



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

FEBRUARY **20**
newsletter **18**

www.mansfieldct.gov

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

An Update on Facility Planning for our Schools

Your feedback counts. Your involvement matters.

Mansfield Public Schools has prided itself in educating our young citizens for many years. The Board of Education's vision and planning will continue to support exceptional educational experiences. Classroom practices are changing to personalize instruction to meet each student's learning strengths and needs, while developing their skills to be a citizen of the world: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity.

Education of this caliber must be provided in buildings that are safe, efficient, and support learning. Our schools are now between 50 and 60 years old. Maintenance costs continue to increase while revenues from the State of Connecticut have been sharply reduced. In addition, overall enrollment is declining. Recognizing the strain that these realities place on our school system, the Board of Education is in the process of creating a plan for our schools' future to maintain our educational excellence.

While we're doing a great job educating our kids, the critical decisions we make regarding the future of our school facilities will impact children who have not yet been born. That's why awareness and participation across the entire community is so important during the planning and implementation process.

We invite you to read through this newsletter to learn more about the learning experiences provided in our schools, the process underway to plan for the future of our buildings, and how you can be involved in the work.

Mansfield Public Schools, Board of Education

Your input is important to creating a Plan for Mansfield Schools' Future!



Attend the Community Involvement and Planning Sessions on February 28 and March 7 at Mansfield Middle School.

Based upon its initial study and advisory committee input, the Board of Education has begun defining the vision and goals for our schools' future learning spaces. As a Mansfield resident, your input to this process is critical!

Please consider attending two facility planning dinner sessions on **February 28** and **March 7**, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Mansfield Middle School. Childcare will be provided. The sessions will address our schools' future size, grade configuration, and construction and renovation costs. Presentations of information will be followed by community discussion. This is a two part program and attendance at both evenings is strongly encouraged.

The sessions will begin with a complimentary dinner at 5:30 p.m., with the program beginning at 6:00 p.m. Community members will have time for small group discussion. The evenings will conclude with sharing of ideas from the groups.

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The information we receive from Mansfield citizens during the Feb. 28 and March 7 sessions will support the Board decision-making process.

To register please go to www.mansfield.gov/mboe or by calling Celeste Griffin at 860-429-3350.

Make your voice heard. Take the survey.



Help us create the Plan for Mansfield Schools' Future.

Your valuable input will support Mansfield Schools' decisions in its facility planning. Please complete the pre-paid self-mailing survey below, fold in half, and mail back to us by **February 19**.

Your input will be added to the feedback we receive during our **February 28 and March 7 Community Involvement and Planning Sessions**, and will support our decision process.

Facilities Planning Status:

What's changed in the Mansfield School District?

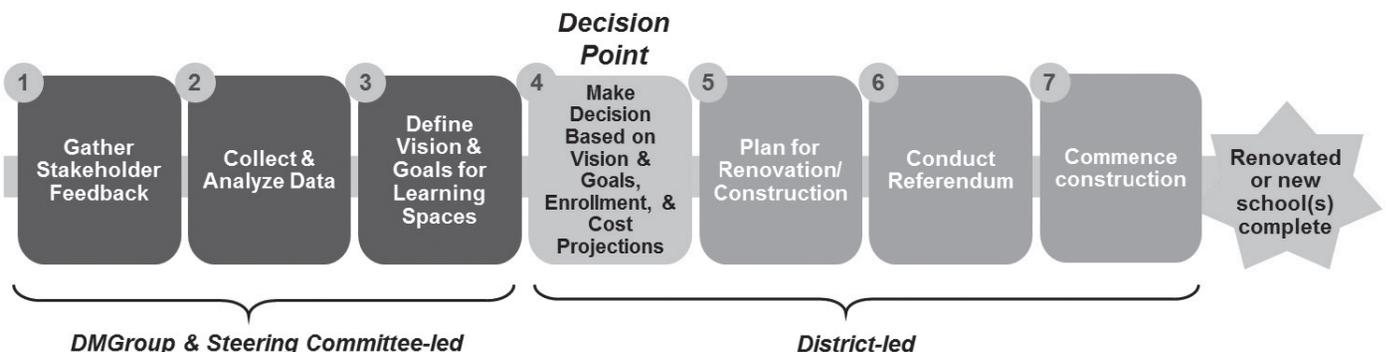
Our planning process began with identifying how the District's current buildings support our educational vision. In 2016-17, The Board of Education began a study to define the district's educational goals and evaluate the impact of our school facilities on those goals. More than 100 Mansfield residents met in focus groups to share their thoughts and desires for our schools. Using data from multiple sources, and with the support of a citizen advisory committee, we created a report http://www.mansfieldct.gov/filestorage/1904/5335/2170/20170919_packet_sp.pdf that documents the current condition of our schools and our educational focus. The aspirational goals within the report will lead the next phase of the process – creating a long term facilities plan for our schools.

A sharper than expected enrollment decline and a loss of revenue from the State of Connecticut this fall prompted the Board to initially consider a short-term plan to consolidate elementary schools for the 2018-19 school year. Using information gathered to assist with this decision, the Board determined it was in the best interest of the community to not consolidate schools for the 2018-19 school year and to continue to focus on a long term plan.

Where we're at right now

The Board is engaged in a plan development process that is exploring multiple options. The Board is specifically exploring three areas: grade configuration of the schools, how many schools to operate, and costs to build new or renovate schools. They are seeking community input to support this work. Through this process, the Board will come to a final decision on the future of the schools and develop a facilities plan.

This chart illustrates where we are currently in the process of creating the **Plan for Mansfield Schools' Future**.



What's happening in our classrooms



New learning practices

Our principals and teachers strive to provide all students with self-directed learning experiences, offer relevant, authentic ways to apply what they have learned, and develop the academic and process skills needed for future learning.

HERE'S A SAMPLING OF RECENT ACTIVITIES!

Vinton Elementary Preschool — Learning through play



Three and four-year-old students at Vinton have been exploring and learning through Loose Parts, a learning approach that presents students with common objects and materials for open ended exploration and play.

Mansfield Middle School Grade 5 — Energy Unit



Students were presented with the challenge of gathering energy for use in a disaster. They applied what they learned about energy to create a solar cooker, which they used to bake cookies in the school yard.

Southeast Elementary — Hurricane Relief: A research and service project



Fourth graders at Southeast School gave up recess for many days to develop an understanding of the struggles of hurricane victims and to research organizations that support hurricane victims. They also planned and held a Hurricane Dance Party to raise funds for hurricane victims in Puerto Rico, Florida and Houston.

Mansfield Middle School Grade 7 — Raising Awareness of Social Issues

This is the second year that 7th graders are learning to research social issues in their community in this self-directed program. Based on their research, students develop an awareness campaign to address the problems they've identified. Then, they present their findings at an exhibition night where they also may raise funds to support the local cause.

Goodwin Elementary — Health Fair

Working with Enrichment Teacher Nancy Titchen and Physical Education Teacher Steve Dean, elementary students researched a health issue of their choice and shared findings at a Health Fair on January 23.

Mansfield Public Schools Community Survey



The Mansfield Public Schools is developing a plan to ensure that our facilities provide the best educational experience for Mansfield's children. The following community engagement survey will assist the Board of Education to create a facilities plan. Please answer all the questions. It should take five minutes.

Complete the survey the best you can, detach, fold over, tape and send back no later than February 19. No postage necessary.

Note: To ensure equal access to important information, this newsletter and survey are being sent to every household in Mansfield. You can fill it out as a family; if each individual wants to fill out his/her own copy, make copies of the survey and the self-mailer address panel, complete, tape and mail back to us. Thank You.

Please use a **PEN** to fill in circles completely like this: ● not like this: ☉ ☒ ☑ **FOR OFFICE USE ONLY Survey #** _____

1. The Mansfield Board of Education is developing a vision and plan for our facilities and learning spaces.

The project goals include:

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

Are you aware of this work?

Yes No Somewhat

2. Have you read or are you aware of the "Developing a Vision and Plan for Mansfield Public Schools and Facilities" report, 9/17/2017 that is on the district website?

Read Aware Not aware there is a report

3. Are you aware of the current status of the project?

Note: See facilities update article in this newsletter.

Yes No Somewhat

4. How important is it for you to know the current status of the project?

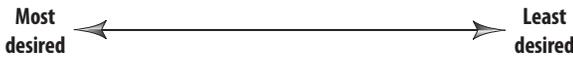
Very important Important
 Not important Somewhat important

5. How are you getting your information regarding the public schools and the facility project?

Please select all that apply

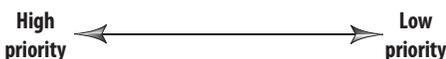
- School Newsletter (sent to parents)
- Board of Education meetings
- School website
- School Facebook page
- Teachers or staff
- Newspaper, please identify _____
- Word of mouth from friends or neighbors
- Other, Please identify _____

6. How would you like to get your information about this project? Please rank 1, 2, 3, etc. as your preference.

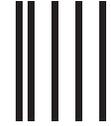


Most desired	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Least desired	
	<input type="radio"/>		School Newsletter (Sent to Parents)								
	<input type="radio"/>		Board of Education Newsletter (Community-based)								
	<input type="radio"/>		Board of Education meetings								
	<input type="radio"/>		School website								
	<input type="radio"/>		School Facebook page								
	<input type="radio"/>		Teachers or staff								
	<input type="radio"/>		Newspaper, please identify _____								
	<input type="radio"/>		Word of mouth from friends or neighbors								
	<input type="radio"/>		Other, Please identify _____								

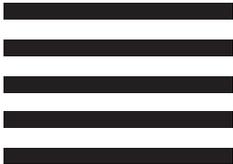
7. We would like to know your priorities for the facilities project. Please rank the following factors from 1 (high) to 7 (low):



High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Low priority	
	<input type="radio"/>		Improving the learning environment (classroom)						
	<input type="radio"/>		Providing high quality learning experiences						
	<input type="radio"/>		Building new schools						
	<input type="radio"/>		Renovating current schools						
	<input type="radio"/>		Flexible and adaptable classrooms						
	<input type="radio"/>		Cost and tax implications						
	<input type="radio"/>		Other, please identify _____						



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Complete the survey the best you can, detach, fold over, tape and send back no later than February 19. No postage necessary.

8. How many years have you lived in Mansfield?

- Less than 3 years
- 4 to 10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

9. Do you own or rent your home?

10. Which one of the following best describes you?

- Work full or part time
- Full and part-time student
- Retired
- Not currently working
- Stay at home parent

11. Do you currently have a child or children that attend Mansfield Public Schools or E.O. Smith High School?

- Yes, identify grade level
- No

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

- Other:
 Early childhood private
 Attend school out of district

12. Other comments are appreciated:

Important Dates

FEBRUARY

28

A Plan for Mansfield Schools' Future:

*Community Involvement
and Planning Sessions*

Mansfield Middle School

205 Spring Hill Road
Storrs, CT 06268

February 28 • 5:30 p.m.

March 7 • 5:30 p.m.

Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education



Board of Education

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Superintendent of Schools

Kelly Lyman

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