Appendix - The Raw Data

The journey began with the **White Hat**, a phase dedicated to grounding the conversation in objective reality. Participants focused on neutral data, stripping away speculation to identify what the community truly knew and where information gaps persisted. By examining the facts that most influenced their previous votes or current uncertainties, they pinpointed exactly what new information was required to build a foundation of trust.

The White Hat perspective establishes the factual foundation of our current situation, identifying both what we know and what remains to be clarified.

White Hat - Confusing

SESSION 1

- Current schools need upgrades and repair
- Financial impact on the Two Towns
- we need information on options for funding
- we need a list of facilities issues in priority order
- we need to assess voter issues
- condition of current schools
- need some environmentally friendly systems
- need to know if the buildings are safe for example black dust in the Winthrop gym
- Site
- cost and MSBA
- model schools
- Penguin Hall
- cost seem prohibitive to the community
- HW is divided between young families and the older generation and empty nesters
- one large school seemed fine and was the less costly alternative
- Why is one large school the best solution
- what are the benefits and disadvantages of one large Elementary School versus two small schools
- Information we have:
  - Town meeting information
  - reports disseminated
  - community group meet
  - Committee meetings
  - untruthful /unreliable social media posts
- I voted yes because the facilities are in need and I wanted the states 49 million to offset financial burden
- cost information for Rehab plan
- impact on children students

- I don't know but we need information and cost of living is too high
- detailed refined costs of rebuilding
- reconfigure schools to allow higher student-teacher ratio
- what are the facts
- a new school is the best way forward for students and costs
- how do we communicate better with towns
- projection of costs associated with band-aiding schools
- costs, taxes, common sense
- I'm not convinced that we need such a large new building
- information needed about costs
- if not a new school what are cost for renovations
- Can we agree on a new school
- How will taxes be impacted
- our facilities are in need of updating
- citizens want something to be done to address school facilities
- what needs to be updated and improved for example technology appropriation of square footage
- influenced vote
- lack of comparable plans

SESSION 2

- "We need the full understanding of what the entire district needs."
- "3 elections were horrible!!"
- "Info need:
  Who does this town want to be?
  Lexington? (Academies, solid special ed)
  - Lynnfield (Solid academics, Solid sports, rising special ed)
  - Masconomet (strong but not top)
  - I am new here and listened to a lot of perspectives in town at the vote but I am not clear who the town wants to be and I need that info to vote

- BEST PATH FORWARD?
  New school?
  Blend?
  Which school to replace?"
- real costs w/ backup and costs that can't be argued
  – what improvements need to be made
  – opportunity costs dollars / town exp
- why did we go through multiple votes?
- "Continued voting for the same project after it was a 'no' at town meeting." What do the citizens want
- What will the voters approve what do the citizens want

- The best choice for the kids was clearly consolidation.
- more clarity around who and which groups were spreading false information about the project and process
- FACTS
  – renovations past due
  – limited budget
- How much will it actually pay / how does that compare to other options
- The kindergarten building does not align with best practices in education.
- Another plan from a consolidated elem. school and new proposal for that and new $ from state.
- How do we get everyone (most) on same page
- The planning and high costs ignoring the voice of town residents
- Students are in closets or the library because of space issues

White Hat - Clear

SESSION 1

- Winthrop heating system is completely inadequate
- current buildings are insufficient in every way to meet needs of all children
- buildings too small not configured for today's needs and laws
- money spent on having duplicate services in > one school
- inadequacy of current schools to meet needs
- many school committee meetings with seemingly only one goal which was consolidation versus looking seriously at renovation options
- five no votes for new schools
- need renovation of school
- cost size of school
- unrealistic expectations and too much pressure on older citizens
- we can change the Ed
- less expensive Renovations and new schools locally
- we need honesty from school committee and superintendent like the misinformation on not being able to be reimbursed for renovations
- 5 no votes two and Consolidated School
- need renovation
- MSBA opportunity
- schools are in disrepair this is expensive
- schools are in disrepair
- teachers need a better work place
- students need better facilities
- affects the overall community
- Educational need

- financial long-term benefit
- various committees did a good job outlining implications financial and other
- three elementary schools are outdated both in terms of physical condition and relevance to 21st century educ
- kids always come first
- 13 years teaching experience at Cutler in a decrepit building
- FINcom analysis
- facilities and condition report
- MSBA FUNDING
- Less Expensive then three renovations (support new school)
- consolidating to bring Community together
- better quality / special education and equity
- Saves MONEY
- schools are in rough shape due to deferred maintenance to keep taxes
- Resources are not Unlimited
- school committee and SBC tour other Renovations in new schools that are MORE cost-effective
- very hot issue lots of opinions
- taxes are already high
- my kids are at Cutler and the facility is in disrepair
- teachers want Improvement to facilities
- some programs exist only at certain school so access is varied and students must change schools for certain services
- different residents have different maximum tax increase
- different people are okay with consolidation others are not
- our schools need updating both for health and student accommodations
- school is vital to health of the town
- kids in schools need for schools to be updated
- we had help from MSBA
- small school
- Resign
- likely water issues therefore more expensive
- unclear information needs to have everything posted in same place with access to all young parents and older seniors
- Through fincom and select board analysis of costs:
    - Hamilton Ultra Rich crowd with private school children do not support public education
    - majority in both towns voted for a new school
- improvements for the next 50 years
- details about each School
- elementary schools are not ADA Compliant
- all five schools need major repairs
- we can't go back to the state for funding for X years
- the design of school spaces has evolved with teaching methodology our buildings are also outdated

- the schools are only one of our major Financial issues
- need to provide great education for our children
- information that the community is very divided
- I voted no because cost and taxpayers and put was ignored causing Town spent millions of dollars wasted
- School officials and school committee ignored taxpayers input of no consolidation
- our schools need a lot of work to provide our kids a safe good learning environment
- taxes will have to go up
- Nothing
- the school committee thinks we need a new school
- The school committee thinks the most cost-effective way is to build a new large school
- consolidation not best for schools and community
- smaller schools much more effective for multiple reasons
- had information that was provided by school newspaper friends and professionals
- current schools inadequate
- the rising taxes are causing us to think it's time to move
- cost to current cohort of residence for all the wish list is outrageously expensive
- didn't like one building
- loss of Winthrop lot for school and athletic outdoor space
- we need to update the schools
- we have a divided Community when it comes to options
- we have two boards that overstep influence and many people feel that way
- conditions of facilities
- more new building options using both sites versus Cutler
- terrible conditions of schools
- importance of decent facilities for Quality education
- we know what each School needs to be comfortable and provide a safe enriching accommodating learning environment and we know what it costs to make this happen
- the facts are that are enrollment is not as large as 10 years ago
- our state rank is declining
- superintendent is paid too much
- what is learned from meeting and at town meeting
- old buildings
- deteriorating trust with decision making
- not enough money
- schools in terrible disrepair
- tax rates are high
- timelines for school replacement long
- 2/3 majority is nearly impossible
- towns do not want a new school
- total cost is too much
- new school was most cost-effective plan

- we need to update replace our facilities
- the Consolidated School plan did not pass
- I was impressed with the work that had been done and the planning for future needs the “new school” solved many problems successfully
- elementary schools are a security risk
- availability of State funds
- need for new facilities
- costs will continue to rise
- all three schools are way out of date
- we currently have no outside funding to help us set the costs like the MSBA
- something needs to be done
- Community is very concerned about tax impact
- schools need work
- full District analysis is needed
- Cost
- Ed plan is too aspirational
- we have excellent education opportunities in Hamilton-Wenham
- we have inferior school facilities compared to our neighboring towns
- as a community we need to invest in our schools to preserve our towns
- the terrible loss of 50 million dollars in state funding
- my own observations of the subpar facilities in schools
- heating cooling systems need to be replaced
- bathrooms at Cutler are inadequate
- small schools work and educate better
- current situation is dire schools are old and not safe conditions for students something has to be done
- small schools better for kids
- no teachers who live out of town are on the committee
- towns are divided regarding Solutions
- cost for new schools too much
- my children having a clean updated school to learn in

SESSION 2

- Cost efficiency of new school vs. renovation at 2 schools
- Cost of new consolidated vs cost of renovation 2 existing school
- Know costs of consolidated and source of MSBA money and amount of state aid
- Know piece-meal approach is more costly
- Cost of one plan (new consolidated school)
- My vote was driven by preserving small schools and addressing the entire district
- Facts are the ed plan was bias towards a new single school
- We have the info that the town does not support a new school

- A mega large school does not fit in the character of the HW sized community. I couldn't vote for it. We need an ed plan that is not all the wants but simplified, not all the bells and whistles
- Pros and cons of project
- The project was subsidized by the state. Winthrop and Cutler are both in dire need of repairs
- Past experience with school consolidation - what is best for our children
- Schools are sub-standard, not safe and lack needed security. Facilities do not support educational needs
- New construction is less expensive than repair/restoration. Missed great opportunity to get state aid
- Teachers and parents of students in the school systems opinions of experience
- Feeling of important to contribute to future of schools
- my kids education - daughter at winthrop and another starting in the fall
- Total dollar cost was biggest influence - only affordable option long term is new construction
- Such division and conflicting info
- Cost of project
- Project timeline
- Number of project options and process to get there
- The new school would cost less than renovating three schools
- Cutler site allowed for no disruption to the current learning environments
- MSBA was a unique, hard won opportunity
- Seeing the condition of the buildings
- We also need to heed the voters outcome and not revote revote and revote that breaks trust and makes everyone bitter
- So many thorough reports by experts
- Cost comparison data
- Site analysis
- A well-articulated and thoughtful ed plan
- Aging buildings
- No room for budget for repair
- People did not understand the process
- Expensive
- Aging buildings
- Organization of building not appropriate for a modern education
- Fixing this is expensive
- Small schools are better for safety and education, renovate them
- The process of meetings, shared information, superintendent information
- Voted + for renovation
- Professional consultants, educational feedback, aligned district priorities
- Sequential and systematic information meetings with shared information
- Grounded information with stats and figures
- Lots of marketing to push consolidation without having vetted the true cost of renovation. ET event acknowledged it was not vetted but estimated

- Lots of adequate information re: the benefits of a new school that address so many of the current problems
- The buildings are old and in need of serious upgrades
- Modern school will have positive impact on property values
- Cost for new school
- New school support groups
- Cost data - most fiscally responsible choice
- Cost of new consolidated vs cost of renovation 2 existing schools
- Third party pricing context
- Child learning impacts
- State funding known
- Tax impact known
- Timeline known
- Bad condition of Winthrop and Cutler
- Not enough Special ed programs except at Buker
- Not enough money to build a new school
- Better guidance to SC needed for facilities and building improvements
- Improved maintenance needed
- No new school
- We know our elementary school buildings are outdated and lack space for teaching and learning
- The facts are the MSBA recognized that Cutler and Winthrop qualified for money based on the state of the buildings.
- As a teacher that works in elementary schools, I see how limited and insufficient our buildings are for a healthy learning environment
- Schools need renovation or replacement
- Inadequate facilities / space
- Cost plan layout
- Engineers report, architectural plans
- No false information
- School committee member
- We need to know the state of the 3 elementary schools and build out a renovation plan for all 3 schools. My vote was most influenced by the fact that there is no trust between the district / SC and the taxpayers each consolidated vote only led to another and another and then finally a district vote which was not legitimate
- Who knows what the facts really are since only one option was explored through to debt exclusion and without trust and transparency there are not facts
- Since there is no trust or transparency with the district or sc, “whatever the information we have is not trustworthy”
- Schools are in need of renovation or new buildings because of age
- My 3 year old and 1 year old wanting the best facilities for them
- The elementary schools is outdated for teaching and learning
- Multiple votes not meeting the threshold for a new school

- My experience as an educator
- The current schools are old and in need of either renovation or a new building
- A lot of data
- My own family planning
- Education experience in the ed space as a teacher / parent
- Plans from various committees, MSBA, town approvals
- Known cost
- Known state funding $49M
- Known tax impact
- Neighbors
- A well-thought-out plan that took years of expert planning was shot down by town members who don't want their taxes raised
- The consolidated school provided the best option that was the most cost effective and would solve the problem the fastest and impact the children the fastest
- People realized there needs to be a plan
- Opportunity to provide needed facilities for students
- Long term financial responsibility
- Vote yes based on cost impact of project
- Tax impact with state funding
- Best option for most kids
- Cost, grant availability for needed repairs/updates
- Security
- State funding
- Years of town planning
- We need to address facilities
- The new consolidated school did not have a majority support
- People were frustrated
- School was too big and would need to grow still in the future
- Need better facilities to meet child and adult needs
- Money is the factor that most simply affects all parties
- Consolidation was most cost- effective, especially long term.
- I don't want to be priced out in 20 years
- consolidation= $50 from state
- Timeline 3 years
- 1 or 2 schools are in urgent needs
- Cutler need capital improvements
- Felt I had sufficient information
- Renovation often costs more than new construction
- That code upgrades are non-negotiable at some point and they cost a lot
- That investment was long overdue
- That NIMBY and misinformation (much of it intentional) drove the discussion
- There was a youth movement related to support for a consolidated school

- Tax increase no matter what
- Consolidating eliminates maintaining 3 building down to 2
- Consolidation is cheapest and most bang for a buck

White Hat - Missing

SESSION 1

- Needed information what will it take to do basic maintenance and repairs to the schools? and specific categories of needed repairs.
- Financial for future designs
- time frames and prices with MSBA for renovations
- I would like the SC to let residents tour the building
- full District analysis is needed
- costs of renovating specific schools
- comparing options with full transparency compared and presented unbiased
- better comps or estimates for three Renovations versus New School
- better/more simple messaging
- have repairs and upgrades of the schools been prioritized
- next steps with the MSBA
- what location are people okay with consolidation?
- what can we afford/residents are willing to pay
- Clarity on the sources of funding available for different types of options
- what teachers want
- what parents want
- how much will it increase my taxes
- schools need to improve modern brick and mortar
- what is the cost of sending special needs students out of District
- information by topic by cost input tax vs Grant
- No info rehab two schools
- the cost of fixing up one school at a time over decades not at once
- how do community members feel their objections and priorities
- would new space for special needs students require less out of District placements
- Cutler School land where a new building was proposed is it sinking ?
- Influenced by school committee not considering renovations
- no school in Wenham pre-k through K is not a school
- cost of renovations
- tax implications
- meeting scheduled during hours parents can attend
- what options are feasible given massive loss at MSBA funding
- what is in Queue with the MSBA now

- what are the options
- transparency of process
- improve existing schools
- prioritize students needs
- what are the facts what info do we need and what info
- What will the community support
- cost to me
- the cost of new construction
- cost to benefit
- full analysis of cost process of renovation
- honest and thorough facts
- school committee focused primarily on consolidation but minimized option to renovate and deferred maintenance allowed

SESSION 2

- Can we get any funding from state for repairs
- What are other options that require ADA upgrades
- A clear plan for renovation of existing schools
- Facts vs opinions
- More on process of renovations (which i believe will cost more and not deliver the highest level of quality)
- More background of why we got into such a big hole in the first place
- Multiple third parties confirming the information provided is accurate and true, don't let people turn fact into fiction
- Provide benchmark cost data with similar school projects happening in MA to show that our costs are not “inflated”
- Trust and transparency
- What are people willing to pay for
- How to make voters understand the process and unique challenges of public building projects vs. homes
- Who is behind the opposition and what are their motivations why voters rejected new elementary school
- More quotes and design options for repairs, renovation, rebuilding etc.
- Other capital needs (the high school, middle school) were not considered
- We need lower cost options
- We need to save the options available with small schools and flexibility that comes with scaling up and retracting our enrollment changes
- SC pushed the consolidated school before giving renovations a chance
- Need more community knowledge and involvement from the beginning to create buy in
- Communications is not disseminated to all
- Needs v.s wants, realistic goals what is possible financially and good form children

- More information on schools in absorbable fashion
- Nothing yet
- Nothing: need to know what scope of problem of issue current
- A way to shut down the vocal opposers who spread misinformation with no backing
- Other options for renovation and costs
- Master plan for all HWRSD renovations needed ahead

Red Hat

Recognizing that school facilities are a deeply personal issue, the process then transitioned to the **Red Hat**. This was a vital space for intuition and emotion, where participants were invited to express the emotional reality of their experience without debate or justification. By summarizing their feelings about the process in a single word, the community acknowledged its "emotional pulse," validating sentiments that often go unheard in purely technical or financial discussions.

Session 1

Predetermined Xx
Divided
Syllogist
Politicized
Disappointing xx
Disingenuous
Democratic
Betrayed
Professional
Irrational
Contentous
Disrespected
Frustrated x
Gas -Lighted
Polarized
Ignored
Unrepresented
Bullied
Manipulated x
Limited
Uni Directional

Splintered
Stressful
Partisan

Session 2

Short-sighted
FALSE
CLEAR
CONFUSING
GASLIT
DISHONEST
ACCESSIBLE
DIVISIVE
BULLIED
DIFFICULT
STUDENT-FOCUSED
COMMUNITY-FOCUSED
OPEN
HEAVY
PRE-DETERMINED
HOPEFUL
IGNORED
NARROW INPUT
- DISAPPOINTING
- LEFT OUT
- WRONG
- INCLUSION
- BIASED
- CONTENTIOUS
- SAD
- SELFISH
- LOSE-LOSE
- INFORMATIVE
- MADDENING
- PREDICTABLE
- CHAOTIC

Black Hat

With a clearer understanding of the facts and feelings, the focus shifted to the **Black Hat**—the perspective of caution and critical thinking. This stage was not about negativity, but about foresight. Participants systematically identified potential risks, "deal-breakers," and the specific conditions of opposition. It was a rigorous effort to identify the most serious concerns and determine potential risks before the plan was finalized.

FINANCIAL	EDUCATIONAL	PROCESS/TRUST
• Loss of state funds • Senior citizen tax cap • Investigate funding for renovations	• 2 new schools • Deteriorating facilities • Falling behind other towns • Quality ed with current situation • Size of building vs lot size • Prefer small schools	• Delays • Full process explanation prior to beginning • Separate 3A from the process • Hear and address citizens questions • Design of building
• Prioritization >cost> objective • Budget overrides, teachers salaries • Scale of updates truly needed • Availability of state & federal funding • Phased updates • Worry about increase in property taxes • No financial oversight of the school community • Property values falling due to falling school ratings	• Small schools work best • Hamilton's falling status as a town because of bad facilities • Safety- protection from school shootings	• Prioritization • Parking/traffic flow/safety for drop off • Scale problem
• Missing information on other options and costs • No evidence of this being the most cost-effective • Lack of information on needs in priority order • Where was the money going to come from • Disputed allegations	• Ed plan only supported one option • No evidence of this option being best • Lack of input from teachers about what space needs were a priority • Discussion lacking re:	• Lack of transparency • Pre-determination • Ignored an early poll showing interest in small schools • ⅔ majority is too high a bar • Communications rules made many feel excluded

about deferred maintenance • The scope of financial needs/distress in town: 5 schools, water, etc • Myopic view, not looking at the big picture	what education should look like • "Back to basics" resistance	• Winthrop school and 3A - feeling manipulated • "Mega school" and similar language was inflammatory • Lack of ability to speak freely with school committee • Lack of conversations as opposed to a presentation • Well funded anonymous campaign confounded with 3A issues

• Taxes increase
• Cost
• Burden community now
• Gradual improvements possible
• Allowed schools to decline to force issues
• Phased-in plans needed
• Consider older members of community so they can stay in their homes/community
	• Size of school proposed too large
	• Students being lost and poorly treated
	• Bullying worse at larger schools
	• Neighborhood schools strong
	• Prioritize special ed facilities
	• Larger class sizes are possible
	• Explain the rationale for class/school size
		• State pushing larger schools
		• Allowed long-term issues with school conditions/deferred maintenance
		• All options not fully considered
		  ○ Dismiss reno option
		  ○ Modular school buildings
		• Misrepresented conditions of school facilities (ie. use of rooms)
		• Lots of misinformation
		• Perceived lying=actual lying
		• Disrespect to members of the community
		• Ignored initial community survey where renovation was priority
		• Follow vote of community don't do "end runs" - bad faith

• Taxes increase • Loss of state $$	• Conditions the schools are in • Lack of services to special needs	• The district followed the MSBA process but Communication could have been more robust • NIMBY!
• Taxes	• Small schools	• Too rushed

• Renovation seem cheaper • Confusion about MSBA process	• Fear of a decrease in services • Fear of an increase in class size • Identity/community of small schools • Lack of trust in the teacher's professional opinions>>>>>>>>>>	• Communication • Location • Timing / 3A • Ham vs. Wen property • ballot vote • Abutters
• We need to act soon because costs are rising • We need a comprehensive capital plan • More of the budget for maintenance and less on administrators • A small school system like HW does need to pay the super $250000, which is more than surrounding towns • Tax impact	• Our school system is declining in rank • I'm against consolidation bc the Wenham ___ would all go to Hamilton • Against consolidation • Keep elementary separate • Small schools are better for young children • Space and safety need to be resolved	• Community needs to be heard • It appears that the SC and Super withheld their plan to have the last vote until they needed it • We should have been told all of the options upfront • No trust in the sc because they gave a significant raise to Super and said he deserved it after his lead us through 6 failed votes
• Tax consequences of new vs. renovation were not clear • Renovation estimates were not robust enough • Concerned about the tariffs and MSBA funding uncertainties	• Smaller schools offer better ed (per some opinions) • Pro: consolidates services; speaks to the lack of understanding by the general public as to how 21st century education works • Pro: Border Communication relationships	• HW news is biased (if unintentionally) against new school • Lack of trust BTW some community members and SC • Repeated votes were legal, but contributed to mistrust • Need for residents to see it as a personal responsibility to find credible information and keep an open mind. • Difficulty with what was decided by a committee vs town vote
• Where do students learn during….	...Renovations and cost of temp classrooms	
• Cost • Timeframe	• Fixed or modified needs of full district - needs to	• MSBA • Think out of the box

• MSBA - financial ceiling in renovations • What triggers other upgrades • Non-aspirational Ed Plan (just the basics) • SC needs to get control of the budget • The people who live in town longer are left footing the bills	be assessed	• Allocation of students to rooms • Addressing why people move in just for special needs and out after kids graduate • Regular families moving in and out • SC committee going to visit other new schools and renovations, like Welch School
	SESSION 2	
• People won't back multiple renovations • Wenham won't back 2 Hamilton schools first • Cost escalation • MSBA backing • People don't want higher taxes • Bandaid fixes (security vestibules) • MS and HS future needs • Get town budgets in order • Town decisions to impact tax implications	• Security • Non ada compliant • Not accessible • Resources spread too thin • Displacement during construction • Inequitable access to resources • Teacher retention and acquisition • space/growth • Current and future looking spaces • Class sizes	• Vocal misinformation • Social media • Timeline • ⅔ vote • Last mile participants • NIMBYS • How do we reach everyone with accurate information • Strategize for success • Fearmongering from opposition
• Taxes • Increased price since the vote • Budget impacts of delayed timeline • MSBA funds • Decreased state and federal funding	• Continued use of subpar learning spaces - replace • Educational inequality school to school • Healthy environments • Safe schools for students and adults	• Town approval • Yes vote threshold and process • MSBA funds • Deep engagement in the community • Sense of community pride in the eventual outcome • Misinformation • Development of agreed upon facts • Mission statement of this project • Integration of the school plan and town plan
• $33K cost over the loan burden per household too	• Want to ensure best education - small	• Equity does not mean new/big

high • ADA compliance costs if triggered with renovation • Entire district needs building plan • BLow all money in Elementary school and not tend to other buildings • Over tax elderly and middle class from the community • Cutting teachers if override doesn't pass - cut elsewhere • Same money could be used for reno	classrooms are better • Need ed plan not aspirational • Get rid or tech monopoly in education • It's all about the teacher/student relationship - focus here • Taj Mahal no needed	• ADA compliance trigger renovation • Have to vet all options and listen to surveys not ignore • Railroaded into this solution • SC needs to engage in conversation with public not just listen and ignore. They should have an element of representing the public • Build trust with community by having diverse views on SC • Be like ipswich and bring it back - same plan, big risk • Over 1000 people in small community if consolidated wrecks neighborhood • Don't bring kids view into the adult discussions of the plan and non resident teachers • Taxpayers matter, all aged

• What are ongoing capital improvements in the district (High, Middle, Buker etc)
• WHat is the long term financial commitment
• Have we missed the boat with what is the sate funding? Can we stll access the money?
• Concern for financial burden across our community
• What else is needed for tax payers> is this one of 10 projects?
	• Single elementary school
	• Kindergarten as a separate school
	• Disruption of construction on existing teaching of students
	• Same kids going through multiple construction projects
		• Need to define who the towns want to be
		  ○ Academic
		  ○ Sports
		• Need to satisfy a balance between who we want to be and how to keep kids in public school
		• We need a new north star as a town for who we want to be

• Overrides forever • Available budget	• Keeping and attracting good teachers	• Clarify priorities • Case studies

• Overall needs • Tax implications	• Proper space for all students • Maintaining small student/teacher ratio • Consistent experience for students	(regional/national) • budget/funding is complex
• Taxes • Rising costs • Opportunity cost • Declining Property values • Cost of keeping old building going • Loss of MSBA funding	• Quality of ed is declining • Safety concerns • Teacher retention • Info re size of school/impact on education	• Repeated failure/no new investment • Misinformation • Sense of community suffers • Failure of community to learn enough to make educated decision
• Losing MSBA money • State money to be spread out over a period of years for renovation • Cost to run 3 facilities vs 2 with 1 that is LEEDS certified • Transportation costs	• Disruptive to student location and education • Special ed program adequate and appropriate space and offerings for special ed students (ex. No LBC @ Buker or Winthrop)	• Perceived quality difference during and after renovation • Trust experts
• Raising taxes • Sc spent 15 million on turf for HS why not put it in renovations like the HS roof • We voted every budget for SC - what did they do with the maintenance money • What can the community support • Research other funding • Done feel we can trust mSBA either • School budget is more than 60% of town budget is not sustainable	• We need to focus on curriculum based learning not fancy buildings	• We risk losing ⅔ vote on debt exclusion • How do we ever rebuild trust with the SC now • SC pushed consolidated school not renovations • Communication not all in once place for all to access • blueprints/layout unclear
• Tax rate • Cost analysis flaws • Wasting resources on things that sound good but are not important	• Impersonal setting • Kids get lost • Staff disconnected • Overscheduled administration	• Model school process • Lack of respect for opinions • Getting what we are promised

	• What is best for children • Ed plan does not meet community needs • Loss of small community	• Honest numbers • Could not trust traffic numbers •
• Escalating costs • Loss of state aid • Significant residential tax impact • Resistance to tax increases • Adequate acreage • Loss of home values	• Crumbling infrastructure impacts kids remaining in district • Consolidated is too big • Loss of quality teachers • Threat of legal action over ADA and special ed inadequacies • Need school of efficient size • Equity in education for all children • Safety and security concerns	• Multiple votes wont fly • Division within each town • Resistance to investing in infrastructure • No voters won't budge • Emotional basis of opposition • inaction/delay • Conflation with 3A • Renovation would have to be all 3 schools • Abutters • Fear of change

Yellow Hat

To balance the Black Hat's caution, the group shifted to the **Yellow Hat** to explore benefits and shared values. This phase moved the conversation toward logical optimism, seeking the fundamental principles that united the two towns. Regardless of the final architectural solution, participants worked to define the specific outcomes they collectively desired for their students, staff, and the broader community.

<u>Session 1</u>

- Safety
- Haigh Quality Education
- Special Ed In District with space
- Schools/ Town asset
- Competitive Teachers Salary
- Facilities To help retain staff
- Community spaces (Use)
- Interim Solutions while implementing long-term corrections
- Environmental Consciousness
- Info to COA Newsletters
- HW News Weekly Column

- K-5 In Wenham
- Long-range Comprehensive Pan
- Impacts of Decision - traffic, Etc.
- Fostering Connection/Positivity with Community + Schools
- Investigating Senior Citizen Tax Relief (broken, need pathways)
- Schools As Assets (Reasonable Taxes)
- Mutual Respect and Understanding of Various Needs and Constraints
- Honest Two-way Communication with Seniors

SESSION #2

- Access to Resources (ED)
- Fosters Community
- Life Long Learners
- Inclusive Facilities (ADA)
- Pride
- Competitive
- Break Out Spaces
- Planned to Compete w/ Private Schools
- Long-Term Consideration
- Improved Spaces for Special Ed Students
- Small Teacher: Student Ratio
- Green Space (Outside)
- Diverse Opportunity
- Community Spaces
- Top Schools in State
- Minimum tax impact
- State of the art
- Budgets that reflect beliefs
- Capacity for Growth
- Pathways
- Compassion
- Teachers student relationships
- attract/retain staff
- Sense of Urgency
- Good Citizens
- Critical Thinkers
- Environmentally (Friendly) Healthy Facility
- Safe Building
- Beautiful Building

- Known Timeline (Results)
- Minimize Disruption during construction
- People Don't Need to Move
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Appropriate Program
- properly maintained + upgraded
- Equitable Educ.
- Teacher Retention
- 21st Cent. Learning
- Admired Schools (Teachers)
- Students at center
- Engagement
- listening/respecting opinions
- Fairness
- Physically healthy facility

Green Hat

Building on these shared values, the **Green Hat** opened the floor to creativity and new possibilities. This was a time for "outside the box" lateral thinking, where traditional constraints were temporarily set aside to generate fresh ideas. Residents were encouraged to look beyond the obvious and suggest which innovative options or alternative paths deserved serious exploration next.

Worth Exploring Now

Session #1

- Green environmental education, outdoor education
- Interim improvements
- Maintaining what we've got
- Exploring more communication between schools + community/schools being more part of the community
- Continue Public Discussion
- Modular units needed for each elementary school on an interim or permanent basis
- Utilize excess space at high school
- Use vacant community spaces during renovations (Patton Estate, Town Hall, Community House, American Legion, Virtual classes for older students)
- Model School Program MSBA

- Better ways to engage residents
- Sponsorship of Facilities
- Renovations - Look at Schools that have been renovated (Welch School)
- Model Schools
- Revise Ed Plan
- Air Quality - Frenkel had free options
- Develop a list of priorities
    - School Safety
    - Traffic Patterns
- Renovate all 3 existing elementary schools
- Look at Penguin Hall
- Greater Regionalization
- Wenham leave the HW district and join another
- Nature school/outdoor education magnet school
- Increase trade/tech school opportunities
- Increase early college credit for High School Students
- Increase partnerships with community organizations
- Research other configurations (notional or international examples)
- How to improve communication and understanding of needs, current educational and facilities requirements
- Explore other available spaces and buildings
- Penguin Hall availability
- Additional district? Financial costs

SESSION #2

- Improvements to current facilities
- Replace one school / remodel 2
- Long term maintenance
- Community relationships generates ideas/solutions , inside/outside town
- Wealthy alumni who will show support
- Is there a piece of land we have not considered
- Eminent domain Haley property
- Increased regionalization
- Is there an alternative educational model that would not require all students to be in school at the same time
- Don't give up consolidated plan at Cutler or Winthrop
- Repurposing existing schools/buildings
- Tax base growth
- Including businesses in schools — beyond school students
- Renovation costs to maintain small schools
- Streamline Ed plan that's not "aspirational" but basic
- Different grades together vs all in same bldg
  (i.e.: Bukers K–1, Cutler 2–3, Winthrop 4–5)

- Community participation in fixing things (work days)
- Fundraise for “wants” if needs are met
- High-quality competitive schools facilities to help analysis of district management of facilities
- Definition of equity in education and not having focus just on building. Resilience in kids is character building

Blue Hat

Finally, the process reached the **Blue Hat**, the stage of management and synthesis. Here, the diverse sentiments and ideas gathered throughout the previous hats were transformed into specific, actionable success criteria. By asking participants to complete the prompt, "*I could support a future school plan if...*", the community effectively drafted a roadmap of the conditions required to achieve consensus.

I COULD SUPPORT A FUTURE SCHOOL PLAN IF… (Session #1)

My children were getting a high-quality education with the services they need if necessary in a safe environment that had the proper facilities for everyone to learn and be part of the community.

I felt it would support and benefit fully the students and the staff in the classrooms and the community.

The facilities allow us to retain high-quality educators, the funding is clearly articulated, and the services for the students are equally accessible to all students in both towns.

Focused on what students and teachers need and want to have a positive, healthy, safe learning and working environment.

If one new school

- better lay out
- more outdoor space
- Define future goals of the Winthrop site and reserve for a facility that benefits and excites the entire community.

If two new schools:

- could be put out to more Architects for alternate plans and costs
- Two equal-sized schools?
- preferred plan for two new schools.

It is one Consolidated Elementary School that further connects the two towns and provides modern learning environments.

There is a reasonable balance between actual needs vs. wants, and there is an eye to keeping costs reasonable for our community.

Questions that people bring up must be investigated and answered at Future meetings rather than ignored.

It addresses our current educational and Facilities needs as well as projected needs in the future. The plan should address all schools in our district, and be affordable, for example, make use of grants, creative funding etc. It should have much community support.

It provides safe educational spaces for our children and provides enough space for our students and has some ability to accommodate increased future capacity. Provides accessible spaces for all students, staff, and visitors. It is a plan that our community supports and feels a sense of shared pride in having created.

There is a k through 5 school renovated in Wenham. We renovate Cutler, Winthrop and the high school. Keep small schools. Create and follow through with a daily, weekly, and yearly maintenance plan.

Affordability is key. I hope I can still afford to live here after the new plan is completed. We need to get buildings in shape but we all have to afford living in the community or it won't work.

The school committee needs to reduce the bloated Administration budget and use those savings to improve the buildings. Every retired household that you force out from over-taxing will be replaced with families with children. When I'm is becoming unaffordable and high taxes hurt our property values.

We focus on what is best for students, impact to the environment is a key Focus, 204o net zero. financially feasible for all residents.

Complete cost estimate for Rehab of Cutler and Winthrop. Prioritizing 1. safety 2. code adherence, and 3. all of the rest.

Where MSBA is clear in the process for amount available to renovate both Cutler and Winthrop based upon a comprehensive plan (Jim Purdy).

We keep our children's and educators' needs as the absolute top priority and incorporate ideas for future Society changes like AI and Technology.

Tour other school Renovations (Welch School) if not willing to do it then you aren't serious. not telling older residents to defer taxes for a school project, this is tone deaf and disrespectful to

those who have worked hard their whole lives. must be financially realistic. Get control of the school budget before bringing anything forward. Make hard choices. Explore options on parents kicking in extra for anything above basic needs we can't continue, or reconfiguring class sizes, or brainstorm ideas to reduce budget to afford Renovations Etc. must be good not just for people with kids in schools, the entire Community must agree

It truly makes a difference, no band-aids.

We need to improve District resources for facilities, planning, communications, and reserves even if this means tax increases. I wish we could require all voters to tour the schools prior to voting.

The needs of students are considered first and next the new plan results in long-lasting improvements that align with 21st century education.

It turned our schools into town assets

The project makes sense, we have to have schools.

It follows the MSBA program which would qualify the district for a subsidy.

Students and teachers are provided an environment they deserve. Special education is inclusive and keeps special ed students in the community when possible.

From the beginning of the process multiple plans were extensively researched. Budgets presented, architectural design available and open process with clear and distinctive choices. Costs, tax implications, how to manage impact on the community.

We restart the process bringing citizens in at a more detailed and arduous level early on more open houses, even more outreach. Technical constraints on schools, especially sped need careful explanation. The aging population needs extensive Outreach more efforts to bring all ages into schools to support the needed costs

It provides for educational excellence for K through five children, while anticipating middle and Senior School needs and timelines, at a cost that can be borne, rationalized to the community through an open transparent process.

Full analysis of the District needs to determine prioritized needs that are not aspirational. Consider all reconfiguration options and maintain small schools. Anything over needs is only considered as crowdfunding. (Jeff Austin)

It met immediate needs for space while implementing phased-in, long-term corrective plan for existing facilities based upon independent professional assessments, for example, Structural Engineers HVAC Etc.

If there was a well-publicized effort to develop a clear and open process to identify and prioritize educational needs. get community buy-in through information sharing and listening not through perceived coercion.

The school committee had least input, Financial impact of each taxpayer for one school repair at the time, overtime, over decades. One cohort should not have to pay it all going forward. Small schools must stay to preserve one small town feel that's why we live here. We don't want to be Beverly.

A full and comprehensive analysis of all current buildings was completed by an independent professional. The school committee would need to be objective and open to various options without a predetermined outcome. The Proposal would be presented to the community for approval under the terms of the existing Regional Agreement.

We do not have a serious increase in our property taxes and concern about the safety of our children.

Schools were renovated for Brick and Mortar safety Etc and as time goes by with technology etc. use the budget to complete more projects. It can't be all done at once. We have always voted for the school committee budget for renovations to the schools, but why, why, why didn't they keep up with the renovations when provided and noted in the money to do so.

There was Financial oversight of the school committee/HWRSD.

I COULD SUPPORT A FUTURE SCHOOL PLAN IF… (Session #2)

We don't end up voting for the same proposal as before
We exhaust all new “outside the box” ideas
We work expediently with urgency and transparency
We consider implications for all residents and present fair solutions

Every detail was transparent to the town
We explored all options for state subsidized finding
We communicated pros and cons to all about action versus inaction, specifically tax implications
We reviewed the RFP process for school repair options
If I knew my children were going to learn in a safe and comfortable environment

Opposition is allowed to express their concerns and provide their own solutions
We, as a town, thought of our children first over ourselves and our comfort

There is a long-term plan where people can see the financial impacts
The plan reflected the stated values of the community: quality ed, small class sizes, safe and clean buildings to be proud of

We had full context on district-wide investments/renovations needed ahead
We created a space that enabled best-in-class learning teaching and well being - not just copying what's been done but leaning into what's best and leading the way forward as a district
Various options and findings have been explored and proposed to allow greater choice and input in the process

I had a bigger picture of the 2 towns' master plans (10 years) across all areas, not just education and a bigger picture of the district plan/major goals needs expenses over the next 10 years
I heard clarity for who the district is aiming to be (vision) and how it will be similar and different to other school options in eastern MA. With this vision, I could better prioritize what to support with all the upcoming building program etc. I am open-minded and undecided. I just need for clarity where this town wants to go. We are pretty new to the town, we like it here and can get behind a lot of ideas. We just need a border vision first. Thanks for all you do for the community!
Want to hear more from teachers - what they need and want from the town. Amplify their voices.

Teachers and staff are excited for it
It maximizes non-town funding sources
It doesn't disrupt learning experience of our current elementary students
It better serves the full range of student needs
It improves safety and comfort of overall spaces
It enables more learning for future job market

THANK YOU
It reflects our district's portrait of a learner
Adapt & Persevere, empathize, learn for life, communicate, collaborate, think critically, environmentally sustainable

It provides a safe learning environment for our students
It provides accessible spaces for our students
It is a long-term fiscally responsible project
It creates a sense of pride and ownership for the community
It provides facilities where teachers want to teach, students want to learn and the community feels proud to have created

The teachers and staff are in favor of it

If the plan is clear with the timelines in the near future
The student is at the center of the plan
The commercial tax implication is weighed more that residential
Families of elementary-aged kids who attend public school are in favor of it

Funding was supported in part by the state
It showed how debt is paid over time and what debts get stacked
Included 21st century learning - connected to ed plan and had teacher input
Community voting process remains consistent
Any groups campaigning for or against have to be named with individuals for accountability
Kind and respectful dialogue in community meetings

Incorporated the current ed plan
Allow for community growth - extra space
Qualify for MSBA funding
The plan was supported by the teachers and the community
The new school was an inclusive and modern space

We reduce administrative costs - fewer buildings
We maximize state funding resources
Children benefit from the state-of-the-art facilities

It results in high-quality educational facilities, helps retain teachers/staff - and does not raise property taxes to the point that many residents would be forced to move out of Hamilton

If it's the most cost-efficient options that maximizes quality education for the largest number of elementary students in HW

It includes a consolidated elementary school that offers space, environmental quality, teachers support for a top quality learning space

We had a clear vision for the type of school system we want to be, and what was designed and built was aligned with that vision, balanced with what is feasible for the current residents to build , operate and maintain
Can we design an ed system we want that is best for students and teachers rather than starting with the minimum viable product?

The People in charge would be honest up front, good listeners
If the people in charge would be willing to do what the majority of the whole community wants for the town to keep many of the values it has had for years.
If the town decision did not need to be showy and make themselves the best of the best physical buildings

If the future plans would be trying to help the young generation be well rounded, good, loving honest citizens!
If the leaders would be honest and not deceitful and hid agendas

If it followed the MSBA model school process for one new school and an ed plan similar to Lexington and Andover's program, including modifications for Hamilton and Wenham's needs.
Estimated $70M , 60,000 square feet
Remodel the other two schools
Winthrop would be the school to build new

It reflects the stated goals of the community members
It takes into account what teachers say they need to teach most effectively (space, materials, special adaptations)
It is designed to last - well built or rehabbed, a maintenance plan is in place
Is assured a well-balanced curriculum
It is environmentally friendly
It allows for upgrading as needs change

MSBA contribution for either reno or new building is reasonable to address / mitigate the significant Real estate property tax burden
Prefer option of a new building plan once again to be explored with MSBA - time frame? Amount of $

Appropriate renovations and upgrades were carried out over several years to all school buildings, not just a few grades.. Boilers, roofs and systems should take priority over fields and sports so that educational excellence is maintained.

There must be a fiscally responsible plan for the entire district
Core needs are addressed - not aspirational
The financial implications are considerate of all residents
Small elementary schools are prioritized (neighborhood)
Iterative plans are considered
Don't boil the ocean $$$

It continued investment in our staff, buildings, children to give them a safe and healthy environment for continued learning success and did not cut funding

The small school's footprint was maintained and the tax impact to do so was spread over a longer time from, supporting an ed plan of simple needs
We focused on _____ issues not fluffy and dof issues, hands on vs computer focused… What are the basics in a school learning environment vs the "frosting". Keep it simple with engaged teachers cultivating great current learners, small space like private schools. Kids don't need bells and

whistles, they need a clean and functioning, creatively equipped space with real books and markers etc.
Our elderly neighbors don't have to move to support the cost

It's the most financially responsible plan that still meets all the needs of the students, faculty and staff. I would not support increasing taxes if the result is still inadequate learning space that does not meet the needs of all learners
I also wouldn't support a plan that doesn't provide for “future proofing” - 21st century learning option to adapt with population growth and thinking about how we will serve kids in 10 or 20 years. Investing money into schools that will be ill-equipped to meet the future needs is not financially responsible.

It benefits the students and provides fair learning for all the kids. Also the sooner it can be done the better
A plan that will be passed but the anti-consolidation group that still maximizes the benefits for our kids
At the end of the day, though ill vote yes on anything that improves the quality of education, the environment for leaning and that helps our teachers

It benefits all students
lowers/is realistic about tax impact
Okay if taxes go up
It isn't swayed by the loudest naysayers
Address all elementary issues (space and safety)
Needs to increase school safety
Timeline is logical (not forever reno/projects adhoc)

It is a sustainable building plan for the future of HW kids (tech space, high quality ed).
It is a smart financial decision that feels like an investment, but has the buy-in needed across both towns. It gets all the HW kids what they need and provides exceptional ed opportunity that is sought after(for my kids, but also my home value)
Big bonus if we get $$ from MSBA, no quick short-sighted fixes

It is possible to get needed funding
It provides a better, safer option for our students and future students than what we have now
If there is a clear plan and timeline

We concentrate on needs not wants
We put community fiscal health first because bankrupt towns = no schools
Commitment to maintenance of any renovations
Respect town meeting votes - not multiple meetings / notes when HWRSD and SC dont get their way

It is logical well-thought-out plan that recognizes all the schools needs
Why are we spending time on any and all possibilities when he should already be concentrating on renovation what we have (3 elementary schools)

Renovations are prioritized in our existing schools as to need
Regarding education and safety of students
Research alternate funding
School committe needs to be transparent and trusted
Information needs to be available to all in towns in one place consistently
If i knew why buildings were not maintained
When every year of my 47 years is the community we voted for everything the SC put in the budget including overrides. Where did the maintenance money go? Buildings were left to deteriorate

All opinions are respected and not judged as being immoral
Plans are respectful of the needs of the students and community
The community cares about the best education for kids. To decide “what's best?” is where open-mindedness is needed
We consider the importance of green spaces for children and their contact with nature

I’m confident the building is safe
Teachers staff and education experts show support for the plan and that it will meet students learning environments
Relatively small class sizes are maintained
Disruption to existing student is minimal

A quality plan for a beautiful well-thought-out educational facility that was supported by teachers/administration/students/parents
Cost was reasonable that seniors would not have to sell homes and move out because of taxes
A school that our community would be proud of and come together to support

It is cost-effective, built for the long haul, efficient etc. long term good value<capital cost also operating cost
It provides for great spaces to learn and teach
We maximize the funding from other sources (MSBA)
I understand the economic benefit vs the alternatives

There is clearly articulated plan for pathways (that are modeled after the ch 74 CTE programs)

1. Engineering (ex. robotics)
2. Design & media communication (ex. art and music)
3. Environmental tech (ex. life sciences)
4. Marketing (ex. business/hosa)

5. Information teach services (ex. tech and AI)
6. Early education and care (ex. education)
7. Sustainable horticulture (ex. agriculture)

In the next model (k-12) for a renovation of the 3 existing schools that connect to the middle and high schools

It is thoughtfully developed (which it was) and long-term viable, is equitable, cost effective, accomplishes safety goals, and environmentally friendly. Isn't based on fantasy and fear

Schools are safe (air, ada, heat, security, lighting, systems)