

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
FINANCE/FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2022 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

NOTE: This meeting is being held in-person. For those attending via Zoom, please click on the meeting under District Calendar for the Zoom link.

Mission Statement: Our mission is teaching and learning.

Board Goals: In richness of cultures and with a respect for all, (1) Provide Dynamic Rigorous Curriculum, (2) Ensure Effective and Engaging Instruction, and (3) Embrace Excellent Learning Environment

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Review November 1, 2022 Meeting Minutes (Attachment #1)
3. Administrative Staffing Review (Attachment #2)
4. GPS Budget History (Attachment #3)
5. Review Cost of School Safety/Security Plan (Attachment #4)
6. Review HVAC Grant
7. Update re: GMS Field Lights
8. Update re: Solar Panels
9. Update re: Bus Contract
10. Adjournment

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL FINANCE/FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 1, 2022 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

Members Present: Jay Weitlauf, Beverly Washington, Dean Antipas

Also Present: Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight

Chairman Weitlauf called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. Review October 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes - The minutes were reviewed and accepted as presented.
2. Discussion re: Vehicle Charging Stations - Mr. Kilpatrick reported that the district has vehicle charging stations at the three newest schools in the district (Groton Middle, Thames River, and Mystic River). It has been reported that vehicles are sometimes seen charging at night and/or on weekends. The cost is incorporated into the electric bills for those locations and are not on a separate meter. Mr. Knight reported per the US Department of Energy's Alternate Fuels Data Center website, the cost for recharging an EV (electric vehicle) with a 200-miles range and a fully depleted 54 kWh battery is around \$6 assuming electricity cost of 10.7 cents/kWh. It was also noted that the Town has vehicle charging stations at the Town Hall Annex and Library that are absorbed into the town costs.
3. Discussion re: the Purchase of Vans to Transport SpEd Students - Ms. Austin reported that she attended a seminar on electric school transportation vehicles. Mr. Knight reported that the district currently has 14 special education buses (vans) through the contract with STA. The district also utilizes Curtin Transportation for some special education trips. Mr. Kilpatrick noted that a vehicle may need to meet federal and state standards to be allowed to be used for student transportation. In addition to purchasing or leasing the vehicles, the district would need to address staffing, licensing, and insuring these vehicles. It was discussed whether this was intended to replace all the contracted vehicles or be for certain special circumstances. Mr. Knight is to find out if CASBO (Connecticut Association of Business Officials) has any insight into this process.
4. Discussion re: CIP Requests - Mr. Kilpatrick reviewed the CIP submissions for the next budget year. These includes requests that have been submitted in previous years:
 - Expansion at Charles Barnum Elementary, which includes an updated media center, cafetorium, art space, etc. to address equitable facilities
 - Addressing the football field at Fitch High School, including sodding, crowning, and irrigation
 - Air quality improvements at Northeast Academy, which would consist of new HVAC units
 - Renovation of culinary arts classrooms at Fitch High School

In addition, CIP requests are being submitted for projects that had been submitted as a part of the town ARPA grant process:

- Safety and security program to connect school cameras to the police and fire departments in case of an emergency
- Update and enhance security cameras at Fitch High, Charles Barnum, Catherine Kolnaski and Northeast Academy

5. Discussion re: GPS Covering the Cost of AP Exams - Ms. Austin discussed the plan to increase student participation in advanced classes. One of the barriers is the cost of the AP test, currently \$88. Mr. Knight reviewed the attached document that shows the total cost of the tests less the amount paid by the CSDE for students eligible for free/reduced price meals, and amount picked up by NMSI (National Math and Science Initiative). It was proposed that the remainder of \$30,448, which assumes all students enrolled in AP courses take the test, could be funded through ARP ESSER.
6. Discussion re: the Cost/Source of Funding of New Employees Over the Last Four Years - Mr. Knight reviewed the attached schedule of FTEs added over the past four years, as well as how they are to be funded in FY23 and FY24. The majority of the positions were added supports to help students through the impact of COVID-19 through the ARP ESSER grant, which ends September 30, 2024. It is anticipated that the positions would either be eliminated, funded through other grants, or possibly added to the board budget.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Groton Public Schools
 AP Test Cost Proposal
 Fiscal Year 2023

Course Name	Free	Reduced	Full Pay	Grand Total	Cost @ 100% Testing (\$88/exam)	Free/Reduced Meal Students (CSDE pays)	Cost after reduction for Free/Reduced Meal Students	NMSI Portion (50% of paid)	Cost to GPS
AP Government	22	7	99	128	\$11,264.00	\$2,552.00	\$8,712.00	\$0.00	\$8,712.00
AP UCONN ECE 11 Intr to Academic Writing	15	3	72	90	\$7,920.00	\$1,584.00	\$6,336.00	\$3,168.00	\$3,168.00
AP US History	16	5	54	75	\$6,600.00	\$1,848.00	\$4,752.00	\$0.00	\$4,752.00
AP UCONN ECE English 12	14	5	54	73	\$6,424.00	\$1,672.00	\$4,752.00	\$0.00	\$4,752.00
AP Psychology	12	3	52	67	\$5,896.00	\$1,320.00	\$4,576.00	\$0.00	\$4,576.00
AP Physics I	3	2	28	33	\$2,904.00	\$440.00	\$2,464.00	\$1,232.00	\$1,232.00
AP Calculus A-B	2	1	17	20	\$1,760.00	\$264.00	\$1,496.00	\$748.00	\$748.00
AP Environmental	1	1	17	19	\$1,672.00	\$176.00	\$1,496.00	\$748.00	\$748.00
AP Biology Yr	2	1	14	17	\$1,496.00	\$264.00	\$1,232.00	\$616.00	\$616.00
AP Computer Science	2	1	6	9	\$792.00	\$264.00	\$528.00	\$264.00	\$264.00
AP Music Theory	2	0	7	9	\$792.00	\$176.00	\$616.00	\$0.00	\$616.00
AP UCONN ECE Statistics	0	0	6	6	\$528.00	\$0.00	\$528.00	\$264.00	\$264.00
Total	91	29	426	546	\$48,048.00	\$10,560.00	\$37,488.00	\$7,040.00	\$30,448.00

Groton Public Schools
Positions added

Grant Funded					
Certified Position	Location	FTE	Amount	Funding FY23	Funding FY24
Social Worker	MRM	1.0	62,900	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Social Worker	GMS	0.5	37,529	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Social Worker	CB/NEA	1.0	58,229	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Special Education	TRM/MRM	1.0	60,742	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Special Education	MRM/FHS	1.0	58,229	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Math Specialist	MRM	1.0	68,510	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Mathematics	FHS	1.0	55,464	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Magnet Theme Teacher	MRM/TRM/CB	1.0	55,464	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
BCBA	District	1.0	92,820	ARP IDEA	Board funded
Social Worker	TRM/MRM	1.0	78,347	ARP IDEA	Apply for Mental Health Grant
Special Education	FHS	1.0	55,961	ESSER II Spec Ed	Board funded
Bilingual	GMS	1.0	54,257	Alliance District	Alliance?/Title III 50%
Health Science	FHS	1.0	65,000	Vacant FY23	DODEA Pathways
Project Lead the Way	GMS	1.0	55,464	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Pathways Coordinator	FHS	1.0	106,486	CPP Career Pathways	ARP ESSER
Subtotal Certified		14.5	965,402		
Non-certified Position	Location	FTE	Amount	Funding FY23	Funding FY24
Prog Coordinator	GMS	0.25	14,919	Roots Program	Roots Program
Prog Aides	GMS	0.5	8,452	Roots Program	Roots Program
Prog Assistant	GMS	0.5	5,184	Roots Program	Roots Program
ELA/Math Tutors	District	17.0	644,109	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Tech Support	District	1.0	64,260	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
PT Custodial	District	3.5	88,690	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
SEL Tutors	District	8.0	303,110	ARP ESSER	ARP ESSER
Security Guards	FHS/GMS	7.0	350,368	ARP ESSER/Board funded	ARP ESSER/Board funded
Subtotal Non-certified		37.8	1,479,092		

Already in Budget					
Position	Location	FTE	Amount	Funding FY23	Funding FY24
Special Ed	FHS	1.0	56,415	Board Budget	Board Budget
ASL Teacher	FHS	1.0	100,816	Board Budget	Board Budget
Literacy Spec	FHS	0.5	47,078	Board Budget	Board Budget
Student Data Manager	District	1.0	121,646	Board Budget	Board Budget
Athletic Trainer	FHS/GMS	1.0	48,960	Board Budget	Board Budget
Subtotal Non-certified		4.5	374,915		

Groton Public Schools
 Number of Students per Building Administrator
 Actual FY2023

	Students	Principal/ Director	Assistant Principals/ Sped Supervisor	6-12 Coordinators	Athletic Director	Total Administrators	Number of Students per Administrator
Secondary							
Fitch High School	1,033	1.0	3.0	0.75	0.7	5.5	189.5
Groton Middle School	907	1.0	3.0	0.75	0.3	5.1	179.6
	1,940	2.0	6.0	1.5	1.0	10.5	184.8
Elementary							
Mystic River	523	1.0	2.0	-	-	3.0	174.3
Thames River	525	1.0	2.0	-	-	3.0	175.0
Charles Barnum	344	1.0	1.0	-	-	2.0	172.0
Catherine Kolnaski	353	1.0	1.0	-	-	2.0	176.5
Northeast Academy	392	1.0	1.0	-	-	2.0	196.0
	2,137	5.0	7.0	-	-	12.0	178.1
Subtotal - Building Admin	4,077	7.0	13.0	1.5	1.0	22.5	181.2
District-Wide							
Superintendent/Asst Superintendent		2.0	-	-	-	2.0	
Special Education		1.0	3.5	-	-	4.5	
Human Resources		1.0	-	-	-	1.0	
Technology		1.0	-	-	-	1.0	
Business Office		1.0	-	-	-	1.0	
Facilities		1.0	-	-	-	1.0	
Student Data Manager		1.0	-	-	-	1.0	
		8.0	3.5	-	-	11.5	
Total		15.0	16.5	1.5	1.0	34.0	

Groton Public Schools

Budget History

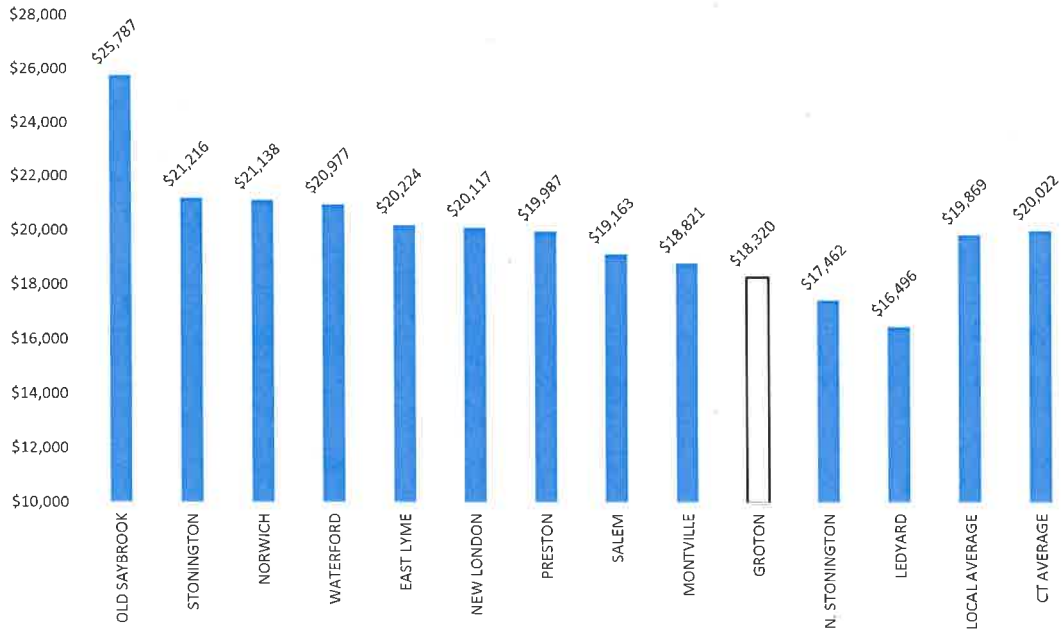
<u>School Year</u>	<u>Budget Total</u>	<u>Inc/(Decr)</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
FY2011-2012	72,645,500	-	0.00%
FY2012-2013	72,645,500	-	0.00%
FY2013-2014	73,662,715	1,017,215	1.40%
FY2014-2015	75,098,943	1,436,228	1.95%
FY2015-2016	76,730,239	1,631,296	2.17%
FY2016-2017	76,468,239	(262,000)	(0.34%)
FY2017-2018	76,468,239	-	0.00%
FY2018-2019	76,485,922	17,683	0.02%
FY2019-2020	77,438,090	952,168	1.24%
FY2020-2021	77,438,090	-	0.00%
FY2021-2022	77,438,090	-	0.00%
FY2022-2023	79,157,271	1,719,181	2.22%
Twelve Year Average			0.75%

Expenditure per Pupil (NCEP per CSDE)

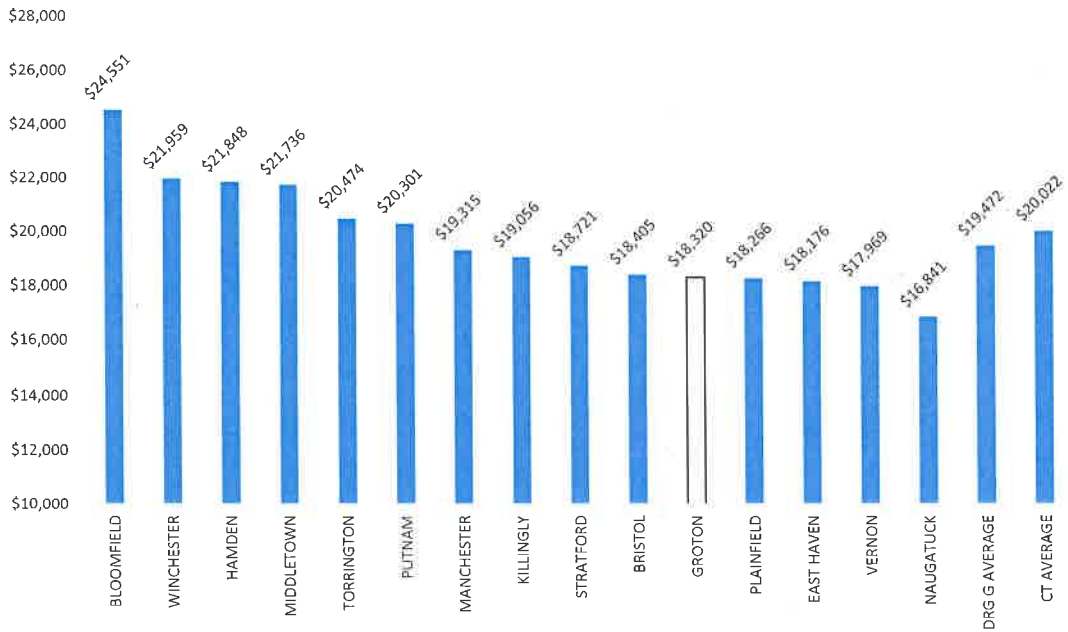
<u>School Year</u>	<u>Groton</u>	<u>CT Avg</u>	<u>Variance</u>
FY2011-2012	\$ 14,366.54	\$ 14,135.33	\$ 231.21
FY2012-2013	\$ 14,603.89	\$ 14,499.70	\$ 104.20
FY2013-2014	\$ 14,698.39	\$ 15,180.11	\$ (481.73)
FY2014-2015	\$ 15,229.90	\$ 15,715.05	\$ (485.15)
FY2015-2016	\$ 15,528.49	\$ 16,244.97	\$ (716.48)
FY2016-2017	\$ 15,812.77	\$ 16,564.06	\$ (751.30)
FY2017-2018	\$ 16,207.50	\$ 16,988.40	\$ (780.90)
FY2018-2019	\$ 16,304.32	\$ 17,438.69	\$ (1,134.37)
FY2019-2020	\$ 16,476.84	\$ 17,747.88	\$ (1,271.04)
FY2020-2021	\$ 17,692.91	\$ 19,011.22	\$ (1,318.31)
FY2021-2022	\$ 18,319.73	\$ 20,021.80	\$ (1,702.07)
FY2022-2023 estimate*	<i>Not yet available</i>		

* Calculated from budget using actual FY23 enrollment

2021-22 Average Cost per Student - Local Districts



2021-22 Average Cost per Student - District Reference Group G





Town of Groton | 45 Fort Hill Rd | Groton, CT 06340
APPLICATION FOR ARPA FUNDING

PROJECT INFORMATION	
Project Title: Improving Public Safety by Enhancing Groton Public School's Security Systems	APP # (to be assigned)
Project Location: All eight schools including Charles Barnum, Catherine Kolnaski, Northeast Academy, Mystic River, Thames River, Groton Middle, Fitch High and the Transition Academy at Central Office	
Email: ppiazza@groton.k12.ct.us	
Phone: 860-572-2115	
Community Recovery Category	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Development & Resiliency <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Human Services <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Culture <input type="checkbox"/> ARPA Administration & Other
One sentence description of the project: With support from Groton's ARPA funds, Groton Public Schools will purchase new safety and security equipment to be installed at all eight schools.	

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Applicant is:	<input type="checkbox"/> Town Department	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit 501c3
	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
Applicant/Organization:	Groton Public Schools	DUNS #: 193308681
Co-Applicant (if applicable):		
Co-Applicant is:	<input type="checkbox"/> Town Department	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit 501c3
	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Contact Person:	Phil Piazza, Assistant Superintendent	
Mailing Address:	Groton Public Schools, 1300 Flanders Road, PO Box K, Mystic, CT 06355	



Telephone:		Email:	ppiazza@groton.k12.ct.us
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BUDGET SUMMARY	
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ARPA Funding Request:	\$514,182
Total project budget:	\$514,182

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST & INSTRUCTIONS	
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- XApplication
- XProject Schedule
- XProject Budget
- Certificate of good standing (if operating as a corporation)
- XNon-profit IRS certification (if operating as a nonprofit)
- XLetters of support from residents, community groups, boards or commissions
- Visual aids- Maps, photos, site plans, renderings, or engineered drawings, if applicable

About the ARPA funds:
To lay the groundwork for a strong and equitable recovery, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 established the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSFRF), an approximate \$350 billion to state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to bolster their response to the COVID-19 emergency and its economic impacts. The Town of Groton is granting awards to qualifying projects under this funding. Groton seeks the best uses for long-term recovery, investment, and results. Projects that exemplify innovation and resilience shall take priority.

The Groton Town Council reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals as deemed in the best interest of the Town of Groton.

Timeline and Reporting: Funds can be used only to cover costs incurred from March 3, 2021 to December 31, 2024. The period of performance will run until December 31, 2026 to allow for the completion of lengthy projects. Groton’s awards will need to clearly align with this Federal government guidance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAM AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:
<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule.pdf>



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Please fill in required blanks and sign the funding agreement, fill out pages 3-8 and attach additional information as necessary. Completed applications may be submitted electronically or in hard copy to: Kevin Fitzgerald, 134 Groton Long Pt Rd., Groton, CT 06340, kfitzgerald@groton-ct.gov.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

1. General Narrative:

Over the past decade, Groton Public Schools (GPS) has taken significant steps to improve safety and security for all students and staff throughout the district. In 2009, following the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, GPS staff and the Groton Police Department jointly reviewed and identified potential security risks at each school. Following this assessment, magnetic locks, cameras, and speakers were installed on the front entrances of all school buildings and staff were trained in new security protocols. In 2013, Connecticut Act 13-3 *Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety* established multiple programs, policy initiatives, and mandates aimed at improving school security infrastructure, including the requirement to develop All-Hazards School Security and Safety Plans. Each plan includes protocols to prepare for and address threatening situations, ranging from disastrous weather events to acts of extreme violence. In 2014, GPS created nine All-Hazards Plans, one for each operating school. The plans were created via collaborative efforts between district staff and community partners, including local emergency management staff, first responders, and public and mental health officials. Each plan is over 100 pages long and includes a 20-page School Building Vulnerability Assessment (SBVA) evaluating the physical safety of each school and the psychological safety of its students and staff. The plans continue to be utilized to prioritize security enhancements at each school. Following the first assessment in 2014, entry vestibules were constructed and added to each school and the high school security system was upgraded to include high-definition cameras throughout the building. Despite these improvements, more work needs to be done. Districtwide safety assessments revealed that GPS needs to improve camera and video surveillance, access control, emergency communication systems, and teacher and student safety resources.

With support from Groton's ARPA fund, GPS will expand and upgrade the *video surveillance systems* at six facilities: Fitch High, Groton Middle, Northeast Academy, Catherine Kolnaski, Charles Barnum and Central Office. Current safety standards recommend a unified system for school districts with a centralized surveillance and control center connected to the town's emergency management departments, including the police and fire department. The two new elementary schools are equipped with this technology however the other schools each have their own unique system and several are 20+ years old. Groton's Police and Fire Departments have requested this, along with a web-based unified surveillance system that would enable Groton police officers to have real-time camera access to the facilities from the station or their squad cars. This access would greatly expedite incident response times.

GPS also requests funds to purchase and install a broadband fiber optic cable between Fitch High School and Groton Middle School. This cable would serve multiple functions. It would provide



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APPLICATION FOR ARPA FUNDING

higher speeds for internet connectivity at both schools and also serve as a back-up line during internet outages at either school, of particular importance during an emergency situation. GPS is developing a comprehensive plan for an emergency access control system to include a closed loop broadband cable between all schools and Groton's emergency response departments. This would serve as the first step in this plan.

As the unified *emergency communication system* is still in development, GPS requests funds to purchase 24 two-way radios with emergency response buttons to be supplied to district and school administration, school security guards, and the town police and fire departments. This approach is recommended by the CT Land Radio Mobile Network (CLRMN) and will be modeled after Ohio's Multi-Agency Radio Communication System, which has proven to be effective. GPS has also purchased and installed shatter and ballistic proof *mirrored film* for the main offices at Mystic River and Thames River Elementary Schools. With support from ARPA, we will install additional film on the two cafeterias at these schools. The All-Hazards Plan is an essential guide for Groton administrators but a cumbersome document, especially in emergency situations. During a recent visit to Middletown High School, Fitch High School administrators learned that all Middletown teachers have an easy-to-use *quick reference emergency flipbook* developed by Environmental Health and Safety Consultation (EHSC). With support from ARPA, we will partner with EHSC to create customized flipbooks for all Groton teachers and staff.

What ARPA Final Rule Category does your project fall under? Choose one:

To respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;

To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay for worker;

For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency;

To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

Explain how your projects fits into the category selected –

Our project falls under Category 1 of the Final Rule, specifically subcategory D listed below:
(D) Preventing and responding to increased violence resulting from the public health emergency, including community violence intervention programs, or responding to increased gun violence resulting from the public health emergency, including payroll and covered benefits associated with community policing strategies; enforcement efforts to reduce gun violence; and investing in technology and equipment;



2. Community Need:

What community need(s) will this project address? How does the project benefit the public and what populations(s) will it serve? If it serves a population currently underserved, please describe. How does the project preserve and enhance the character of Town of Groton? How does the project address COVID 19 recovery in response to federal guidance specifically the U.S. Treasury Final Rule?

Groton Public Schools (GPS) provides educational services to 4000+ students at five elementary schools, Groton Middle School, Fitch High School, and the young adult Transition Academy at the district's Central Office. GPS students reflect Groton's diverse community and include a significant portion of traditionally underserved populations. 50% of GPS students receive free or reduced lunch, 50% are racial and ethnic minorities, and 25% are military-connected.

During the COVID pandemic, GPS worked closely with the town, state and local health district to source and purchase COVID preventative supplies and safety equipment for all schools using CARES and ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER). The majority of CARES and ARP ESSER funds (70%) were used to hire additional tutors, substitutes and teachers to lower staff to student rations and assist students in recouping learning loss during and after the pandemic. An additional \$1 million was used to address long-standing air quality issues, especially at Charles Barnum Elementary and Fitch High School. A portion was also applied to professional development, new educational supplies and software. Throughout the pandemic, GPS strengthened and established new partnerships with local health providers to provide regular vaccine clinics for students, families and the greater community. These funds and partnerships enabled us to keep school facilities open for as long as possible, provide enhanced support services to students when buildings were closed, and help students recover from learning loss when school reopened fully in 2021.

We believe that this funding request via Groton's ARPA fund aligns with the acceptable expenditures of the US Treasury's Final Rule. The Final Rule references the public health challenge of violent crime and notes that gun violence and aggravated assault both increased during the pandemic (p 50-51). We believe the expenditures proposed here meet the description of "evidence-based community violence intervention programs" (p 69) and qualify as "improvements to or construction of emergency operations centers and acquisition of emergency response equipment (e.g., emergency response radio systems)" (p 61, p 139).



3. How will the success of this project be measured?

Describe outcomes and measurable deliverables.

The success of this project will be measured by the timely purchase and installation of all supplies and equipment described in the narrative. We will continue to collect student, parent and staff data via the annual Safe School Climate Committee (SSCC) survey. Improved perceptions of building safety and relationships will be an additional indicator of project success. The project will be completed by December 31, 2024 with the goal to install all cameras, window film, and purchase new radios by November 15, 2022. Flipbooks will be designed and ordered by June 15, 2023. Following the installation of the video surveillance system, a verification walkthrough will be conducted with Groton Police and Fire to test and confirm remote access to all cameras.

4. Critical Need:

Is this project of an urgent nature? Is there a deadline or factors not controlled by the applicant?

The tragedy in Uvalde, Texas was a painful reminder that safety and security must continue to be a priority for all school districts. This is especially true now, as gun restrictions continue to be a highly politicized topic and it's unclear if future legislation will prevent deaths caused by gun violence. At the same time, there continues to be an urgent shortage of mental health services throughout the United States.

As the responsible agent for over 4500 students and adults, Groton Public Schools (GPS) must do all we can to decrease the risk to our community from gun violence. Each Groton school has a Safe School Climate Committee (SSCC), responsible for the collection, evaluation, and reporting of information related to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior. Since 2013, GPS has also annually administered a district-wide Safe School Climate Survey (based on the research of Cohen and Grier and the National School Climate Center (NSCC)) to all students, families and staff. A 2015 NSCC study found that a positive school climate correlates with fewer acts of violence. The survey collects data on four key elements essential to maintaining a positive school climate including 1) perceived facility safety, 2) positive relationships, 3) effective teaching and learning, and 4) overall school community connectedness.

GPS has observed that a positive school climate elevates student morale, behavior, and academic performance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, SSCC survey results revealed mixed perceptions on school safety among students, parents and staff. Overall, parents and students felt facilities were safe however, staff and teachers believed the opposite. Despite being fully supplied with COVID-19 protective gear and equipment, 22% of staff felt their buildings were less "safe and secure" and 36% believe the "procedures to address behavior issues" were unclear. Also notable



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was that more students felt less supported by staff and teachers than in previous years. GPS interprets this data to mean that teachers and staff felt unsafe within their buildings and this stress impacted students.

Data collected by GPS during the COVID-19 pandemic also revealed the most important indicator of student academic success was regular school attendance. We found a direct correlation between students most at risk of failure and those with the lowest attendance. For this reason, it is imperative that in order to keep students in schools, GPS must continue to sustain the trust of families and the community by equipping all facilities with modern, efficient technology and training school staff in current safety and security protocols.

By strengthening the information and communication system between Groton's Police and Fire Departments and Groton Public Schools, we will create a more cohesive and efficient emergency response system. This will decrease the stress level currently experienced by district administrators, school staff and students and lead to a more positive school climate.

Our project meets the criteria of Category 1, Subcategory D: “Preventing and responding to increased violence resulting from the public health emergency, including community violence intervention programs, or responding to increased gun violence resulting from the public health emergency, including payroll and covered benefits associated with community policing strategies; enforcement efforts to reduce gun violence; and investing in technology and equipment.”



5. Applicant Information:

Describe applicant. Is applicant a public, private non-profit, private for-profit, an individual, a partnership, or another type of entity? What is their history and background? Identify and describe the roles of all participants (applicants, architects, contractors, etc.), including the project manager. Describe any past projects of similar type and scale, or experience that demonstrates the applicant's ability to carry out this project.

Groton Public Schools (GPS) is capable of leading districtwide grant-funded initiatives. Over the past decade, GPS reinvested in school infrastructure and transformed its approach to teaching which led to significant improvements in student academic performance and social-emotional wellbeing. Beginning in 2015, with grant support from the Department of Defense Education Activity program and the Department of Education's Magnet School Assistance Program, GPS initiated a districtwide professional development program for its 430 teachers. All Groton teachers now participate in professional learning communities and train in innovative inquiry-based methods for teaching the new Common Core State Standards in ELA and Math. Student standardized test scores have subsequently risen to the point where Groton now places among the highest-performing districts in its state reference group.

Four years ago, Groton residents also approved a districtwide school construction plan, the largest in Connecticut history. This actionized our community commitment to end geographic disparities and broaden participation for underserved students. The plan established the construction of a consolidated middle school and two magnet-themed elementary schools, and culminated a twenty-year project to replace GPS's dilapidated buildings with modern facilities. It also rectified district-wide racial and socioeconomic disparities growing since the early 1990s. The two elementary schools became magnet schools, diminishing disparities without the need to redraw neighborhood boundaries. Despite the COVID pandemic, all new schools opened on schedule and have improved educational equity across Groton. Now is an opportune time to modernize all of our facilities with new safety equipment and strengthen our connection to the town's emergency response departments.

GPS Superintendent Susan Austin and Assistant Superintendent Phil Piazza will oversee the implementation of this project, along with Facilities Director Sam Kilpatrick, Director of Technology Clint Kennedy, the District School Safety Committee (SSC) and representatives from Groton's Police and Fire Departments. The District SSC includes representatives from each school and meets quarterly. If awarded, Kilpatrick and Kennedy will immediately inform representatives from each school and the town's departments about the project and create timelines for security equipment purchase and installation. Kilpatrick will also work with the Fitch High School Dean of Students Adam Diskin to develop the quick reference emergency flipbooks for FHS. The FHS book will be used as a model to create additional books for the other schools. FHS, in coordination with the Police Department, has employed a School Resource Office (SRO) for the past twenty years. The current SRO, Scott Bousquet, has been stationed at FHS for six years. As a result, he has been able to cultivate relationships with the students and administration. He knows many students by their first names enabling him to take a personal, proactive approach to reducing school violence. He is a leader on the FHS SSC and will continue to play a key role in districtwide educational initiatives to enhance school security.



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6. Project Feasibility:

List and explain further actions or steps required for completion of the project, such as environmental assessments, zoning or other permits and approvals and any known or potential barriers or impediments to project implementation. Is this an existing project? If new, how do you intend to operate past the funding horizon?

As described in the Narrative, our plan aligns with Connecticut guidelines and mandates. Throughout the project, GPS administrators will confer with state and local emergency response representatives to ensure all actions align with industry standards and include best management practices.

The Groton Board of Education sets the mission, vision and goals of the district. The mission states “in partnership with parents and community, [GPS will] enable all learners to achieve their highest potential by fostering excellence through a challenging program of study and a *safe environment*.” The vision is the set of beliefs established by the Board to reflect the priorities of the community. These beliefs provide the foundation on which District Strategic Plans are established. The GPS vision includes the following, “We believe in providing a challenging, exciting, creative, and *secure atmosphere* in which students, administrators, teachers, and staff can learn and grow. An optimal learning environment assumes a *surrounding atmosphere that is physically and emotionally safe, healthy, and where differences are embraced*.”



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APPLICATION FOR ARPA FUNDING

GPS Superintendent Susan Austin and the Board of Education support the security improvements outlined in this proposal. They represent the critical first steps towards a comprehensive unified security system for Groton Public Schools that is currently in development. As the responsible agent for the safety of 4,500 students and adults within the district and the maintenance and operation of 900,000 sq. ft. of building space, GPS will work with the Groton Town Council to continue to identify and address ongoing capital improvements projects needed to enhance the safety and security of our school facilities.

PROJECT FINANCIAL INFORMATION



7. Financial Information:

Describe all successful and unsuccessful attempts to secure funding and/or in-kind contributions, donations, or volunteer labor for the project. A bullet point list is acceptable. Will the project require funding over multiple years? If so, provide annual funding requirements. What is the basis for the total ARPA request? How will the project be affected if it does not receive ARPA funds or a reduced amount?

In order to provide Groton students with the best educational services, the majority of Groton Public School’s budget goes towards teacher and staff salaries and materials for curriculum and instruction. GPS safety and security improvements are supported by district funds and Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) via the town of Groton. There are very few grants available for safety and security equipment. GPS applied to two competitive programs, the (US Department of Justice COPs School Violence Prevention Program in 2019 and the CT School Security Competitive Grant Program in 2018) that were both denied funding.

The estimated cost for this project is \$514,182. GPS has received an itemized written estimate from Total Comm (attached) and itemized verbal estimates from Total Comm, Electronic Security Control Systems (Bridgeport) Electronic Security Solutions (Griswold) and Tactical Command (Guilford).

Improving Public Safety by Enhancing Groton Public School’s Security Systems

Video Surveillance System (ESCS)	Qty	Cost Per	Total	Contact
Internal IP Camera	75	\$ 1,112	\$ 83,400	Kennedy
Internal Camera Mount	75	\$ 88	\$ 6,600	Kennedy
External IP Camera	38	\$ 2,304	\$ 87,552	Kennedy
External Camera Mount	38	\$ 172	\$ 6,536	Kennedy
Video Storage Device	2	\$ 17,916	\$ 35,832	Kennedy
Software Licenses (Cameras)	113	\$ 148	\$ 16,724	Kennedy
Unified Web Mgmt + Licensing	1	\$ 30,198	\$ 30,198	Kennedy
Subtotal			\$ 266,842	

Installation (Total Comm) and supplies for PVC conduit between FHS and GMS			\$ 97,787	Kennedy
Broadband fiberoptic cable, including all connective equipment			\$ 20,303	Kennedy
Labor (Total Comm) to install cable			\$ 27,250	Kennedy
Subtotal			\$ 145,340	

Access Control and Emergency Response Communication System

Mirrored film installed by Electronic Security Solutions at MRMS and TRMS	2	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	Kilpatrick
Kenwood portable two-way radios, including charging stations (estimated costs provided by Groton Police	24	\$ 3,000	\$ 72,000	Kilpatrick



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Captain James Bee) purchased via Tactical Command		
Subtotal	\$ 92,000	
Safety and Security Training for Teachers and Staff		
Emergency response flipbooks for all district teachers	\$ 10,000	Diskin
Project Total	\$ 514,182	

8. PROJECT SCHEDULE:		
Please provide a project timeline below, noting all project milestones.		
	Activity	Estimated Date
Project start date:	Upon award	September 1, 2022
50% Completion stage:	Purchase and installation of new cameras, radios, fiberoptic cable, and educational materials	November 15, 2022
Project Completion date:		December 31, 2023



9. PROJECT BUDGET:

Please include a complete itemized budget of all project expenses, including the proposed funding source for each expense, with your application, using the form below and attaching sheets as necessary.. Note: ARPA funds cannot be used for maintenance. If the project received other federal funds in another fiscal year, please include this amount on a separate line, not on line 1. Town of Groton ARPA (Line 1) amount should match the amount requested on the application cover page.

Funding Sources		EXPENSES		
		DIRECT COSTS	INDIRECT COSTS	TOTAL
1	Town of Groton ARPA	\$ 474,182	\$ 40,000	\$ 514,182
2		\$	\$	\$
3		\$	\$	\$
4		\$	\$	\$
5		\$	\$	\$
6		\$	\$	\$
7		\$	\$	\$
8		\$	\$	\$
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS:		\$	\$	\$

* Indirect costs include design, professional services, permitting fees, closing costs, legal, insurance, etc.

10. Did you receive CARES act funding or other federal grants?*

*(Including PPP, EIDL, or State funds pertaining to or associated with pandemic response & recovery efforts)
 Are you applying for or have you applied for other federal funds? (Please list)

The CARES Act and other funding that we received was:

- Coronavirus Relief Funds
- ESSER I
- ESSER II
- ARP ESSER
- ARP IDEA
- ESSER II Special Education Recovery Activities
- ARP ESSER Homeless Children and Youth

Groton did not receive funds PPP or EIDL funds.