

Building Our Future: New Elementary Schools for Region 15



The Plan to Replace Pomperaug and Gainfield Elementary Schools

Why Now? The Need for Action

PES (built in 1967) and GES (built in 1941) are currently the oldest elementary schools in Region 15. While these buildings have served the community well, they now face significant repair costs and contain aging mechanical systems that have surpassed their useful life.

This project aims to deliver modern, safe, and accessible learning environments that meet current energy standards, construction codes, and enrollment trends.



The Strategy: Why New Construction?

A detailed value analysis confirms that new construction offers the best long-term value for taxpayers compared to renovating the existing structures.

Expected State Reimbursement - 65%

State Funding & Fiscal Responsibility

- Legislative Leverage: The plan utilizes new legislation that provides reimbursement increases for projects that include Pre-K and specialized education spaces.
 - Pre-K Incentive: Including space for an 80-student Pre-K program triggers an increase in state reimbursement for the entire project.
 - Special Education: The district will receive an additional 15% reimbursement incentive for space dedicated to special education student programs.

Key Project Features New Construction Benefits

- Modern Infrastructure & Safety
- Systems Upgrade: Replaces end-of-life systems, including roofing, windows, plumbing, and electrical.
- Accessibility: Resolves significant ADA accessibility challenges at GES.
- Traffic Solutions: Addresses site circulation issues at PES. Altered traffic patterns and a new access road for PES will reduce significant traffic concerns on Main Street in Southbury.
- District Balancing: The plan accounts for relocating 100 students from Long Meadow Elementary to better balance district capacity.

Site Location: Practical and Cost Efficient

- Region 15 explored more than 11 sites across Middlebury and Southbury.
- Feasibility: Based on availability, topography, and community impact, the existing school sites present the most practical approach.
- Ownership: Region 15 already owns the PES and GES properties.
- Cost Avoidance: Purchasing new land and selling existing sites would require multiple referendums and complex financial transactions, leading to extended costs and uncertain outcomes for taxpayers.
- Traffic: The new site layouts will greatly reduce or eliminate current traffic issues.

Feature Comparison: New Construction Plan vs Renovate to New Alternative

Feature	New Construction Plan	Renovate-As-New Alternative
Construction Timeline	Efficient Approx 18-24 months	Extended Approx 48 months
Student Impact	Minimal Disruption Students remain in current buildings	High Disruption Requires construction while the building is occupied by students and staff
Facility Life	Full 50+ year life cycle	Limited by existing structure constraints
Cost vs Value	Higher long-term efficiency, lower maintenance and overall value	High "Value Lost" due to cost of temporary facilities, disruption and escalation costs, and extended overhead
Return on Investment	Higher percent of funding applied to long-term asset	Up to \$13 million lost to cost temporary facilities, escalation costs, and extended overhead