



# Middle School Consolidation Study

## November 9, 2017

Tim Smith, Principal  
Pawcatuck Middle School



# Presentation Overview

- Maintaining Two Middle Schools: The comfort of what we know
- The Feasibility of Consolidation
- A New Way Forward as a Single Middle School



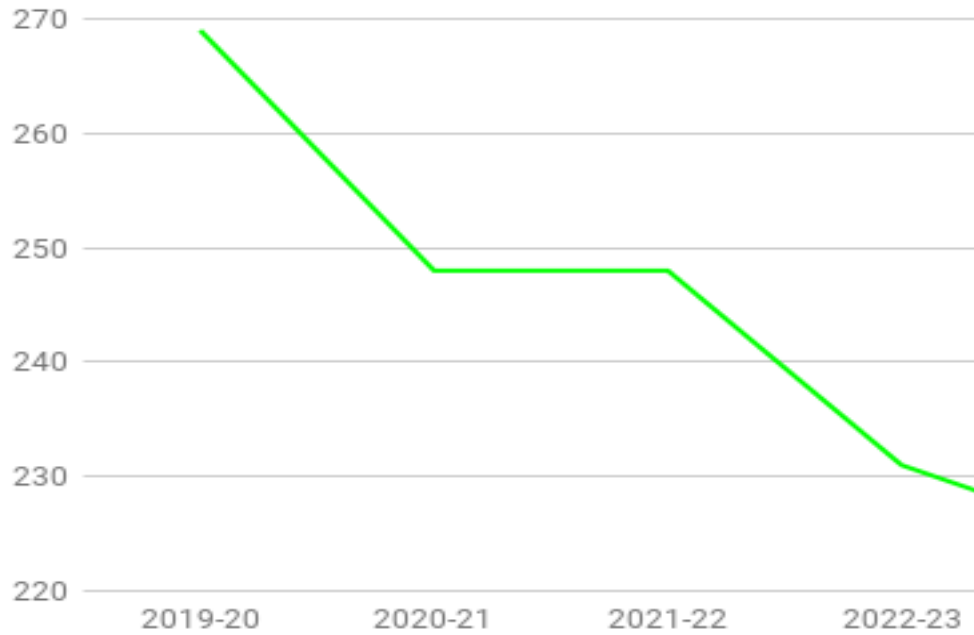
# The Comforts of What We Know

## Maintaining both Middle Schools

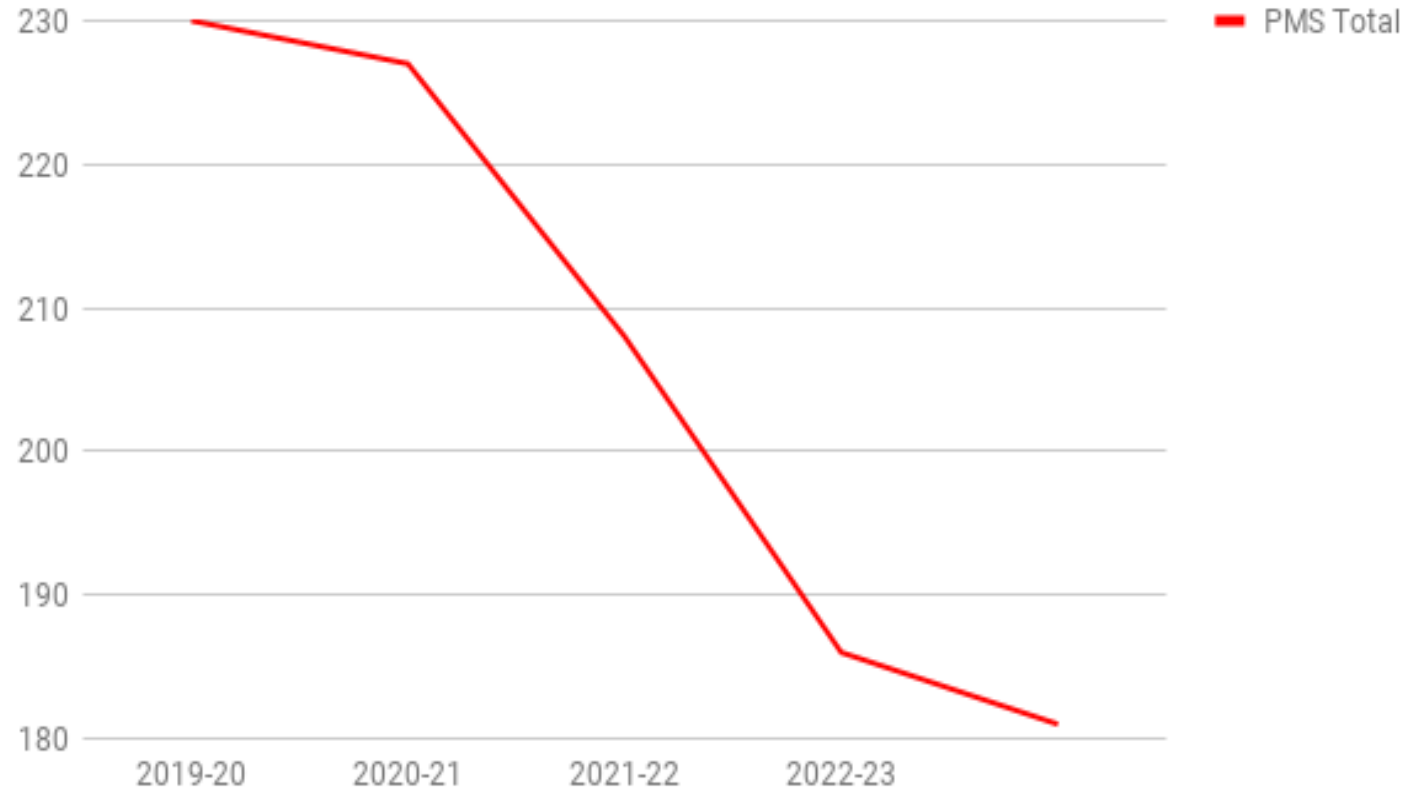
- Declining Enrollment
- Duplicating Programs
- Diminishing Resources
- Devising Parity and Equity



MMS Total



PMS Total



Stonington Public Schools

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# The Feasibility of Consolidation

## The Status Quo At Scale

- Academics
- Surveys
- Operations
- Sports & Extra-curricular Activities



# Academics

- The projected population in grades 6,7 & 8 in 2018-19 will be about 500 Students
- Maintaining current class size of 23 students we need 7 sections per grade level or 21 classrooms
- Mystic's floor plan reviewed to fit classrooms, special services, and the relocation of the SBHC from Pawcatuck
- Classroom needs can be met without sharing rooms. The sharing of classrooms would accommodate any future population increase



# Survey Classes

- Maintain the current World Language Program
- Maintaining current survey offerings with some variations in frequency and duration
- Large survey classes like Band, Chorus & PE will need a re-design



# Operations

- Current 7-period day schedule (5 academic, 2 survey) will fit
- Average class size of 23.8
- Grade level room assignments and lockers need to be carefully planned for traffic flow
- Parking
- Additional AC units





# Lunch Waves

- With 500 students 4 lunch waves are needed to keep lunch to 125 students or less.
- Mixed lunches of two classes across grade 6,7,8 would achieve this.
- Additional throughput for food service
- Carefully planned passing times will also be required
- New cafeteria furniture



## Sports and Extra-curricular Activities

- Offer an additional Fall Sport like soccer and/or Field Hockey
- Create a no-cut basketball program with two interscholastic competitive teams and a full range of intramurals
- Clubs and activities currently duplicated in the budget
- Keep most of this funding intact to offer more at one site



# A Different Way Forward: Design Thinking

- Successful consolidation depends on creating one new 6,7,8 middle school as a cohesive learning community with a new vision, mission, and operation
- All stakeholders, parents, students, teachers, and the community at large have a role
- Design Thinking is:
  - Human-Centered
  - Collaborative
  - Optimistic
  - Experimental



# A New Middle School Framework

- Practices that foster relationships and Community
- Interdisciplinary themed Inquiry-based units of study that develop:
  - Global awareness, Environmental, Civic, Health, and Financial Literacy
  - Creativity and innovation, Critical thinking and Problem solving, Communication and Collaboration
- Schedules with longer more flexible blocks of time to support student centered learning



# Student-Centered, Inquiry Model

- A series of essential questions guides curriculum and instruction to ensure programs are both standards-based and relevant to students
- Students will develop the skills necessary to answer questions linked to the core content area concepts
- The goal of the student-centered, inquiry model is to create a learning environment where no student asks, “When am I ever going to need to know this?”



# Over-arching Essential Questions

- What is a community? What is the individual's responsibility to the community and what is the community's responsibility to the individual?
- How do I connect to the land and water around me?
- What does it mean to lead?



# Common Middle School Experience for all Students

- Offer additional elective courses including access for all to a technology maker space
- Offer 8<sup>th</sup> grade students experiences in mastery-based Integrated high school courses to improve high school readiness for all students
- Focused use of existing resources to improve extra-curricular offerings to all students
- Academic and community service programming that fully integrates with community resources



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