

South Windsor Public Schools Elementary Schools Master Plan

Ten-Year Timeline



Artwork by Finn Jennings, 2013

Plan adopted by the Board of Education on October 29, 2013
Plan updated September 2015 and September 2016

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the level of community support in the Phase I referendum?

Of those residents who went to the polls, 75% voted in favor of Phase I.

Is Phase One on time and on budget?

Yes! As of September 2016, 45% of the construction of the new Orchard Hill School has been completed. Our target of substantial completion for May 2017 remains on schedule. The project is adhering to the budget approved by our residents.

The original plan contemplated that PRS would undergo a "renovate-like-new" construction process. Why did the professionals recommend new construction?

The rationale for new construction includes: new information from the state regarding its contemplation of eliminating the "renovate-like-new" category; guidance from our project professionals and experts; site limitations; equity among schools; ADA compliance; and anticipated hazardous material abatement issues, specifically the unknown risks for increased costs associated with renovating a building of the PRS era.

What will happen to Wapping School when it closes?

The Board of Education will turn Wapping School over to the town in the summer of 2017. The current plan is for the Parks and Recreation Department to move their operations to the current Wapping School. This is a win-win for our community as there are competing demands for space at the Community Center. The move would provide Parks and Recreation with space desirable for supporting its mission and simultaneously open up more space at the Community Center for seniors. The Board does, however, plan to request continued use of a portion of Wapping School to address educational needs at the high school. Specifically, there is need for additional space to support career pathways coursework. In addition, an alternative education program is part of the Board's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and the proximity of Wapping to the high school would make this an ideal location.

What will happen to the current Orchard Hill building after the new school opens?

The current Orchard Hill facility will serve as "swing space" in support of our Ten-Year Elementary Facilities Master Plan. Both Philip R. Smith and Pleasant Valley Schools will require the use of swing space while their buildings undergo construction. At the close of the master plan, the Board of Education will turn over the building to the town and the Town Council will decide at that time whether the building should be razed or repurposed.

What if our student population exceeds projected enrollment?

The State's reimbursement formula is predicated on building to a capacity that does not exceed the projected highest enrollment within an eight-year time frame from the date the application is submitted. We are limited to those parameters for design enrollment. The district works with professional demographers who analyze a wide variety of factors when calculating the projections.

What do new schools offer that our existing schools do not?

Among other factors, new schools offer ADA compliance, modern technology, enhanced school security features, more efficient utilities, environmentally conscious design, improved indoor air quality, spaces designed for current instructional strategies, safer traffic pattern designs, and climate-controlled spaces.

How does the community at large benefit from new schools?

High quality schools protect property values. Realtors routinely cite the quality of our school system as a vehicle for promoting home ownership in South Windsor. In addition, the plan offers some win-wins for those seeking improvements associated with dedicated space for senior citizens and for the recreation department. Our school facilities are used extensively by many community groups that meet in our facilities when school is not in session. These groups will also benefit from modern, climate controlled, ADA compliant school buildings.

How are school construction projects funded?

In Connecticut, local school construction projects are typically paid for through a combination of bonded debt issued by the State of Connecticut and the municipality building the school. The municipality pays for its share of the design and construction costs, typically by issuing short-term notes. As construction continues, the State of Connecticut begins reimbursing the municipality through "progress payments" for its share of project costs that are deemed to be reimbursable. When construction is complete and the municipality has received all eligible reimbursement, the short-term notes are converted to long-term municipal bonds, ranging from a 20 to 30-year term. The reimbursement rate varies from town to town, ranging from a low of 10% to a high of 80% as determined by project type and relative wealth rank of the town.

What is our reimbursement rate?

For both Phase II projects, which we expect to submit to the state in 2017, the state's maximum reimbursement rate for new construction in South Windsor is 37.14%. The state's reimbursement rate for new construction for Phase I is 34.64%.

Will I know in advance of voting in the Spring 2017 referendum what impact Phase Two will have on my taxes?

Yes. Town Manager Matthew Galligan, in consultation with Independent Bond Investment Consultants, will calculate the tax impact to South Windsor taxpayers based on the initial estimate of the cost for Phase II. This information will be published in a community newsletter which will be mailed to all South Windsor homes.

WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.southwindsorschools.org/elementaryfacilities

About this Document

This document outlines a plan for addressing our aging elementary schools and includes a timeline for consolidating from five elementary schools to four. Without question, changes in enrollment, changes in reimbursement rates, changes in the economy, and changes in education legislation could alter this Master Plan or its intended timeline. While variables may arise, we believe a transparent and detailed proposal of a ten-year scenario, based on the information available to us today, allows for a conceptual long-range plan for the community to consider. The first edition of this document was published in October 2013 and updated in September 2015. This edition was updated in September 2016 and reflects refreshed enrollment projections as well as more specific details regarding construction, Phase II, and project milestones.

Phase One Milestones to Date

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|
| 9/2011 | Strategic Plan adopted by Board of Education | 3/2015 | Project reviewed by Planning and Zoning |
| 7/2013 | School conditions assessed | 4/2015 | Commissioning Agent selected by PBC |
| 10/2013 | Elementary Facilities Plan approved by BOE | 5/2015 | Community public information session held |
| 12/2013 | Master Plan presented to Town Council by BOE | 6/2015 | ED049 Grant Application approved by the state |
| 12/2013 | Education Specifications approved by BOE | 7/2015 | Office of School Construction Grants (OSCG) Plan Review |
| 3/2014 | Referendum passed by South Windsor residents | 8/2015 | Project approved by Inland Wetlands Agency/Conservation Commission |
| 3/2014 | PBC appointed by Town Council | 9/2015 | Revisions to Ed Specs approved by BOE |
| 6/2014 | ED049 Grant Application filed | 11/2015 | Final approval of plans and specs by BOE and PBC |
| 7/2014 | Architect selected by PBC | 11/2015 | OSCG completes plan review |
| 8/2014 | Owner's Representative selected by PBC | 1/2016 | Construction contracts awarded by PBC |
| 9/2014 | Education programming meetings held | 2/2016 | Community public information session held |
| 10/2014 | Geotechnical site exploration conducted | 2/2016 | Groundbreaking Ceremony for new Orchard Hill |
| 12/2014 | Community public information session held | 6/2016 | Orchard Hill Beam Signing |
| 12/2014 | Construction Manager selected by PBC | 7/2016 | Orchard Hill Topping Off Ceremony |
| 1/2015 | Surveying work conducted | | |
| 2/2015 | Schematic Design documents approved by PBC | | |

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| Academic Year: September - August | Referendum Year 2013 - 2014 | 2014 - 2015 | 2015 - 2016 | Referendum Year 2016 - 2017 | 2017 - 2018 | 2018 - 2019 | Referendum Year 2019 - 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 - 2023 | 2023 - 2024 |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| Orchard Hill Elementary School  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year of full day kindergarten Ed Specs approved by BOE Referendum regarding the construction of new Orchard Hill elementary school passes March 2014 ED 049 filed June 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved in programming design meetings for new OH Schematic Design for new OH approved by PBC Design Development approved by PBC Community meetings conducted in December and May ED 049 grant approved June 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orchard Hill students remain in original Orchard Hill school Construction documents filed with Office of School Construction Grants (OSCG) Construction bids received December 2015 Construction began in February 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orchard Hill students remain in original Orchard Hill School Construction completion targeted for May 2017 Tours of new Orchard Hill Districtwide K-5 staffing transfers Prepare for move to new bldg. Plan to welcome new students Hold information session | <p>OPEN NEW ORCHARD HILL SCHOOL!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome redistricted students from Wapping and Pre-K students from Eli Terry Prepare original Orchard Hill building as "swing space" for 2018-2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Orchard Hill School serves as swing space for PRS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Orchard Hill School serves as swing space for PRS | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Orchard Hill School serves as swing space for PV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Orchard Hill School serves as swing space for PV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Orchard Hill School no longer needed for swing space |
| Wapping Elementary School  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year of full day kindergarten Overcrowded conditions Temporary music classroom constructed in cafeteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Orchard Hill Wapping repurposing meeting with Town Manager | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Began planning redistricting for students and staff Preliminary transportation analysis Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Eli Terry and Philip R. Smith | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share redistricting plan with families Plan for transition of medically fragile and elementary intensive programs to Eli Terry Develop new bus routes Districtwide K-5 staffing transfers Prepare for classroom moves Support students and families through transition Prepare building for town | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wapping students redistricted to surrounding schools Turn over building to town Potential partial use by SW High School (see FAQs) Redeploy technology hardware and other resources from Wapping | | | | | | |
| Eli Terry Elementary School  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year of full day kindergarten Overcrowded conditions Art-on-a-Cart implemented Pre-K Program consumed six classroom spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Orchard Hill Pre-K staff participated in schematic design and design development phases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Began planning for Pre-K population to move to new Orchard Hill in Fall 2017 BOE requested funding for early services in FY 2016-2017 Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Eli Terry and Philip R. Smith | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early project services Develop Ed Specs Ed Specs approved by BOE Hold information session Districtwide K-5 staffing transfers Prepare for classroom moves Plan to welcome new students March 2017 Referendum File OSCG 049 in June 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-K students transition to new Orchard Hill School Welcome redistricted students from Wapping Design phase of new ET school Schematic Design approval Design Development approval OSCG 049 grant approval by state | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eli Terry students remain in original Eli Terry building Construction on documents filed with OSCG Construction on bids Construction on begins Spring 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eli Terry students remain in original Eli Terry building Construction of new Eli Terry completed Spring 2020 Demolish old Eli Terry building Summer 2020 | <p>OPEN NEW ELI TERRY SCHOOL!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct new ball fields in Fall 2020 | | | |
| Philip R. Smith Elementary School  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year of full day kindergarten 3 portable classrooms removed due to unsafe conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Orchard Hill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOE requested funding for early services in FY 2016-2017 Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Eli Terry and Philip R. Smith | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early project services Develop Ed Specs Ed Specs approved by BOE Hold information session Districtwide K-5 staffing transfers Prepare for classroom moves Plan to welcome new students March 2017 Referendum File OSCG 049 in June 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome redistricted students from Wapping Design phase of new PRS school Schematic Design approval Design Development approval OSCG 049 grant approval by state | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRS students attend swing space school (original Orchard Hill building) Construction on documents filed with OSCG Construction on bids Demolish old PRS building to prepare construction on site Construction on begins Spring 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRS students continue to attend swing space school Construction of new PRS completed Spring 2020 | <p>OPEN NEW PHILIP R. SMITH SCHOOL!</p> | | | |
| Pleasant Valley Elementary School  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year of full day kindergarten Installed new kitchen floor and removed asbestos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced roof Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Orchard Hill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved in programming design meetings for new Eli Terry and Philip R. Smith | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold information session Districtwide K-5 staffing transfers Prepare for classroom moves Plan to welcome new students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome redistricted students from Wapping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOE requests funding for early services in FY 2019-2020 Staff involved in programming meetings for new Pleasant Valley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early project services Develop Ed Specs Ed Specs approval by BOE Hold information session March 2020 Referendum File OSCG 049 in June 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design phase of new PV school Schematic Design approval Design Development approval OSCG 049 grant approval | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleasant Valley students attend swing space school Construction on documents filed with OSCG Construction on bids Demolish old Pleasant Valley building to prepare construction site Construction begins Spring 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleasant Valley students continue to attend swing space school Construction of new Pleasant Valley completed Spring 2023 | <p>OPEN NEW PLEASANT VALLEY SCHOOL!</p> |

* Includes actual Pre-K enrollment; ** Includes average projected 90 Pre-K enrollment

Phase One Phase Two Phase Three