean bag chairs
 - Whiteboard desks



Source: <https://www.k12blueprint.com/success-stories/rethinking-library-media-center>



The district is dedicated to creating learning spaces that support the integration of the environment and academic learning.

Goal 5: Outdoor Spaces

5

Outdoor Spaces

Outdoor learning spaces which support the integration of the environment and academic learning

Outdoor spaces may include:

- School-wide shared spaces that promote the **connection between academics and the environment**, particularly in STEM fields, including:
 - Outdoor classrooms
 - Community gardens and ponds
 - Greenhouses with workstations
- Designed spaces that emphasize **environmental awareness and sustainability**



Source: <http://www.letsmove.gov/blog/2012/11/19/outdoor-learning-center-kids>



To build informed, critical thinkers with strong media literacy skills, we must ensure students have regular access to tools and resources needed.

Goal 6: Accessible Resources

6 Accessible Resources

Accessible physical and digital resources, materials, and tools to facilitate student creativity and exploration

Accessible resources may include:

- **Updated libraries or media centers** in order to:
 - Open up space for small group work
 - Provide room for project-based learning
 - Increase access to digital resources (e.g., iPads or tablets)
- **Designated Makerspaces** - an open learning space where students take control of their own learning by exploring, building, and designing



Source: <http://beyondthebrochurela.com/echo-horizon-schools-magnificent-makerspace/>



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Given a number of factors, we need to be thoughtful in how we use our district resources and we may need to do some things differently.

Summary of Key Findings

- Enrollment has been declining since 2012 and is projected to continue to decline at an even greater rate through 2021.
- The current facilities' operating budget and additional facilities requests for repairs and upgrades total over \$23 million for the next 4 years and beyond.
- State revenue to towns and schools will decrease in SY2017-18 with no expectation that the funds will be restored in the future.
- Our current learning spaces could be better equipped to prepare students for future success and support the development of the "5Cs".

- 
- ***Ultimately, it will be financially unsustainable to maintain and operate three very small elementary schools and the middle school as it is now.***
 - ***Continuing to invest in maintaining our facilities as they are now, may result in needing to reduce resources in other areas or programs to students.***



There are two key high-level recommendations from this study.

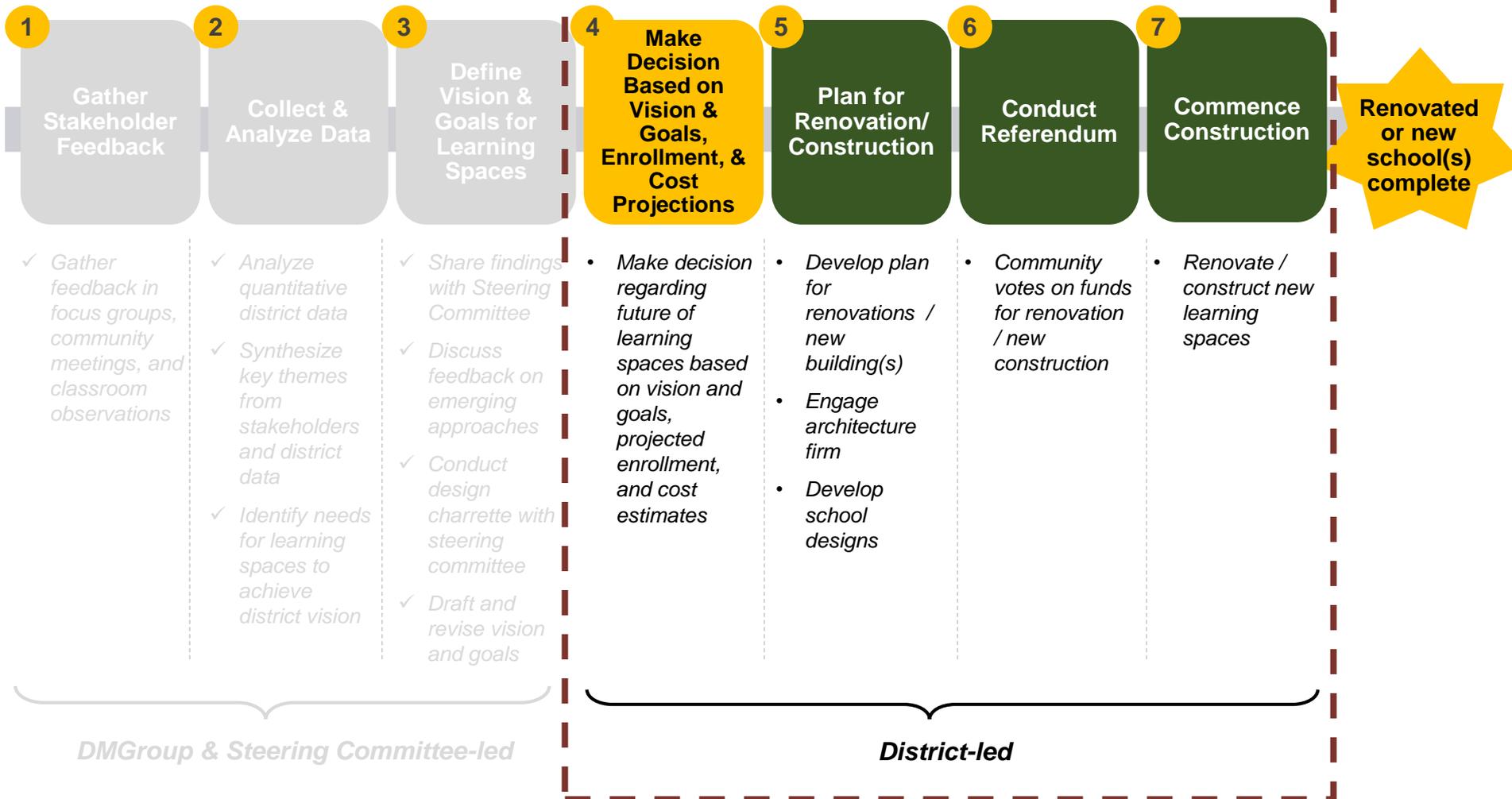
High-Level Recommendations

- ✓ Develop a plan for construction and/or renovation of our current facilities (including the 3 elementary schools and middle school) which addresses our enrollment and fiscal reality and the current limitations of the learning spaces.
- ✓ Meet the needs of all learners by ensuring any future plans for the facilities are grounded in the vision and goals for the district's learning spaces.



Our pivotal next step is to make a decision about the future of our learning spaces based on the vision and goals, enrollment, and cost projections.

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District Management Group

Helping Schools and
Students Thrive

If you have any comments or questions about the contents of this document, please contact District Management Group:

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APPENDIX



Schools and districts across the country and around the world have taken an innovative approach to designing their learning spaces.

Video Examples: Emerging Approaches to Learning Spaces

- **Saanich School District (British Columbia, Canada)** has transformed their traditional library space into an interactive, collaborative Learning Commons, with innovative changes to the physical and digital spaces, resources, and role of staff.
 - To learn more visit: https://youtu.be/7ftD_VtDsQ
- **The Yonge Development Research School (Gainesville, FL)** employs a blended learning model, combining online digital media with traditional classroom methods, to provide teachers the flexibility to define and implement online instruction that meets student needs.
 - To learn more visit: <https://youtu.be/auzwH1mK2TY>
- **Schools in Albemarle County Public Schools (Charlottesville, Virginia)** have been outfitted to include “cave spaces”, along with other more comfortable, flexible seating and furniture.
 - To learn more visit: <https://youtu.be/4cscJcRKYxA>
- **Halswell Primary School (Christchurch, New Zealand)** has moveable furniture and an open classroom format to promote student engagement and choice.
 - To learn more visit: <https://youtu.be/8lOKS8Mv-8M>
- The outdoor classroom at **Postlethwait Middle School (Wyoming, DE)** provides a cross-curricular learning space while also promoting stewardship of nature and social responsibility.
 - To learn more visit: <https://youtu.be/vnoJis1h47U>
- Students at **Lee Elementary School (Los Alamitos, CA)** learn and explore through engineering challenges in the makerspace.
 - To learn more visit: <https://youtu.be/PrdG7DbA6pA>



Student-Related Data: Enrollment & Demographics

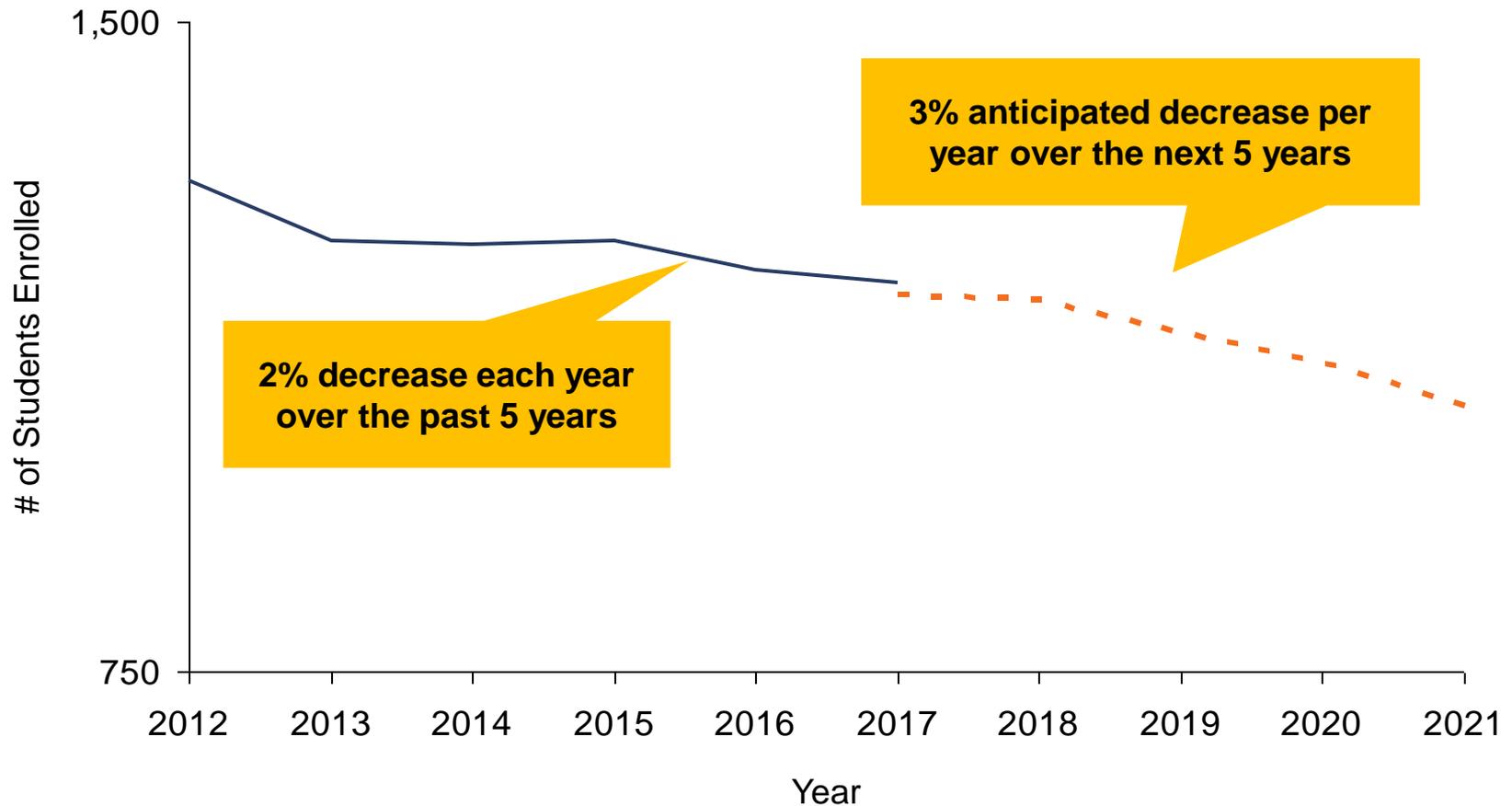


Mansfield Public Schools' student enrollment has been declining in recent years, and is expected to further decline over the next five years.

Historic & Projected Student Enrollment SY2011-12 to SY2020-21

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

1a



Source: Data provided by district

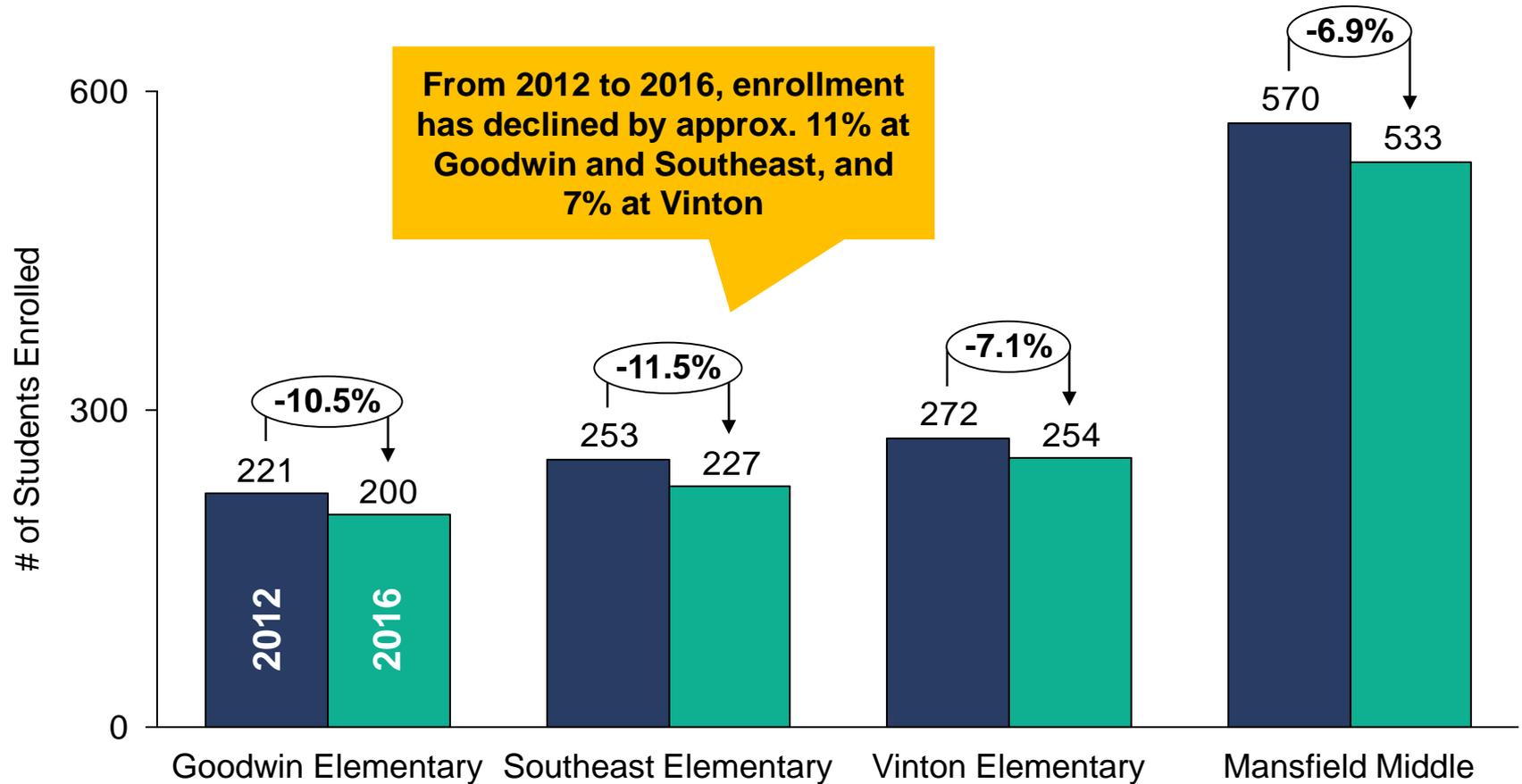


From SY2011-12 – SY2015-16, Goodwin and Southeast experienced a slightly larger enrollment decline than Vinton and Mansfield Middle School.

Historical Student Enrollment by School SY2011-12 and SY2015-16

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

1a



Source: Data provided by district

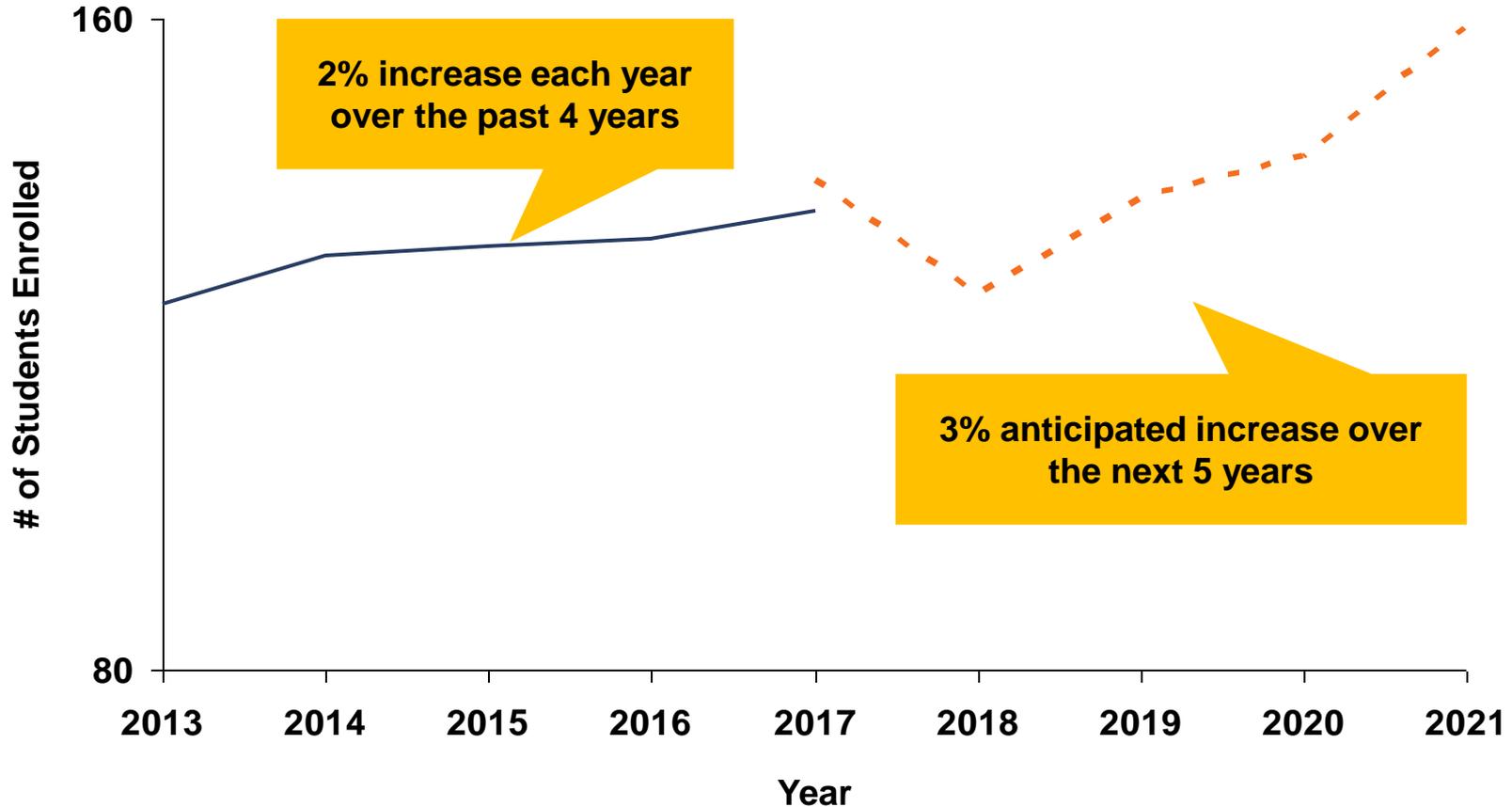


Placement rates for Mansfield students to EO Smith High School have increased and are projected to further increase over the next 5 few years.

Historic & Projected Student Enrollment (EO Smith) SY2012-13 to SY2020-21

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

1a



Note: Projected enrollment to EO Smith is based on current cohort grade size provided by the district.

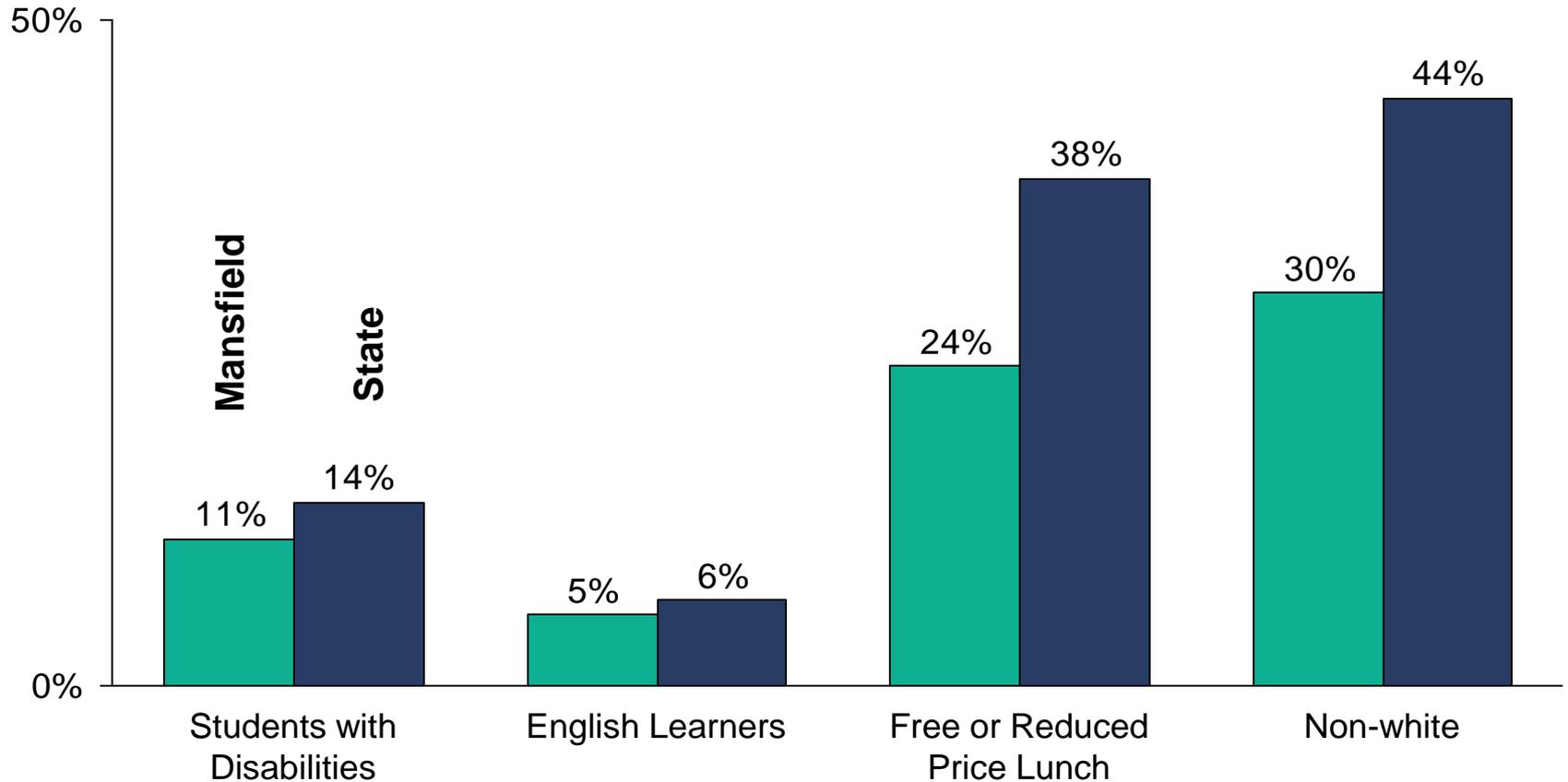


The percentage of Mansfield Public Schools students in certain subgroups is lower than the state average.

Percentage of Students by Subgroup SY2014-15

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

1a



Source: Connecticut State Department of Education



Student-Related Data: Academic Performance

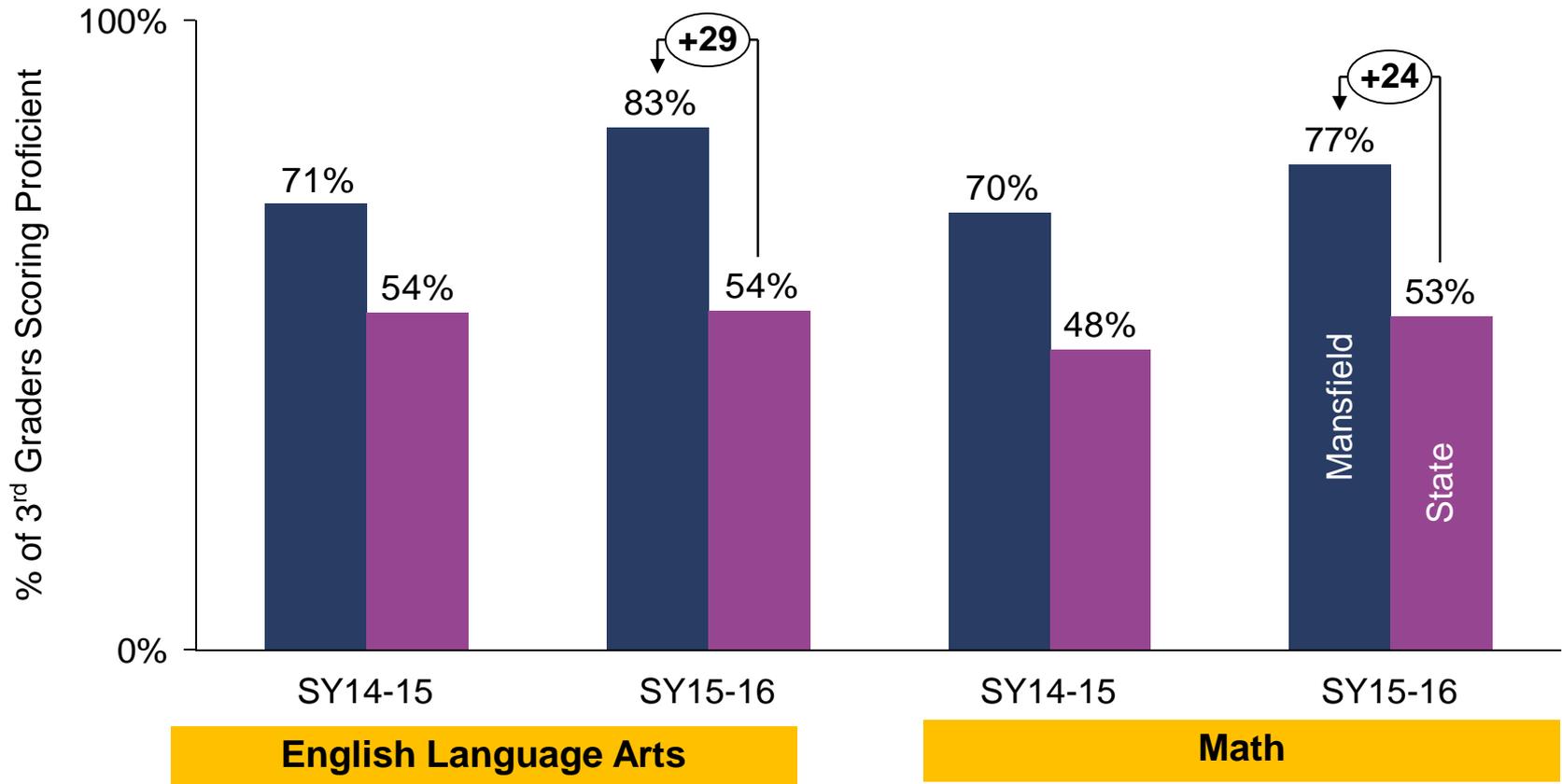


SY2015-16 3rd Grade SBAC assessments show that Mansfield is performing better than the state average in ELA by 29 percentage points.

Percent Proficient on SBAC ELA & Math (Grade 3) SY2014-15 and SY2015-16

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

1b



Source: Data provided by district

Note: Mansfield switched to SBAC assessment during SY2014-15.

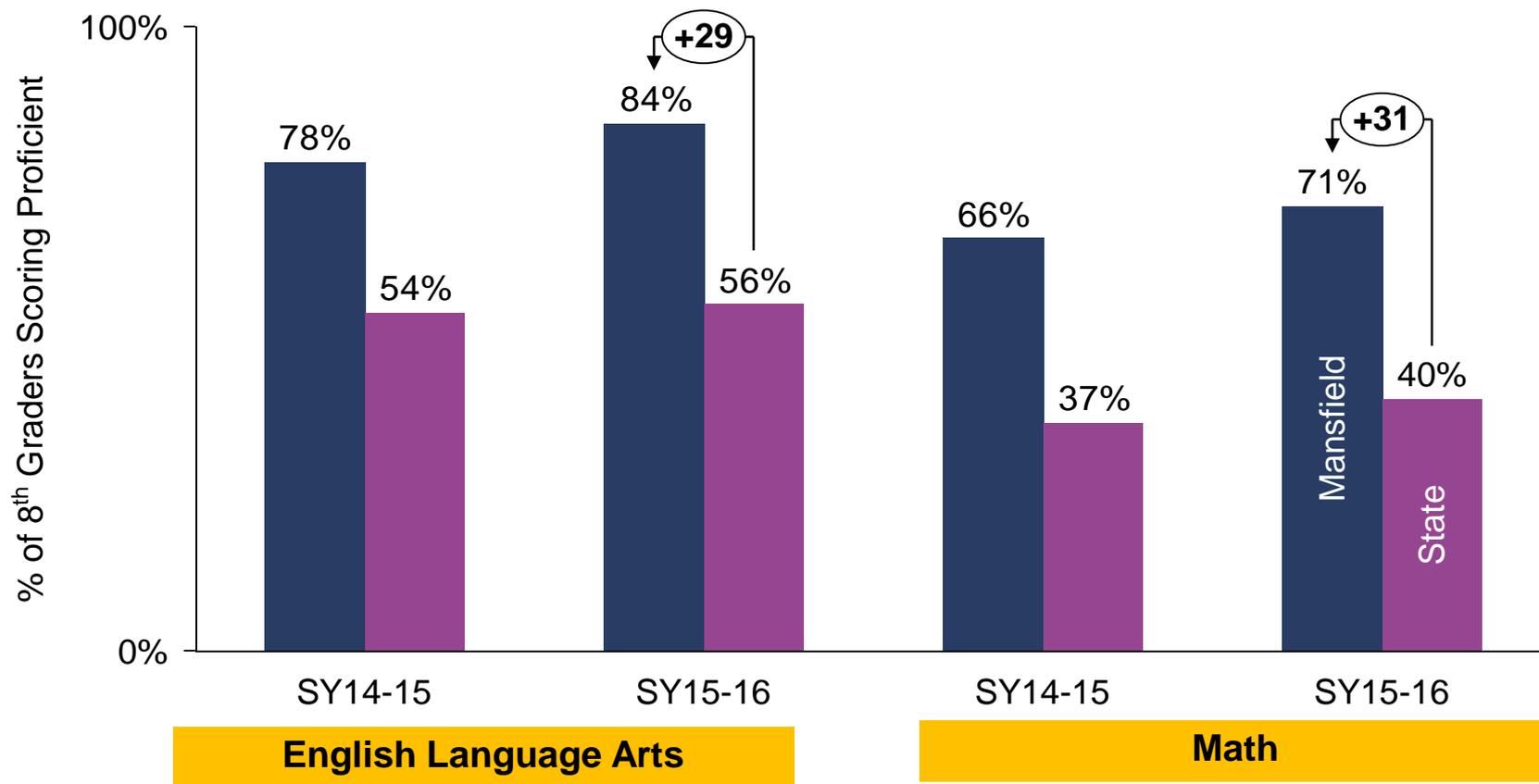


In SY2015-16, the number of Mansfield 8th graders scoring proficient or higher on both ELA and math was significantly higher than the state averages.

Percent Proficient on SBAC ELA & Math (Grade 8)
SY2014-15 and SY2015-16

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

1b



Source: Data provided by district

Note: Mansfield switched to SBAC assessment during SY2014-15.



Climate & Culture-Related Data

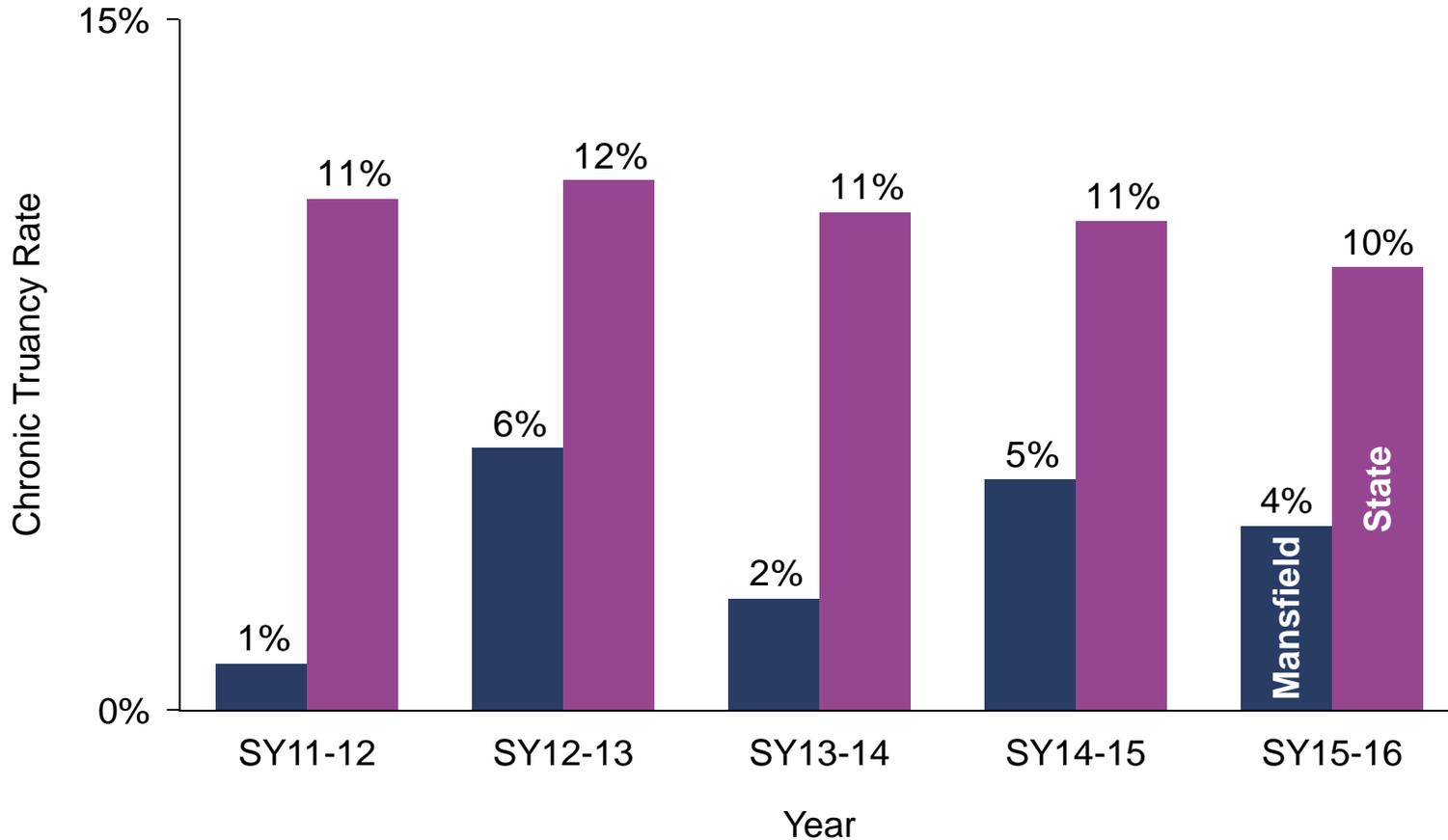


Over the past five years, the chronic truancy rate in Mansfield has been less than half of the state average.

Chronic Truancy Rate SY2011-12 to SY2015-16

CLIMATE & CULTURE

2



Note: A student is truant if they have 10 or more unexcused absences in any school year.

Source: Connecticut State Department of Education and data provided by the district

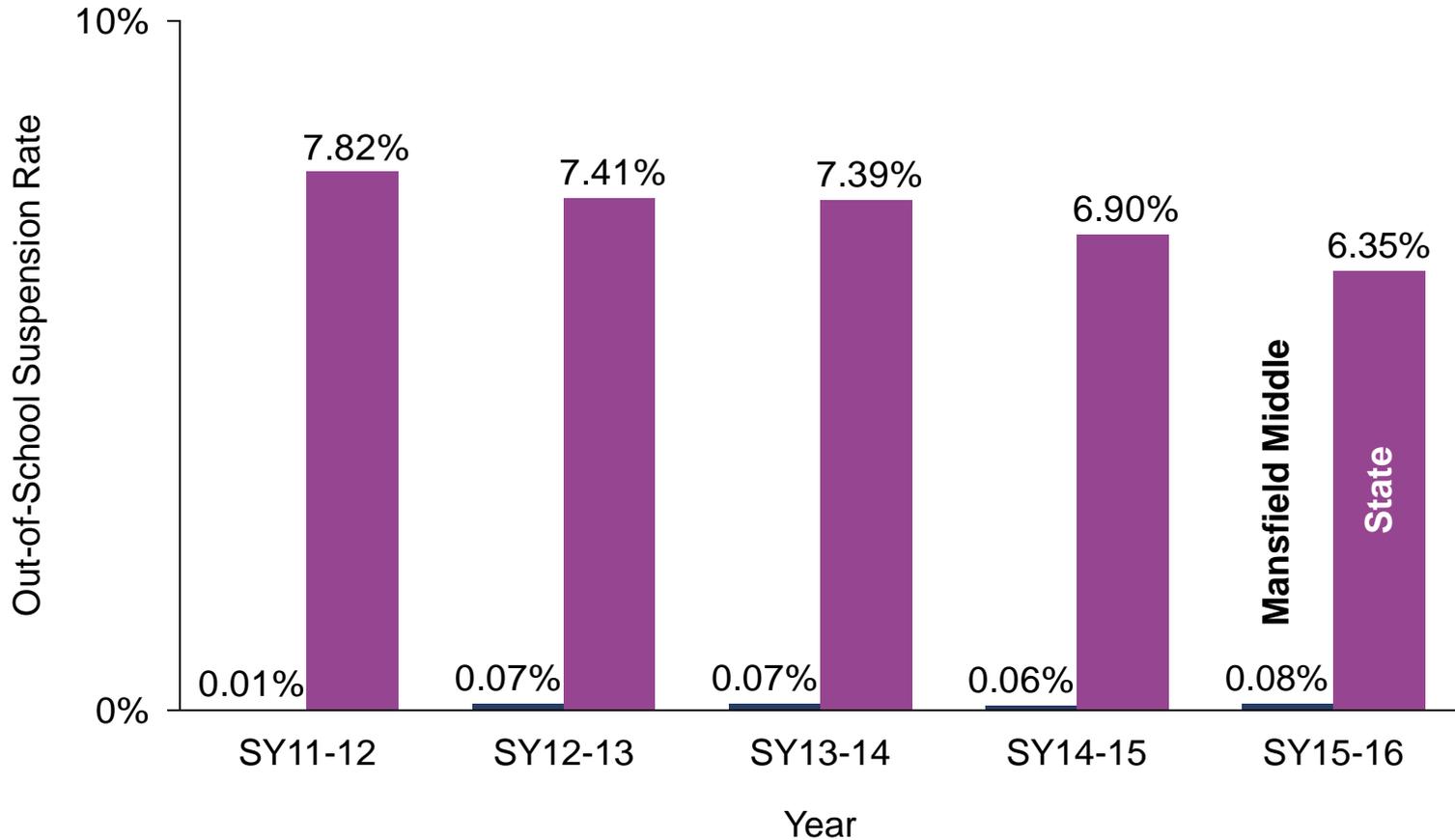


Mansfield Middle School's out-of-school suspension rate has been significantly lower than the state average.

Out-of-School Suspension Rate (Mansfield Middle School) SY2011-12 to SY2015-16

CLIMATE & CULTURE

2



Source: Connecticut State Department of Education and data provided by the district

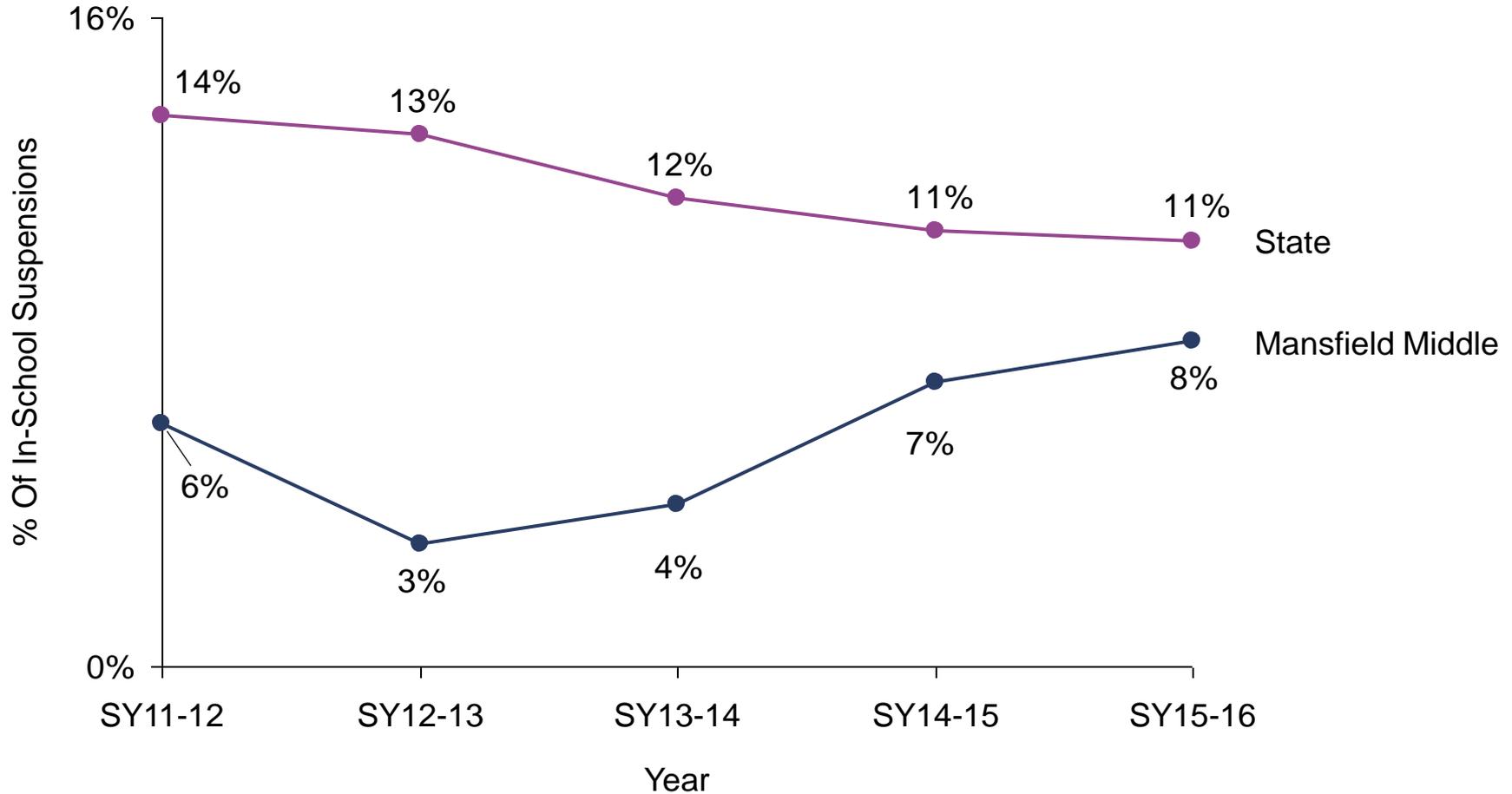


Although below the state average, Mansfield Middle has seen a gradual increase in in-school suspensions, while the state has been declining.

In-School Suspension Rates (Mansfield Middle School) SY2011-12 to SY2015-16

CLIMATE & CULTURE

2



Source: Connecticut State Department of Education and data provided by the district



Key Takeaways

Enrollment and Demographics

- Student enrollment has decreased by 2% annually in the last five years and is expected to further decrease 3% annually over the next five years.
- Goodwin Elementary and Southeast Elementary have experienced the largest decline in enrollment at about 10% since 2012.
- The percentage of Mansfield students with disabilities, qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, who are non-white, and are English learners is lower than the state average.

Academic Performance

- For the SY2015-16 SBAC assessments, the percentage of Mansfield 3rd graders and 8th graders scoring proficient or higher was above the state average for both ELA and math.

Climate & Culture

- Chronic truancy and out-of-school suspensions rates have remained significantly below the state average over the last five years.
- Since 2011, the in-school suspension rate for Mansfield Middle School has increased by 2%; over the same period, the state in-school suspension rate declined by 3%.



Teacher-Related Data

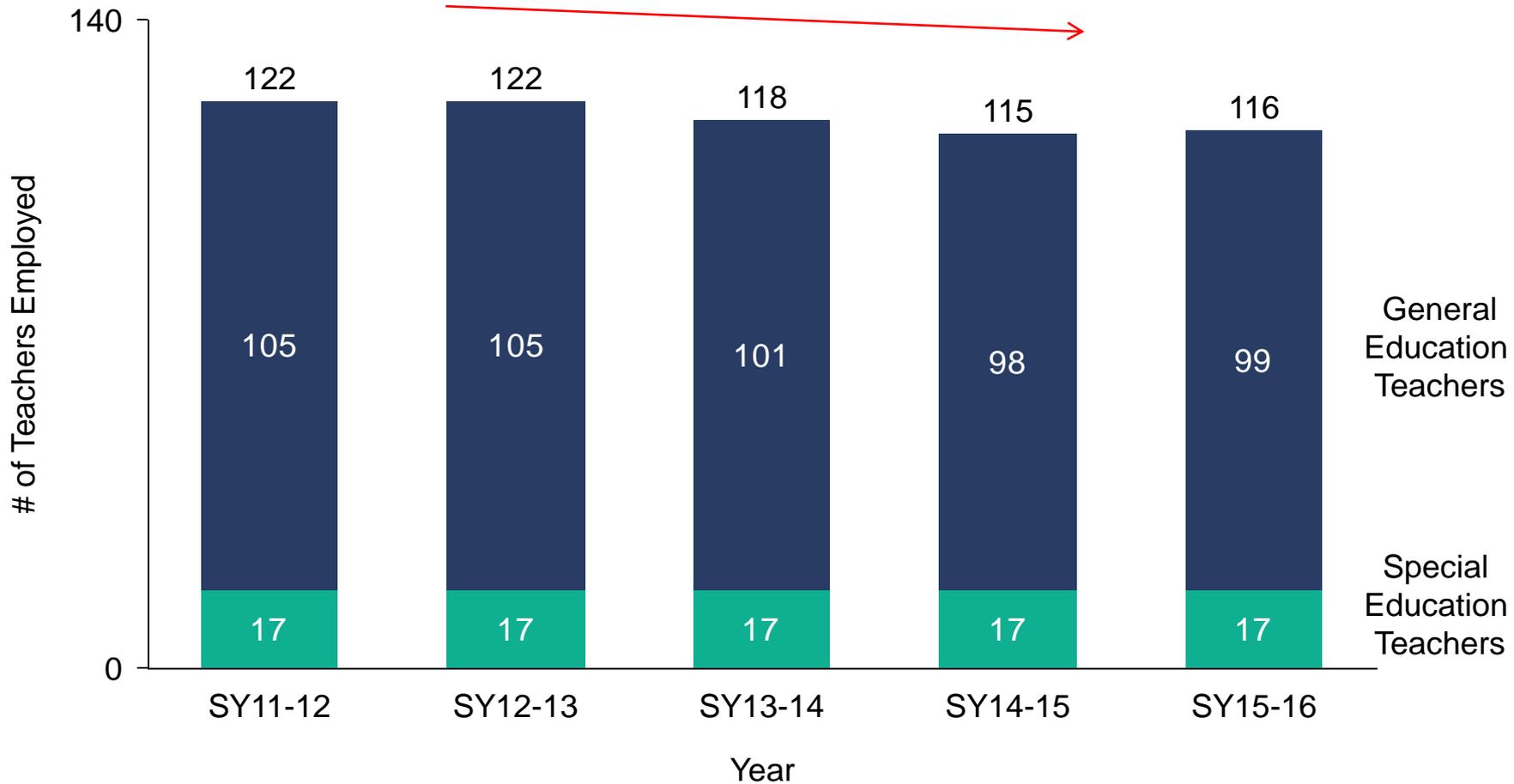


Over the last five years, the number of general education teachers employed by Mansfield has been slightly decreasing by 1.5% each year.

Number of Teachers Employed (FTE)
SY2011-12 to SY2015-16

TEACHER-RELATED DATA

3



Source: Data provided by the district

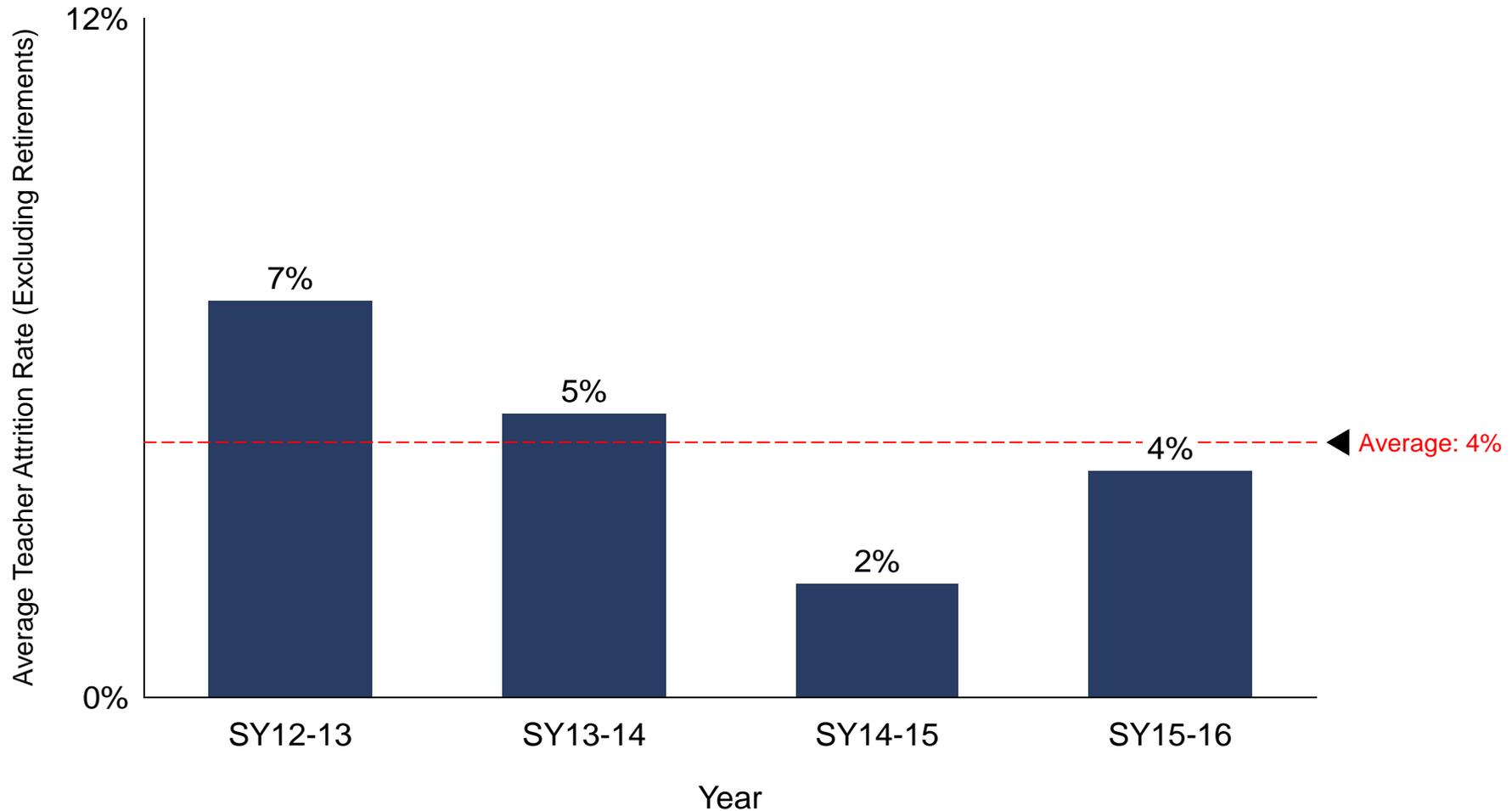


Mansfield teacher attrition rates (excluding retirements) have overall been declining over the past 4 years, with an overall average of 4%.

Teacher Attrition Rate (Excluding Retirements) SY2012-13 to SY2015-16

TEACHER-RELATED DATA

3



Source: Data provided by the district

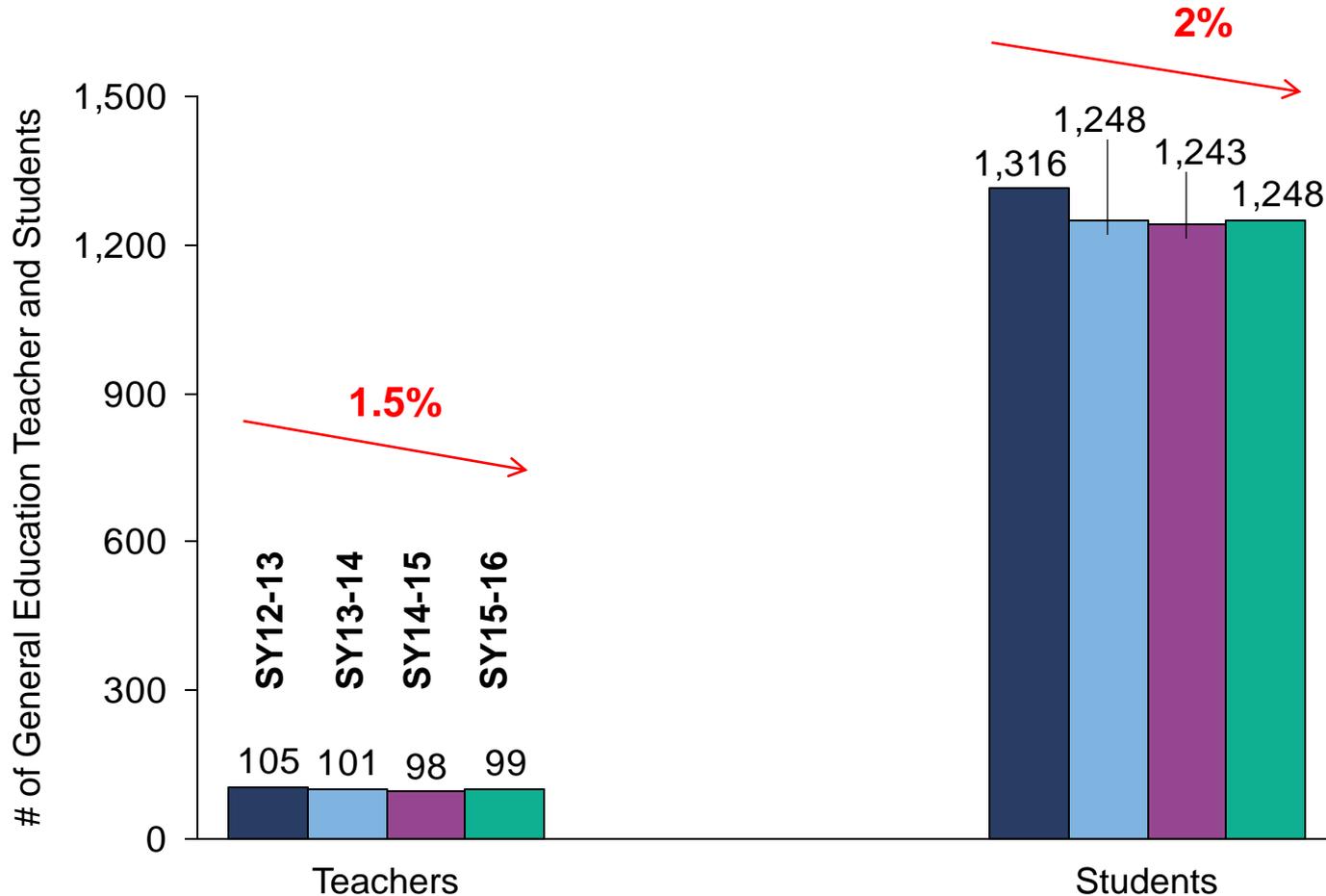


Mansfield's student enrollment and the number of general education teachers have declined at a similar rate.

Number of General Education Teachers (FTE) & Students SY2012-13 to SY2015-16

TEACHER-RELATED DATA

3



Source: Data provided by the district



District Financial Data

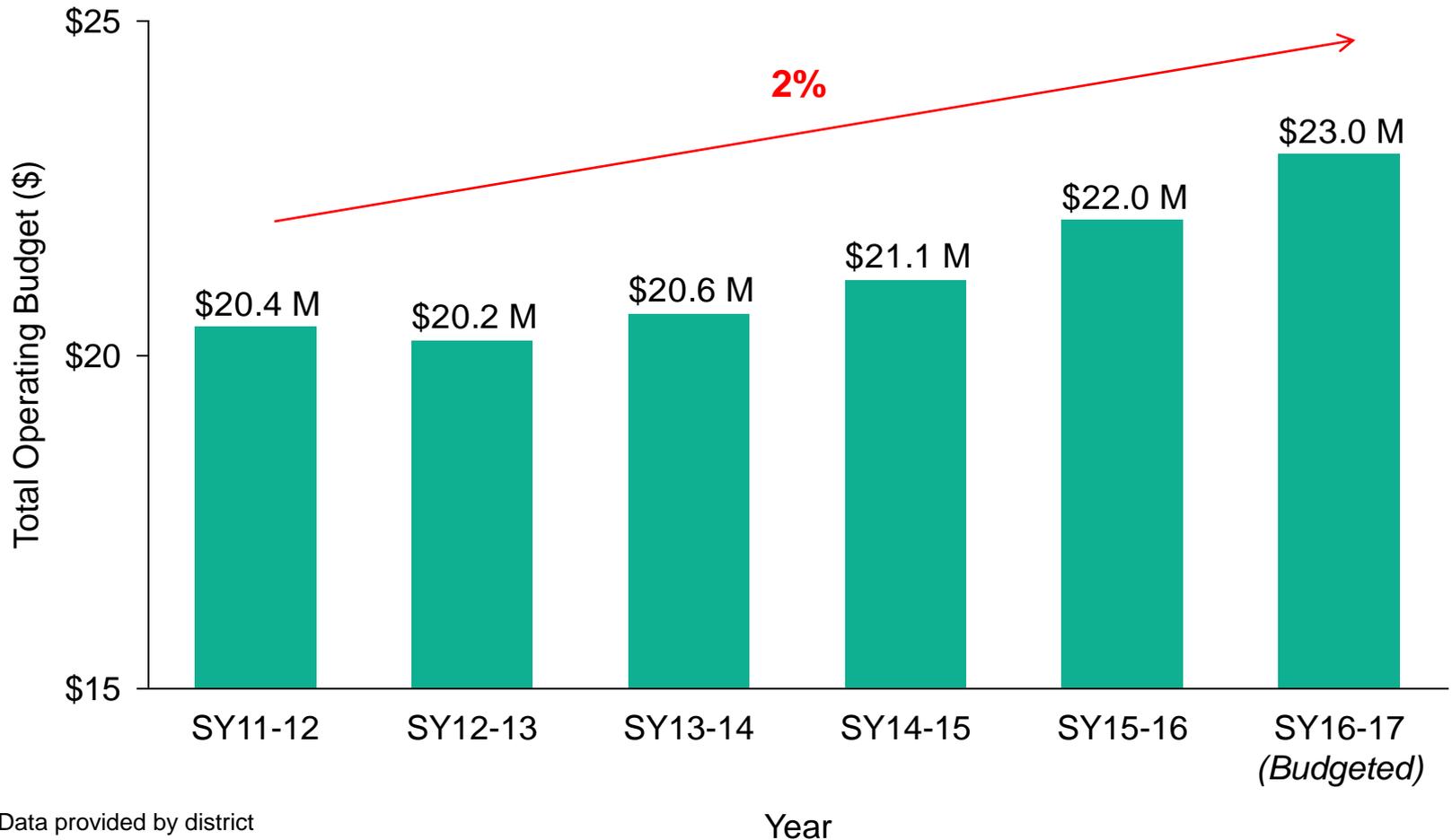


Over the last five years, Mansfield Public Schools' operating budget has increased 12.8% in total and 2% annually.

Total Operating Budget SY2011-12 to SY2016-17

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



Source: Data provided by district

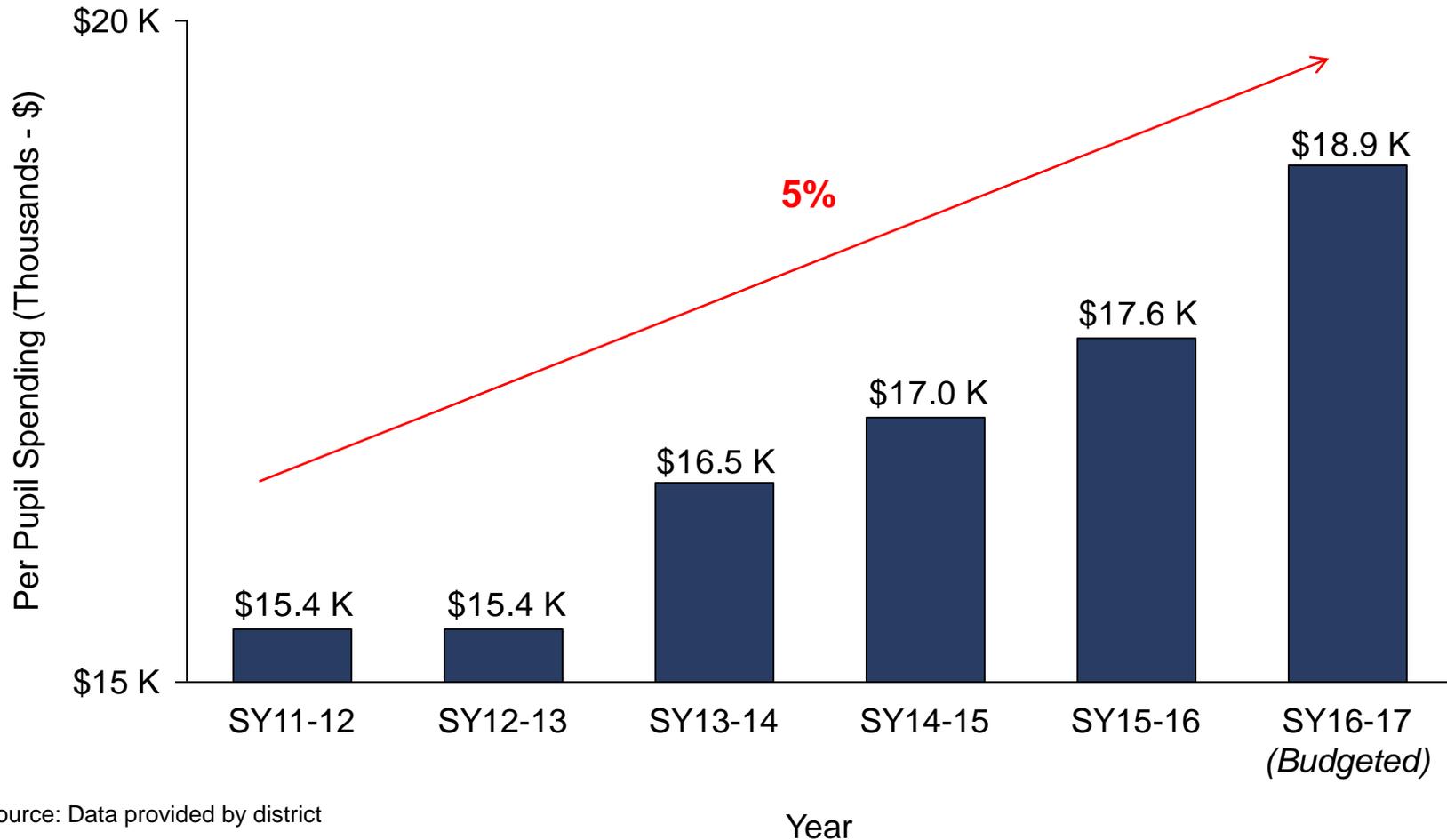


Over the last five years, Mansfield Public Schools' per pupil spending has increased 23% in total and 5% annually.

Per Pupil Spending (of Total Operating Budget) SY2011-12 to SY2016-17

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



Source: Data provided by district

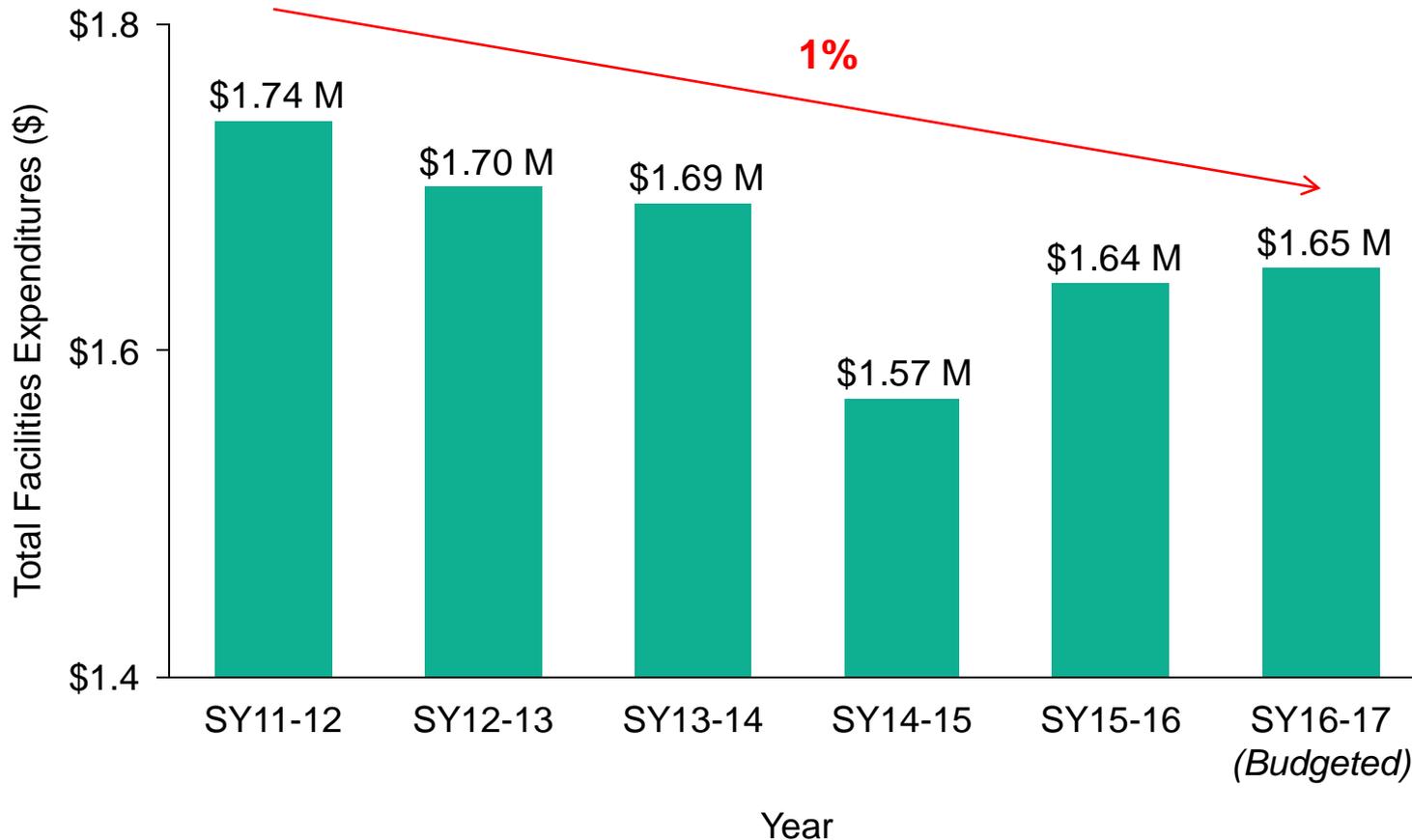


Over the last five years, Mansfield Public Schools' facilities expenditures have declined by 5% in total and 1% annually.

Total Facilities Expenditures SY2011-12 to SY2016-17

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



Source: Data provided by district; Note: The total facilities expenditure amounts do not include capital expenditures.

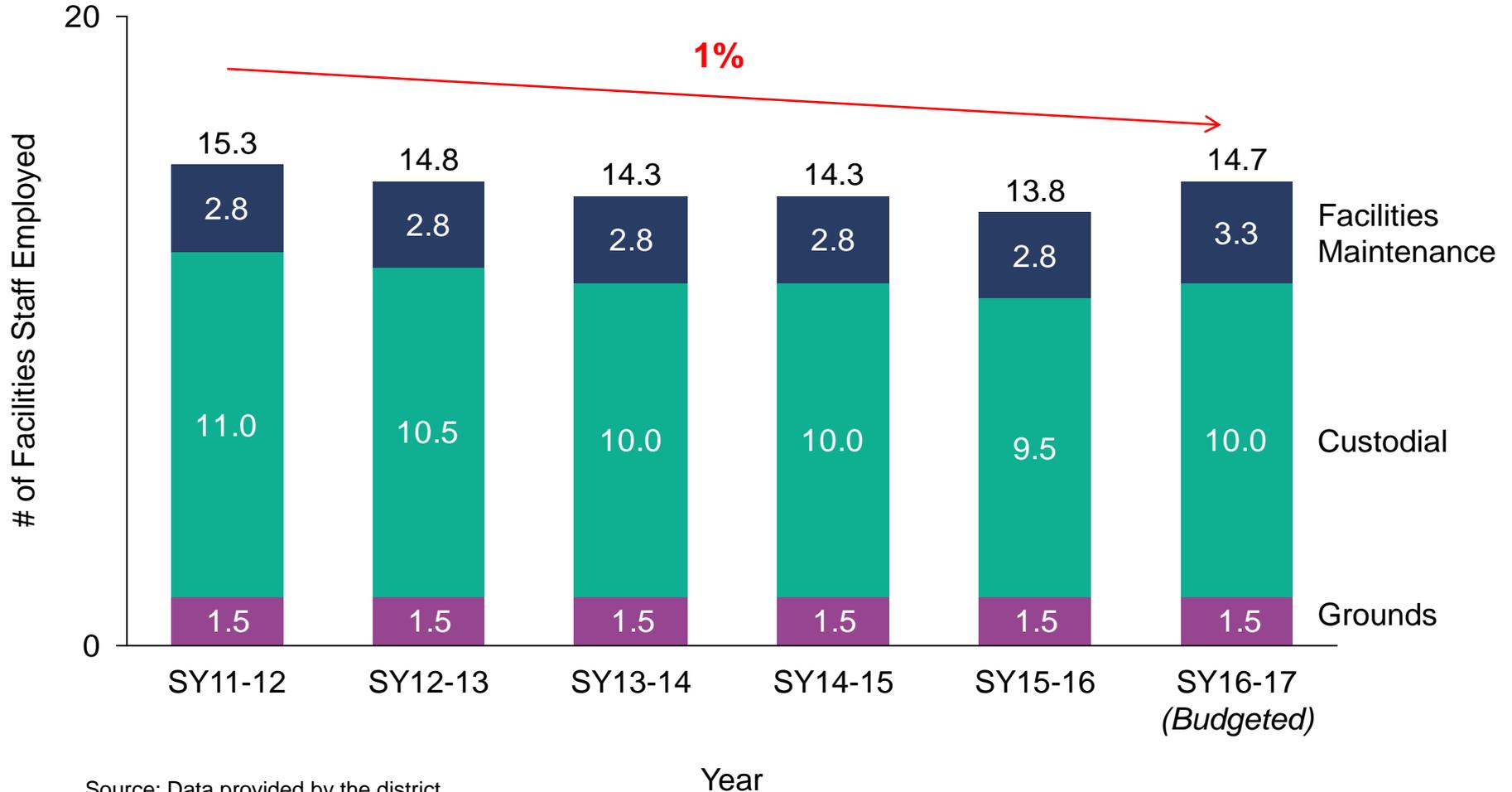


Over the last five years, the number of facilities staff employed by Mansfield has decreased by 1% annually.

Number of Facilities Staff Employed SY2011-12 to SY2016-17

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



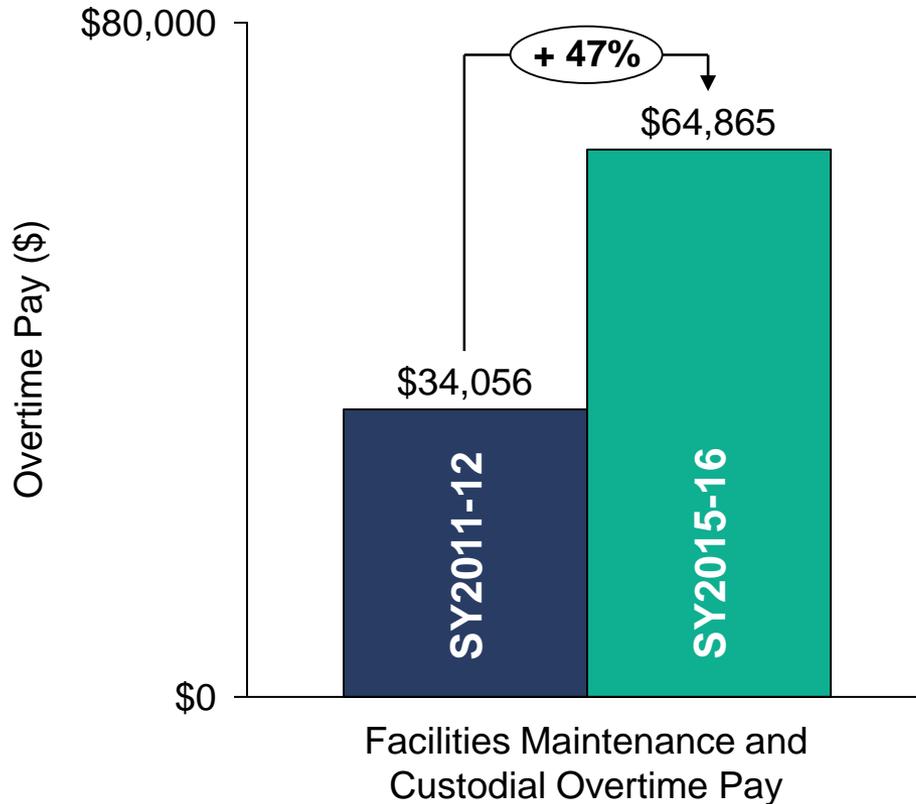
Source: Data provided by the district



District Management Group

From SY2012-13 to SY2015-16, the combined cost of facilities and custodial overtime pay increased by 47%.

Facilities and Custodial Overtime Pay SY2012-13 and SY2015-16



Note: This excludes funding from capital-funded projects
Source: Data provided by the district

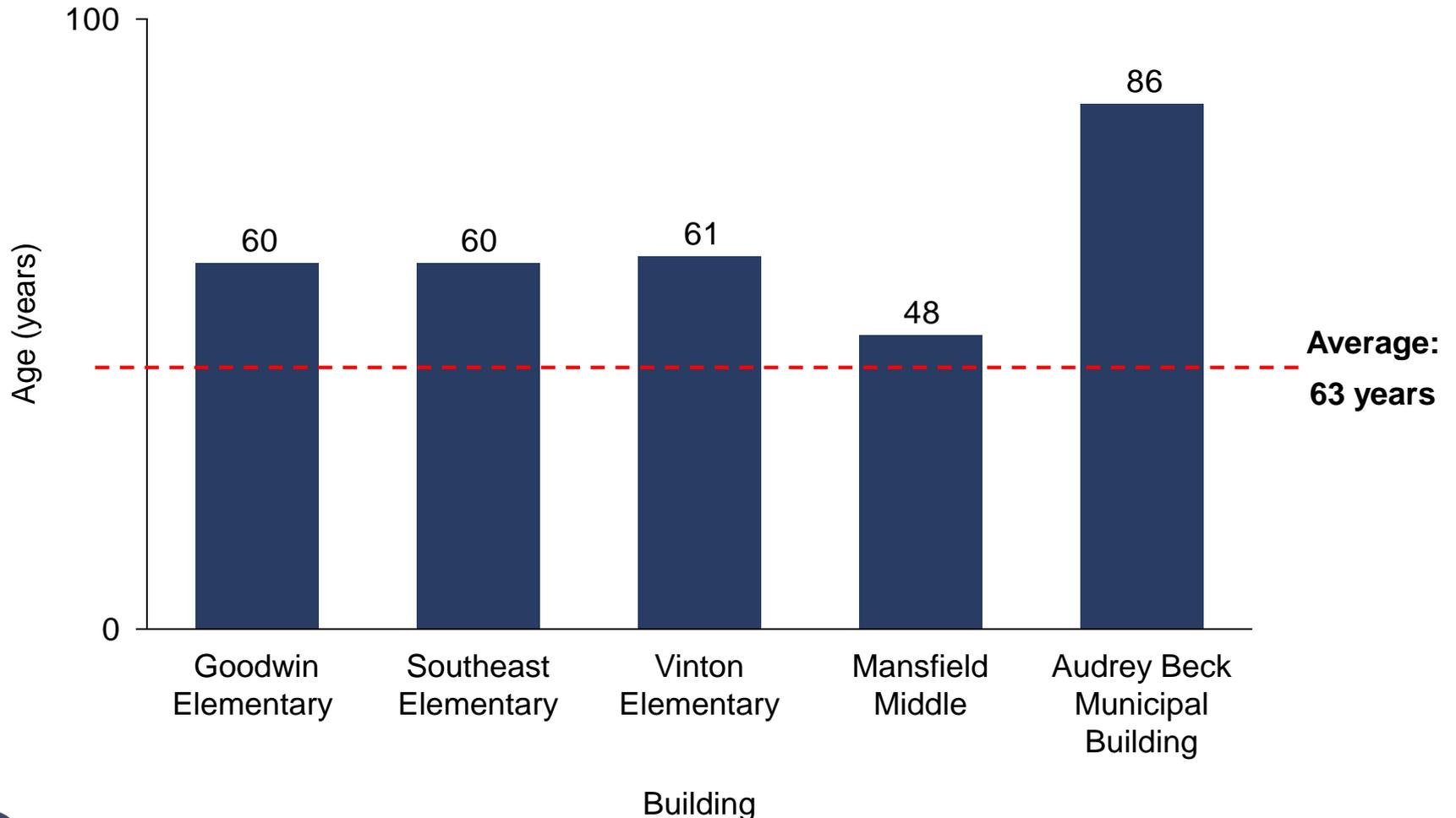


The average age of all district buildings in Mansfield is 63 years old.

Average Age of Buildings SY2016-17

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4

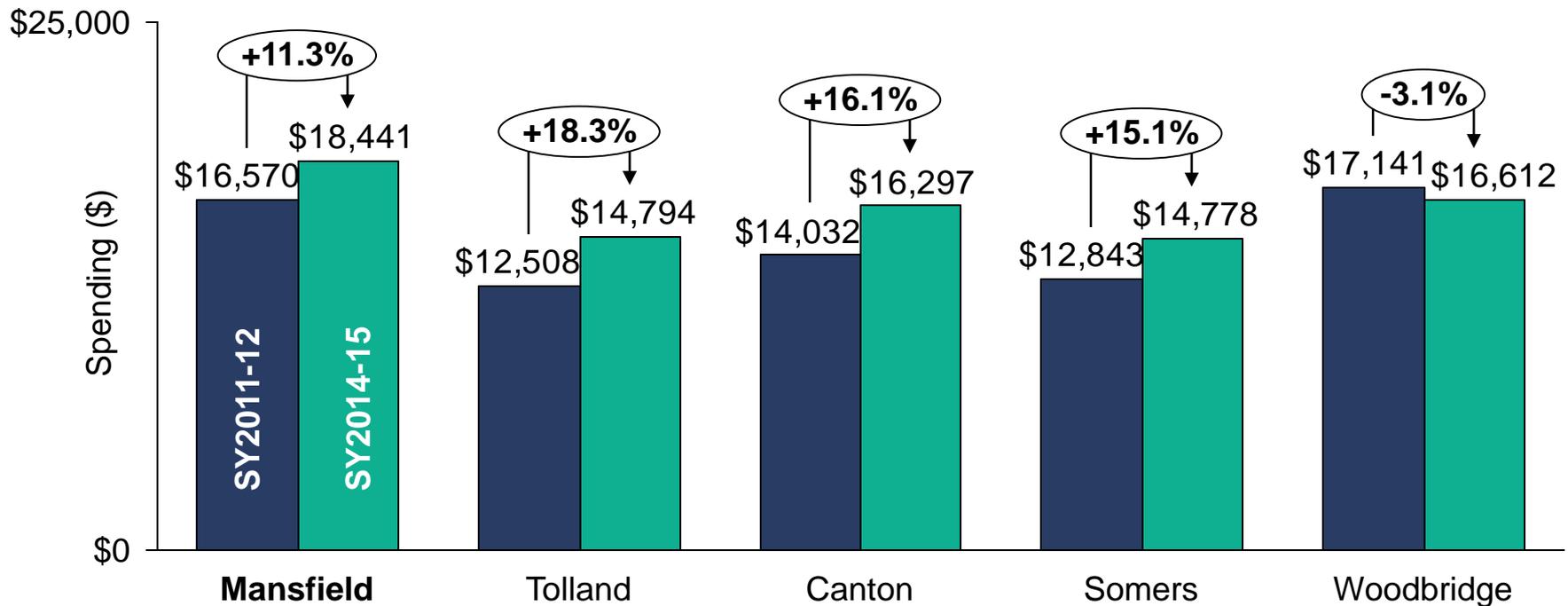


In recent years, most comparable Connecticut districts have experienced a similar increase in per pupil spending to Mansfield.

Change in Per Pupil Spending SY2011-12 to SY2014-15

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



Woodbridge has seen a slight decline in per pupil spending due to an increase in enrollment.

Source: Connecticut State Department of Education

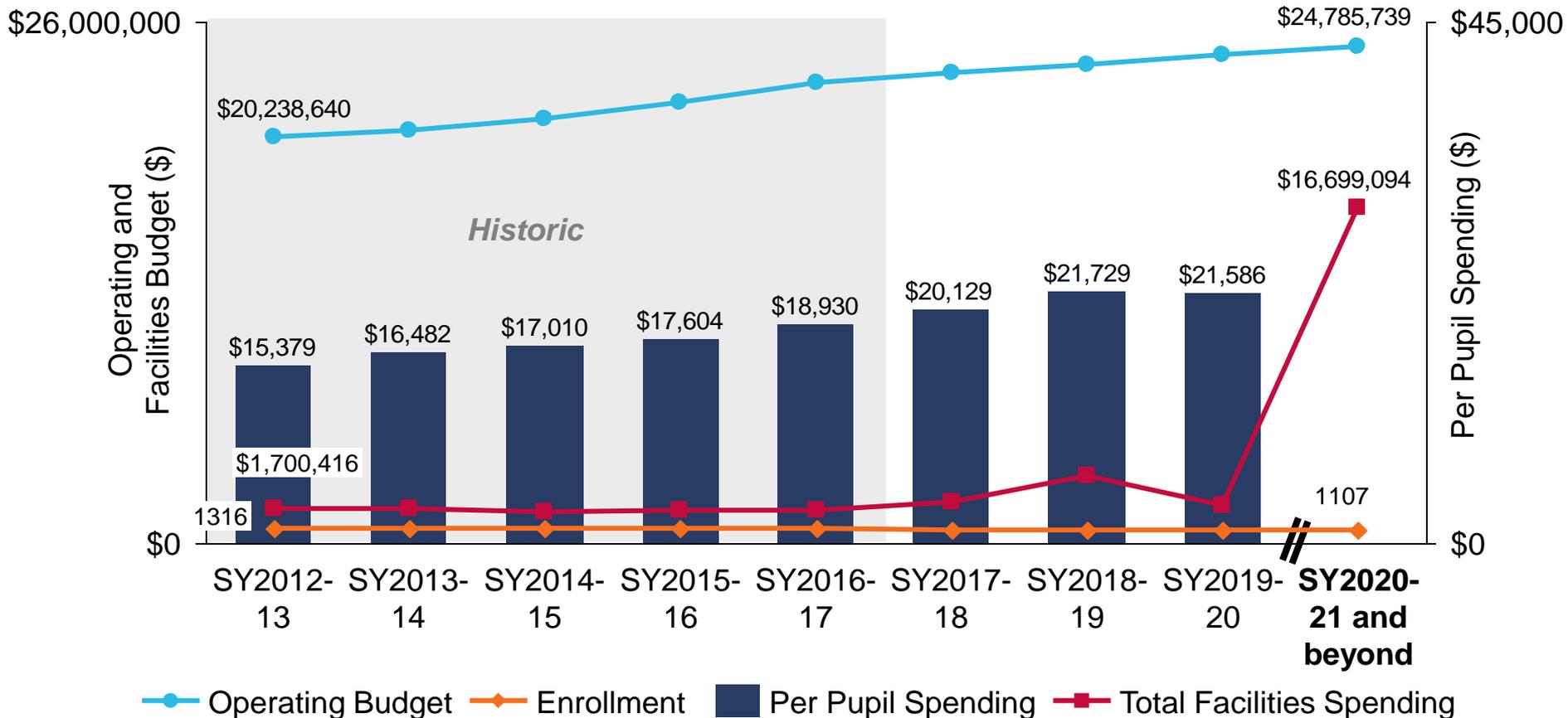


If funded over the next four years, the requested facilities budget items would result in a substantial increase in per pupil spending.

District Financial Trends: Historic and Projected SY2012-13 to SY 2020-21

DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA

4



Note: Projected operating budget is based on assumed continued 1.9% annual increase in operating budget as occurred between SY2011-12 and SY2015-16. Total facilities spending assumes a 1.0% decrease in facilities budget as occurred between SY2011-12 and SY2015-16, with addition of requested facilities items for SY2017-18 – SY2020-21 and beyond. Per pupil spending is calculated based on sum of operating budget and requested facilities items for SY2017-18 – SY2020-21 (both funded and unfunded).



Source: Data provided by district
District Management Group

Key Takeaways

Teacher-Related Data

- Over the last five years, the number of general education teachers employed by Mansfield has been slightly decreasing by 1.5% each year.
- Mansfield teacher attrition rates (excluding retirements) have overall been declining over the past 4 years, with an overall average of 4%.
- Student enrollment and the number of general education teachers has declined at a similar rate leading to a consistent student-to-teacher ratio.

District Financial Data

- Since 2011, the district's operating budget has increased 12% total and 2% annually.
- Since 2011, the district's per pupil spending has increased 23% in total and 5% annually.
- While facilities expenditures have been declining by about 1% annually since 2011, facilities maintenance and custodial overtime pay rose during the same period.
- The average age of buildings in Mansfield Public Schools is 63 years.

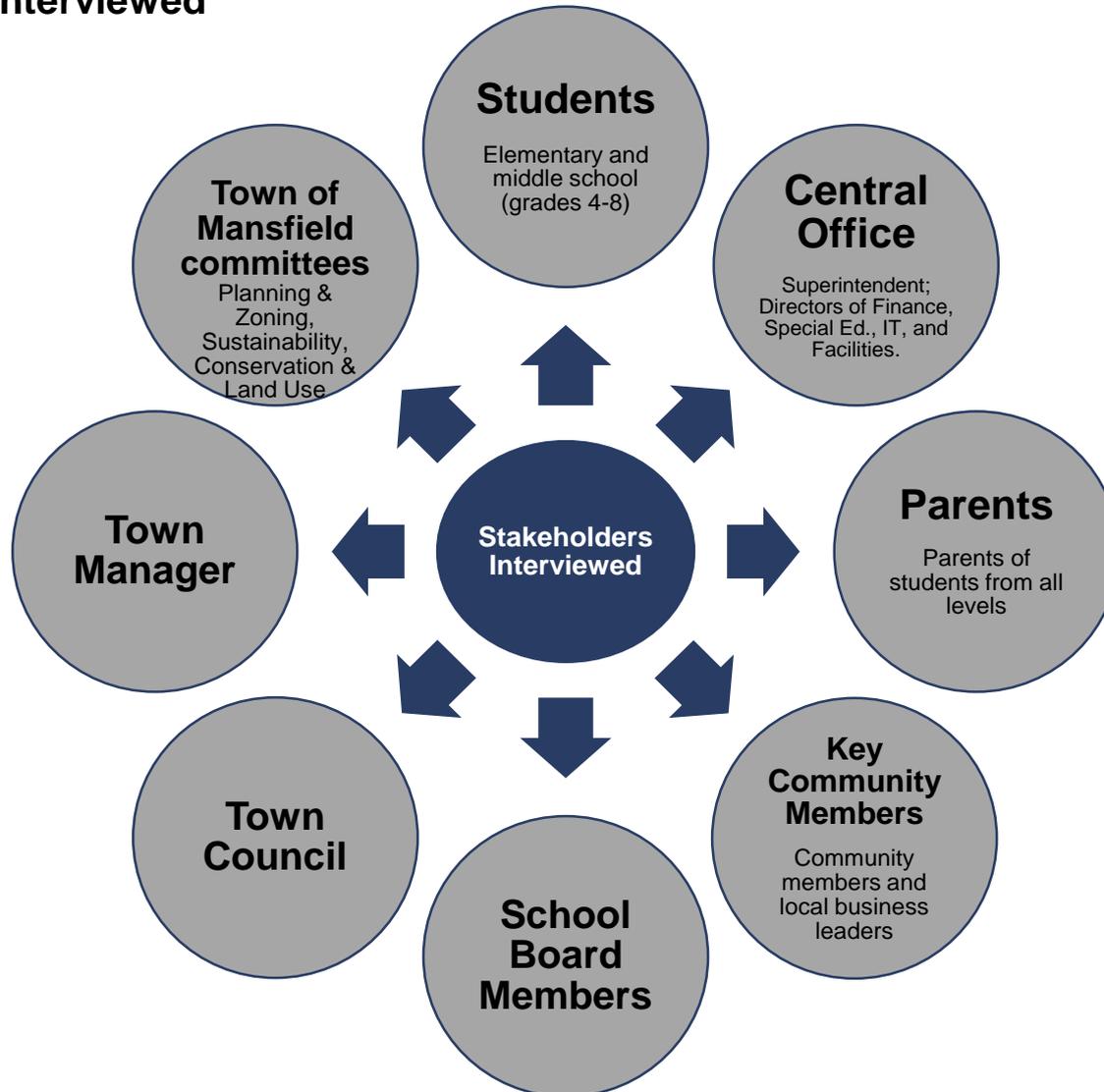


Key Themes from Focus Groups and Interviews



Approximately 50 different stakeholders participated in focus groups to provide qualitative insights on the vision for the district and facilities.

Stakeholders Interviewed



4 key questions were asked in interviews and focus groups to help uncover strengths and areas for improvement.

Focus Group Questions

- 1 Given the district's mission and core beliefs, how is Mansfield Public Schools current serving students well?**
- 2 Given the district's mission and core beliefs, how could Mansfield Public Schools better serve students?**
- 3 What are some strengths of Mansfield Public Schools' learning spaces?**
- 4 What are some concerns or limitations of Mansfield Public Schools' learning spaces?**



Mansfield Public Schools has many areas of strength to build upon.

Key Areas of Strength

- 1 Teachers and staff are talented, innovative, and dedicating to serving students well and promoting academic rigor.
- 2 Students have access to an abundance of opportunities to explore their interests and passions through courses and extracurricular activities.
- 3 At the elementary schools, some teachers have created more flexible classroom environments to allow for more flexible learning.
- 4 The middle school has a flexible schedule with a daily “X block” where students access personalized intervention and enrichment.
- 5 All schools have some environmentally sustainable systems and practices in place, including recycling, composting, and greenhouses.
- 6 The district is dedicated to building teacher capacity through an ongoing initiative of targeted professional development.



6 key areas for growth came across as core themes throughout interviews and focus groups.

Key Areas for Growth

- 1 Restrictive Classroom Spaces**
- 2 Less Flexible Common Spaces**
- 3 Underutilized Media Spaces**
- 4 Integration of the Environment & Outdoor Spaces**
- 5 Limited Teacher Collaboration Spaces**
- 6 Limited Family & Community Engagement Spaces**



Current classroom spaces may be restrictive, limiting student choice and collaboration.

Key Areas for Growth

1

Restrictive Classroom Spaces

- The majority of classrooms are set up in a traditional classroom arrangement, with desk and chairs in rows and immovable furniture
- Many stakeholders, including teachers and students, expressed a desire for a more flexible classroom setup to accommodate different learning environments, such as:
 - Small group breakout sessions
 - Project-based learning
 - Quiet, independent work time
 - Student movement breaks
- District staff and community members also spoke to the lack of technology integration in classroom, noting it can be difficult to effectively retrofit technology or infrastructure upgrades to older buildings.

“We need more spaces that allow students to learn by doing.”



Not all common spaces are setup to serve as flexible, multipurpose spaces.

Key Areas for Growth

2

Less Flexible Common Spaces

- District administrators, staff, and students expressed a desire for a more flexible, purposeful use of common spaces to promote collaboration.
- Some of the current limitations of the district's common spaces include:
 - Elementary "Cafe-gymatorium" is not a functional multi-purpose space and scheduling is a challenge
 - Poor acoustics in the Mansfield Middle cafeteria limit usage
 - Flexible walls at Mansfield Middle provide option to create larger open spaces, but are not soundproof and are difficult to move
 - Hallways are sometimes used for student breakout sessions or quiet work time, but a lack of comfortable seating makes uninviting workspace



Media spaces (such as libraries and computer labs) are under-resourced and underutilized.

Key Areas for Growth

3

Underutilized Media Spaces

- District staff and community members expressed the importance of ensuring students have access to the information and resources they need to become informed, critical thinkers and learners. However, the current libraries and media spaces in the district are not fully equipped to serve this purpose.
 - Schools libraries were described as overcrowded, with a lack of flexible, usable space for collaboration.
 - Computer labs are underutilized

“The library is overstuffed and too cluttered.”



There is an opportunity to further integrate the environment and outdoor spaces into the curriculum.

Key Areas for Growth

4

Integration of the Environment & Outdoor Spaces

- Across all focus groups, environmental awareness and sustainability were emphasized as priorities for the district and its schools. While some sustainable practices are in place, overall there is a need to deepen the connection between the classroom, students, and the environment.
 - All schools have greenhouses, but water is not always accessible.
 - More outdoor spaces for play integrated with environment are desired
- Teachers and parents expressed a desire to see more connections between academics and the environment; particularly in the STEM field (science, engineering, mathematics, and technology), where the outdoors can serve as a living “learning lab” for student investigation and exploration.

“We need to have sustainable buildings in order to teach our students about sustainability.”

“Our buildings should create zero net energy...or even produce energy!”



In some schools, there is limited space for teachers to collaborate.

Key Areas for Growth

5

Limited Teacher Collaboration Spaces

- The district has a dedicated focus on professional development and growth for teachers and staff, and has a number of initiatives underway towards this end. However, staff frequently expressed that there are limited spaces in some schools for them to collaborate.
 - The Mansfield Middle conference room is too small for a school-wide staff meeting.
 - Mansfield Middle is primarily organized by grade level. With limited common spaces for teachers to meet, collaboration across grade levels is challenging.



Overall, there are limited spaces in the district for engagement and collaboration with families and the community.

Key Areas for Growth

6

Limited Family & Community Engagement Spaces

- Across all focus groups, there was a desire to build connections between Mansfield schools, families, and the broader community. Providing designated spaces to facilitate community engagement may support this goal, such as:
 - A Family Engagement Center with resources and events for families
 - Strengthening connections with faculty at UConn and utilizing the university's learning spaces

"The schools are a big black box to me. I would like to know more about what goes on with my child there."

"The schools really should be a community space."

