



SMCPS Facility Utilization and Boundary Study

February 03, 2026

CANNONDESIGN

Agenda

Where We've Been

Survey #2 Outcomes

Cannon Design Final Recommendation

Superintendent's Recommendation



Where We've Been

Survey Outcomes

CD Recommendation

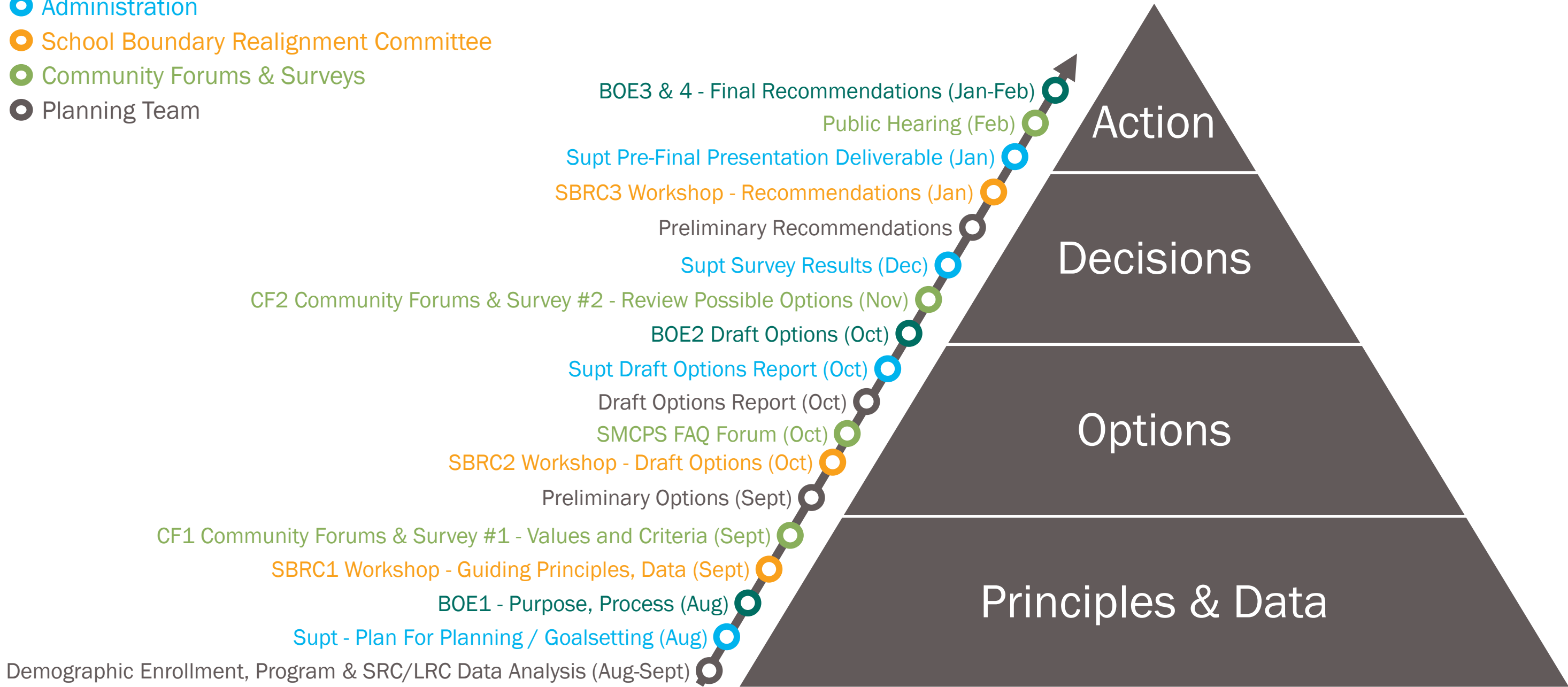
Priorities from the School District

- Effective and efficient use of capital resources in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Optimized use of our facilities.
- Maximize opportunities for student achievement and allow for the delivery of the best instructional program possible within available facility and financial resources.
- Relieve Overcrowding



Our Process

- School Board
- Administration
- School Boundary Realignment Committee
- Community Forums & Surveys
- Planning Team



Challenge: Historic Enrollment Decline w/Potential for Increase

Grade	SY 16/17	SY 17/18	SY 18/19	SY 19/20	SY 20/21	SY 21/22	SY 22/23	SY 23/24	SY 24/25	SY 25/26
KG	1,325	1,260	1,203	1,268	1,162	1,169	1,145	1,139	1,118	1,145
1	1,331	1,316	1,278	1,247	1,233	1,268	1,238	1,198	1,175	1,155
2	1,373	1,340	1,301	1,287	1,230	1,241	1,291	1,258	1,236	1,187
3	1,389	1,359	1,325	1,335	1,246	1,258	1,260	1,335	1,274	1,252
4	1,453	1,387	1,360	1,344	1,272	1,244	1,282	1,265	1,330	1,275
5	1,364	1,433	1,374	1,338	1,331	1,293	1,260	1,289	1,313	1,369
6	1,364	1,355	1,415	1,379	1,307	1,330	1,286	1,254	1,291	1,301
7	1,275	1,367	1,356	1,420	1,370	1,330	1,331	1,301	1,244	1,277
8	1,298	1,267	1,341	1,349	1,423	1,400	1,334	1,298	1,346	1,235
9	1,407	1,434	1,448	1,539	1,475	1,706	1,572	1,529	1,477	1,487
10	1,260	1,324	1,295	1,268	1,384	1,340	1,482	1,421	1,389	1,375
11	1,199	1,270	1,232	1,221	1,176	1,267	1,228	1,334	1,260	1,308
12	1,195	1,187	1,238	1,234	1,274	1,270	1,293	1,181	1,339	1,269
Total Enrollment	17,233	17,299	17,166	17,229	16,883	17,084	17,002	16,802	16,792	16,635

Enrollments are based on student GIS files with counts taken on dates differing from official enrollment date

What kinds of outcomes will be considered?

Facility Outcomes

- Repair/upgrade/expand facilities
- Demolish/replace facilities
- Repurpose facilities
- Divest facilities

Program Outcomes

- New/expanded educational programs
- Expanded Pre-K
- Career Tech and Academy Expansion

Portfolio & Policy Outcomes

- Feeder alignment
- Attendance policy/zoning change
- Grade reconfiguration
- School consolidation/closure



Community Survey #1 Reminders

53% of respondents would prefer to not move to a newer or modernized school a little farther away and would rather remain in an older building closer to home

60% of respondents believe the quality of educational and student programs is more important than proximity and small school size

84% of respondents believe funding for school facilities should be allocated to benefit as many students as possible.



Community Survey #1 Reminders

Key Takeaways:

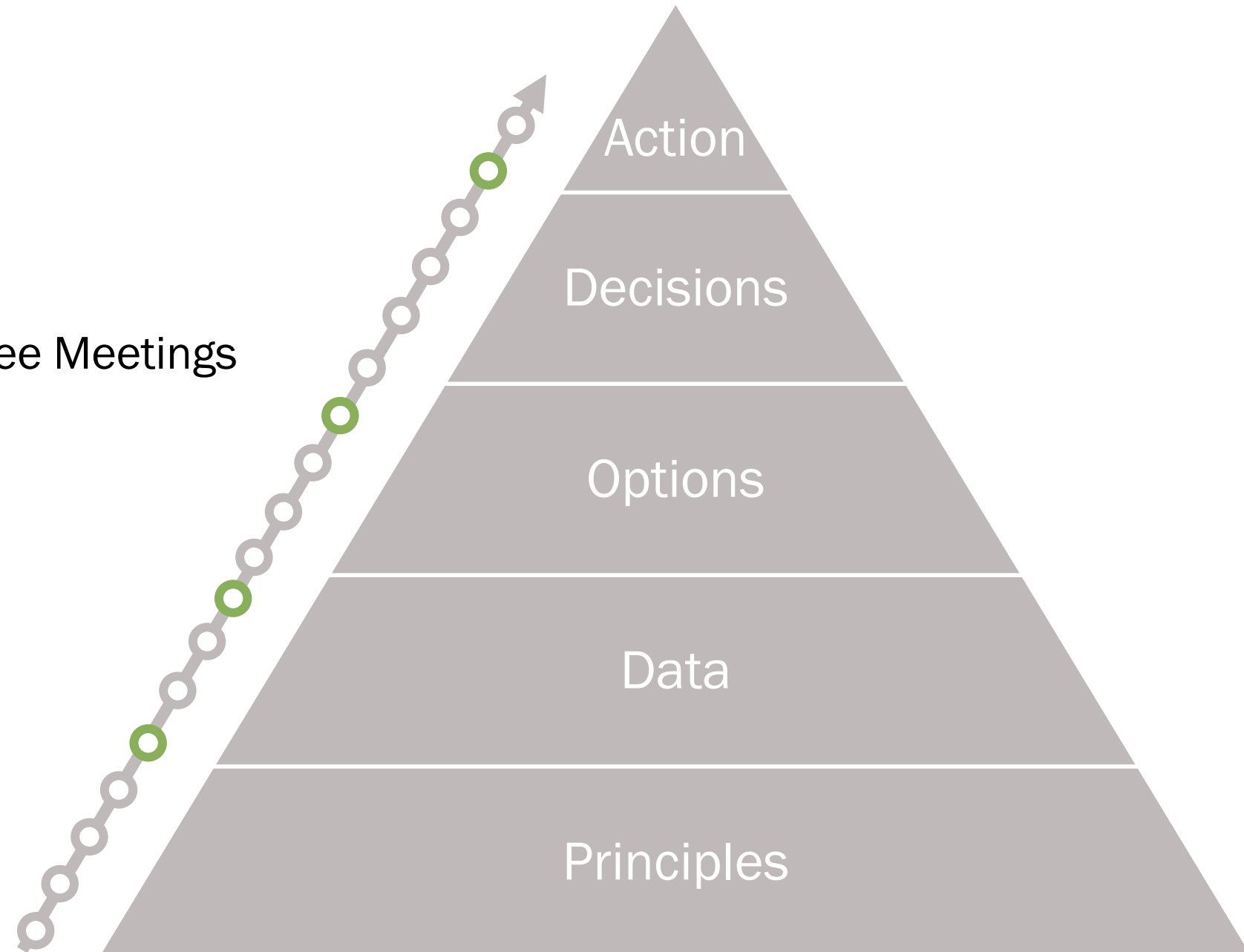
- Importance on Safety and Security
- Newer Buildings Won't Convince People, Quality Programs and Opportunities for All Might
- Affecting the Fewest Families and Keeping Kids From the Same Neighborhoods Together
- Better Funded Teachers, District Transportation, and More Extracurricular Opportunities
- Off-site and Programs and Specialty/Magnet Programs Have Strong Support





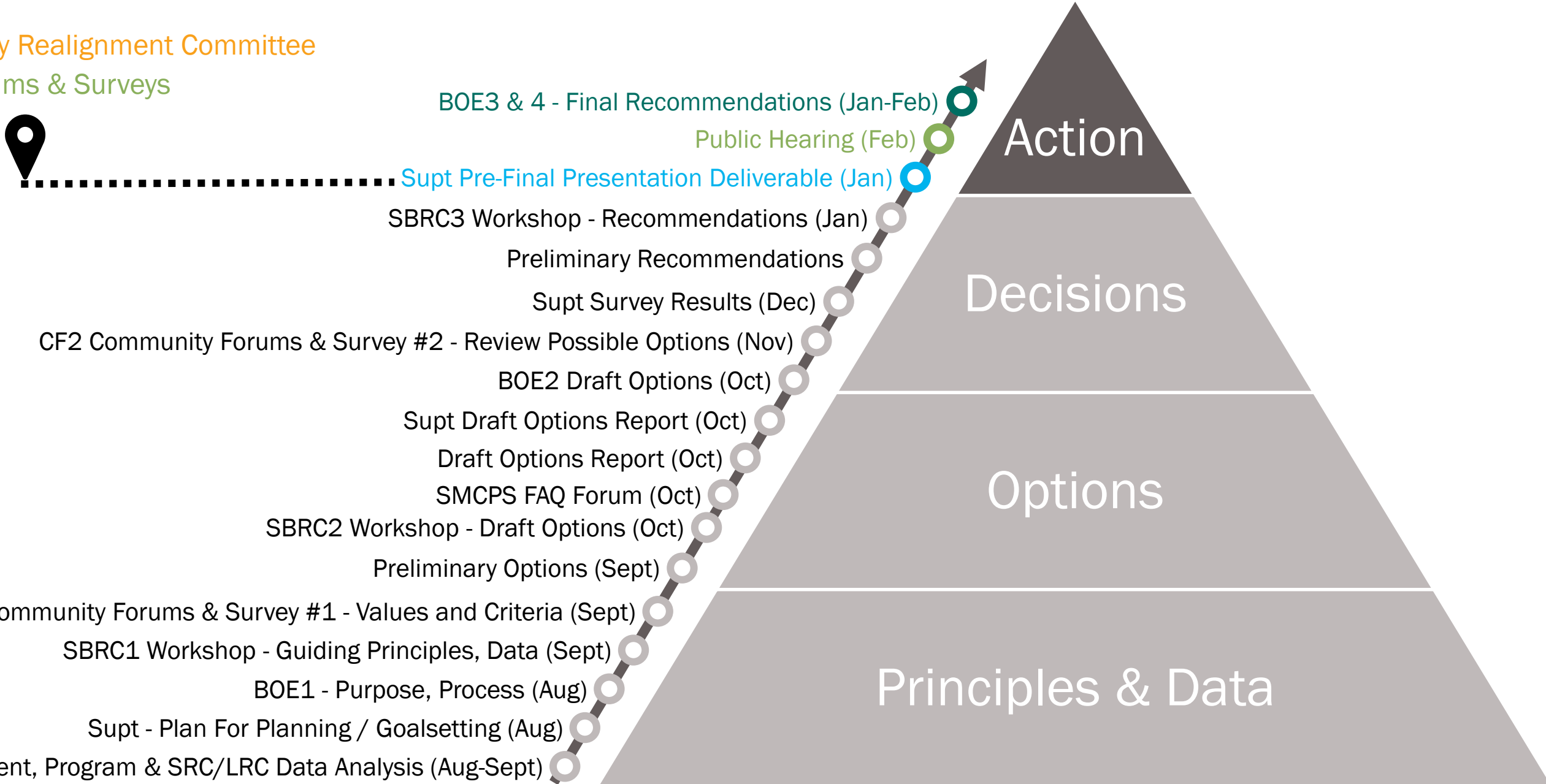
Community Engagement

- 1** FAQ Forum
- 3** Community Engagement Team Meetings
- 3** School Boundary and Redistricting Committee Meetings
- 5** Countywide Forums
- 600+** Meeting Attendees
- 5,000+** Survey Responses



Our Process

- School Board
- Administration
- School Boundary Realignment Committee
- Community Forums & Surveys
- Planning Team



Where We've Been

Survey Outcomes

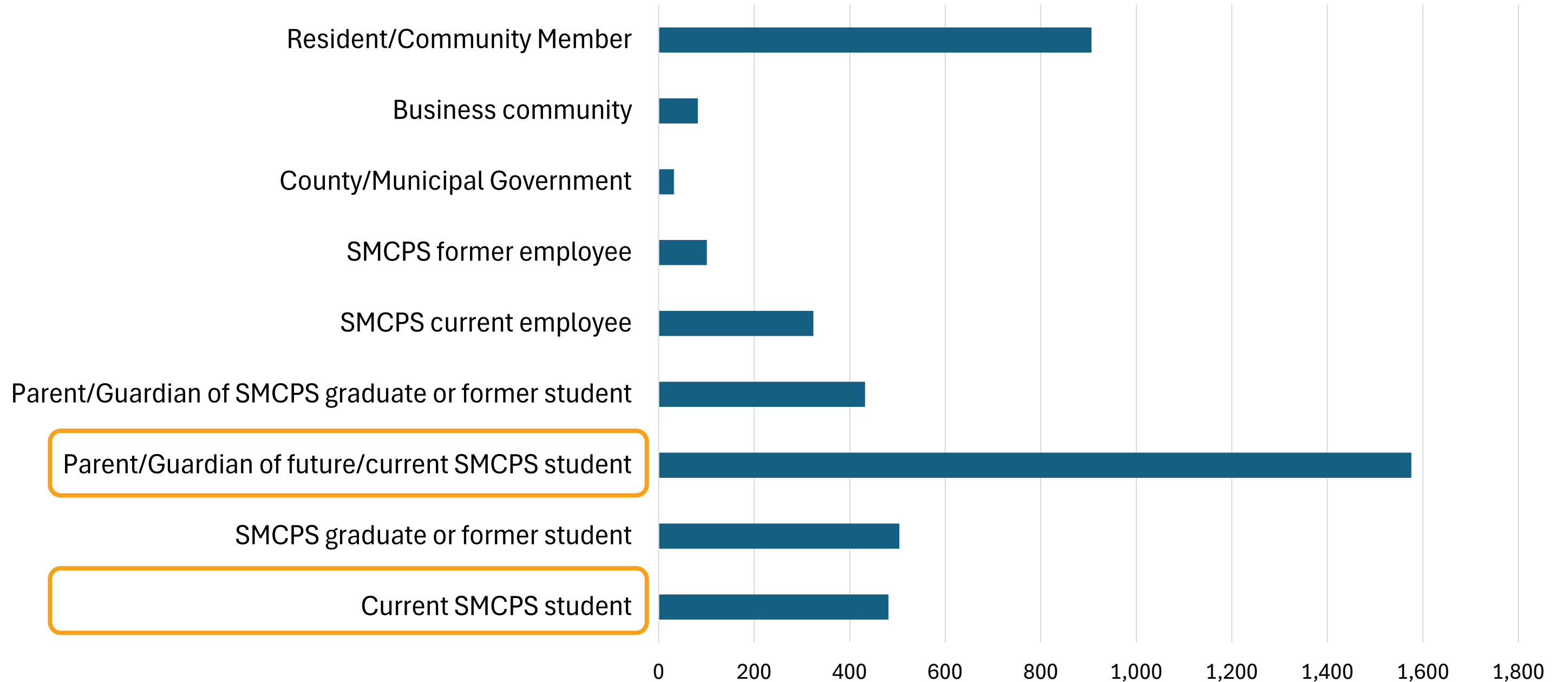
CD Recommendation

Community Survey #2

2,340 responses!

Community Survey #2

Individual Affiliations:



Benjamin Banneker Elementary School	172
Captain Walter Francis Duke Elementary School	176
Chesapeake Public Charter Elementary School	61
Dynard Elementary School	104
Evergreen Elementary School	205
George Washington Carver Elementary School	39
Green Holly Elementary School	75
Greenview Knolls Elementary School	32
Hollywood Elementary School	170
Leonardtwn Elementary School	255
Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary School	147
Lexington Park Elementary School	44
Mechanicsville Elementary School	136
Oakville Elementary School	145
Park Hall Elementary School	44
Piney Point Elementary School	362
Ridge Elementary School	41
Town Creek Elementary School	51
White Marsh Elementary School	168

Community Survey #2

Elementary School Affiliations:

Community Survey #2

Middle and High School Affiliations:

Chesapeake Public Charter Middle School	24
Esperanza Middle School	259
Leonardtown Middle School	742
Margaret Brent Middle School	255
Spring Ridge Middle School	138
Chopticon High School	292
Great Mills High School	151
Leonardtown High School	1025
Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center	240
Virtual Academy	12
One or more schools in other public school districts	26
One or more charter schools	12
One or more independent/private schools	111
None	61

Community Survey #2

Positive Feedback

“We value the integrity and time allocated to keeping parents, students and community members engaged and informed.”

“I’m sure these decisions require a ton of considerations. I appreciate the opportunity for the public to share opinions.”

“As a community member, I greatly appreciate the work going into this.”

“We appreciate the due diligence demonstrated by the Canon Design team and school staff members leading this project.”



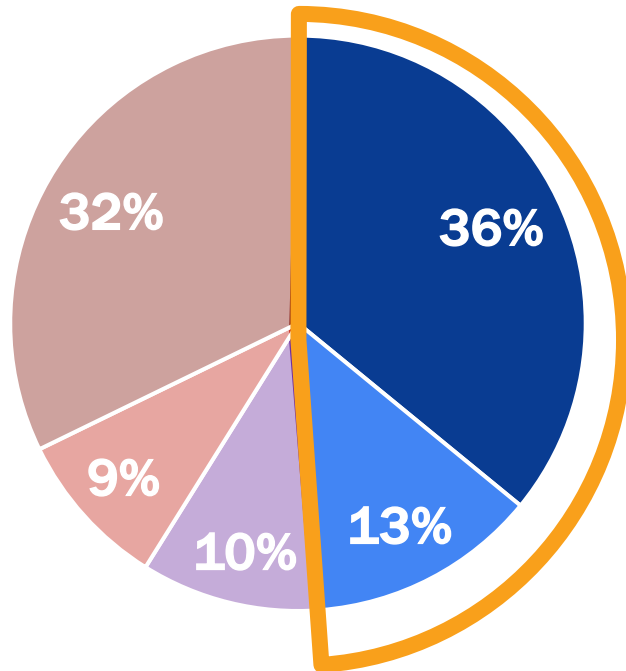
Elementary and Middle School Possible Options

Community Survey #2

ES-MS Options Summary



Option #1 – Balance Utilization

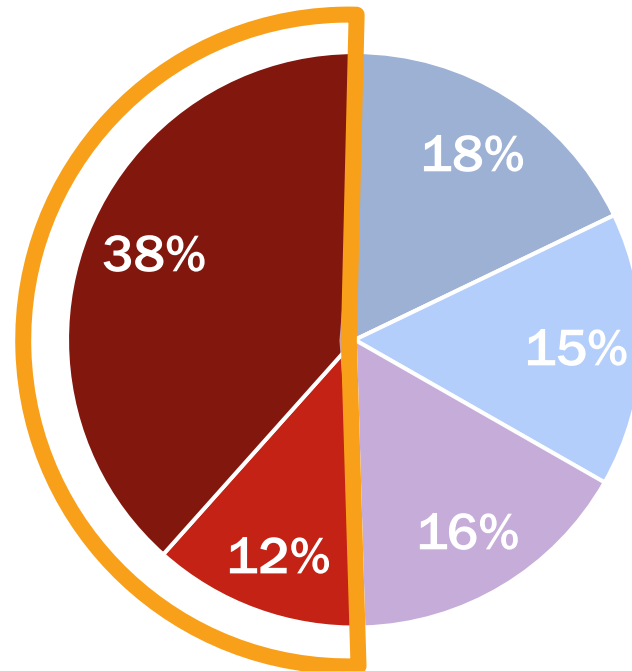


49% support Option #1

41% oppose Option #1

10% are neutral to Option #1

Option #2A – No split feeders

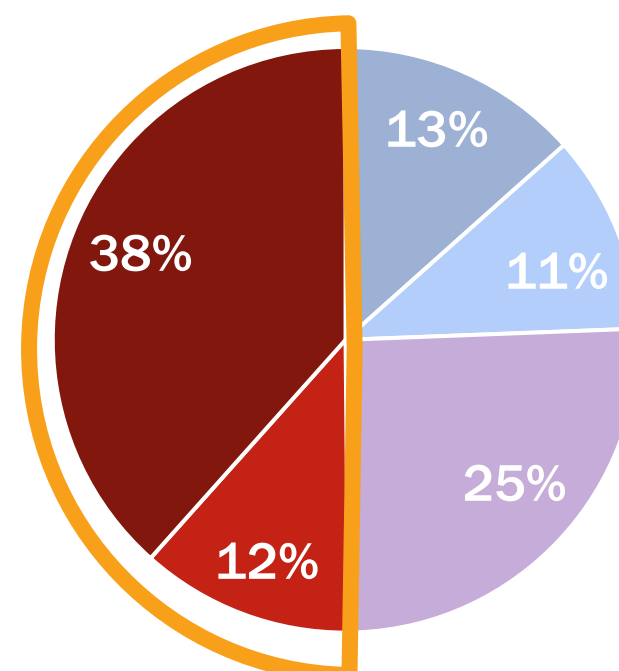


50% oppose Option #2A

33% support Option #2A

16% are neutral to Option #2A

Option #2B – Split Benjamin Banneker ES and Oakville ES

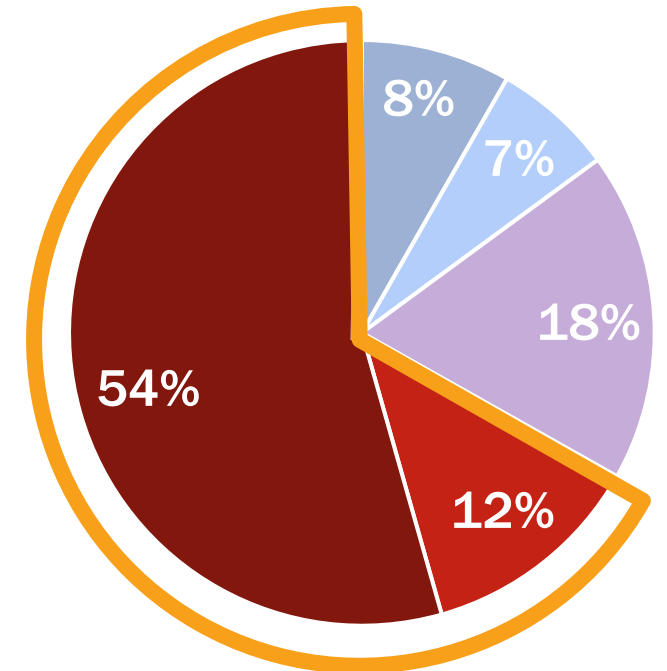


50% oppose Option #2B

24% support Option #2B

25% are neutral to Option #2B

Option #3 – Close White Marsh ES



66% oppose Option #3

15% support Option #3

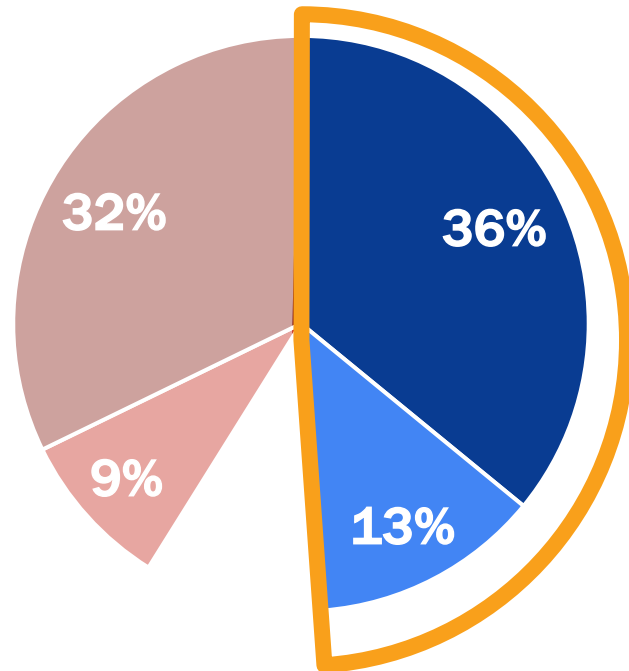
18% are neutral to Option #3

Community Survey #2

ES-MS Options Summary Weighted (without neutrals)



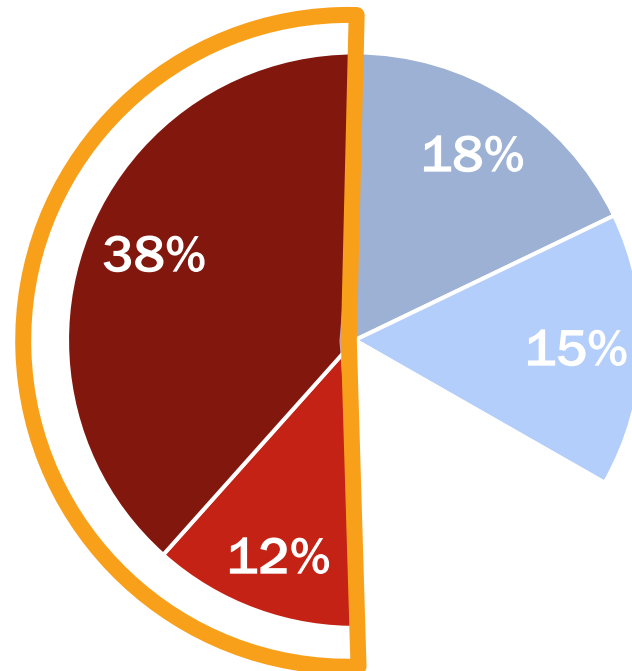
Option #1 – Balance Utilization



54% support Option #1

46% oppose Option #1

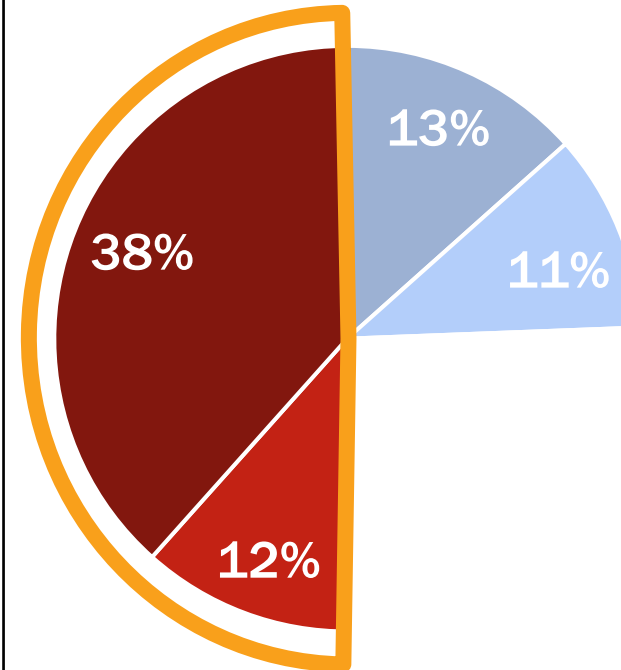
Option #2A – No split feeders



60% oppose Option #2A

40% support Option #2A

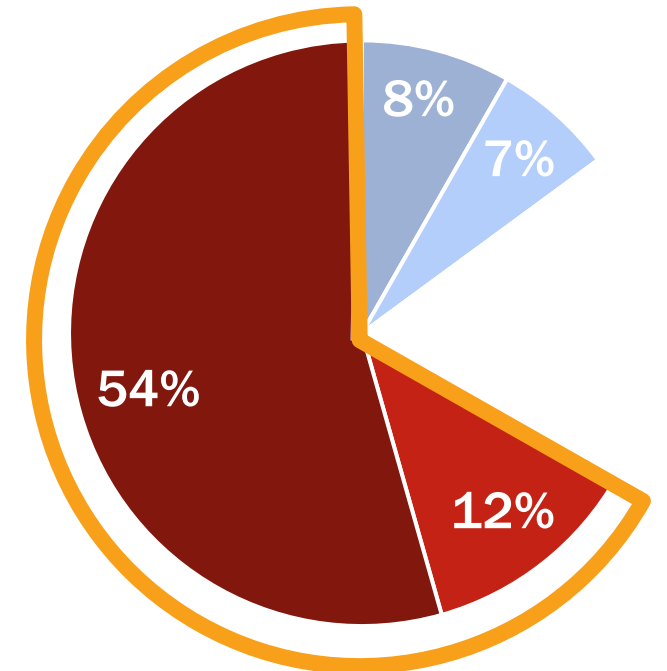
Option #2B – Split Benjamin Banneker ES and Oakville ES



67% oppose Option #2B

33% support Option #2B

Option #3 – Close White Marsh ES



82% oppose Option #3

18% support Option #3

Community Survey #2 – White Marsh ES Community Comments

When evaluating the possibility of closing a school, the consultant team reviews feedback and preferences from individuals directly connected to the school under consideration. For those affiliated with White Marsh ES individuals expressed the following:

Concern for Crowding Neighboring Schools

Many expressed a concern for overcrowding at neighboring schools and a significant increase in class sizes as a result.

“Don’t Close a High-Performing School”

Strong opposition to closing a blue-ribbon school, with strong test scores. Many suggest it should be considered as a model school for the district.

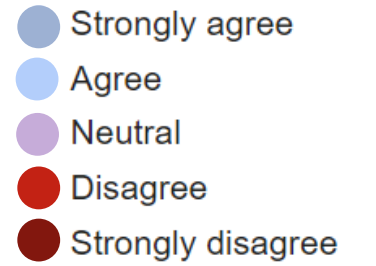
Slight Preference For Option 2A over 2B

Instead of closing White Marsh ES, the least opposed option for those affiliated with White Marsh ES is Option 2A. However, the feelings around this option are polarized with 42% in support and 43% in opposition.

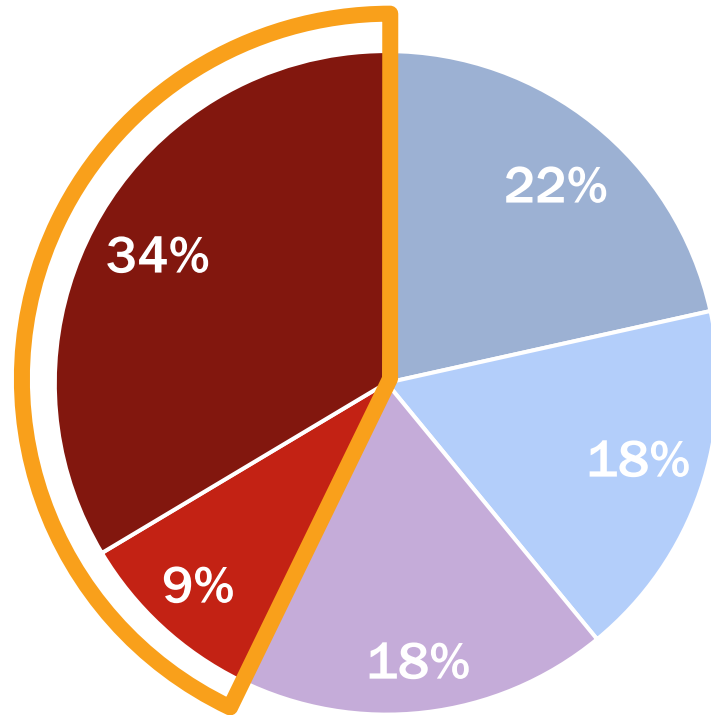
High School Possible Options

Community Survey #2

HS Options Summary



Option #1 – Balance Utilization

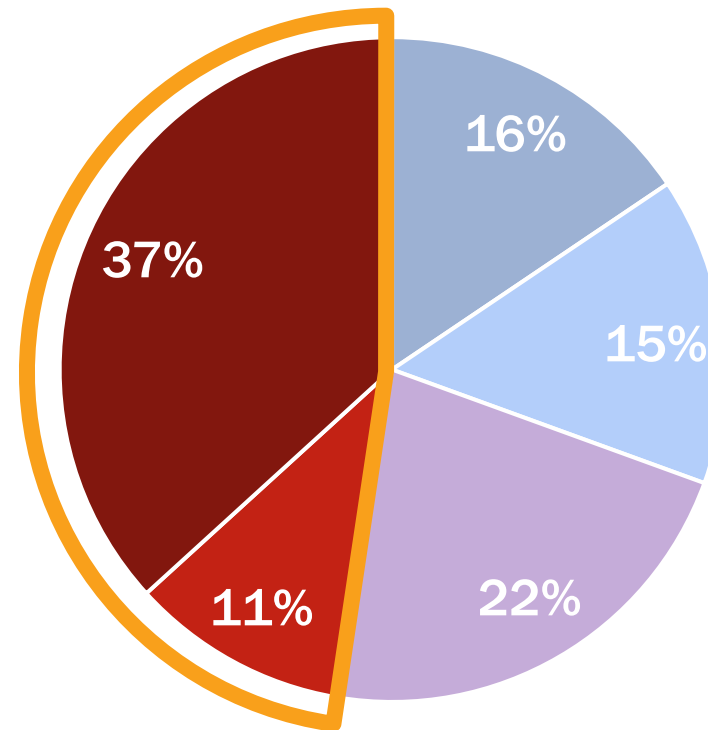


43% oppose Option #1

40% support Option #1

10% are neutral to Option #1

Option #2 – Balance Utilization

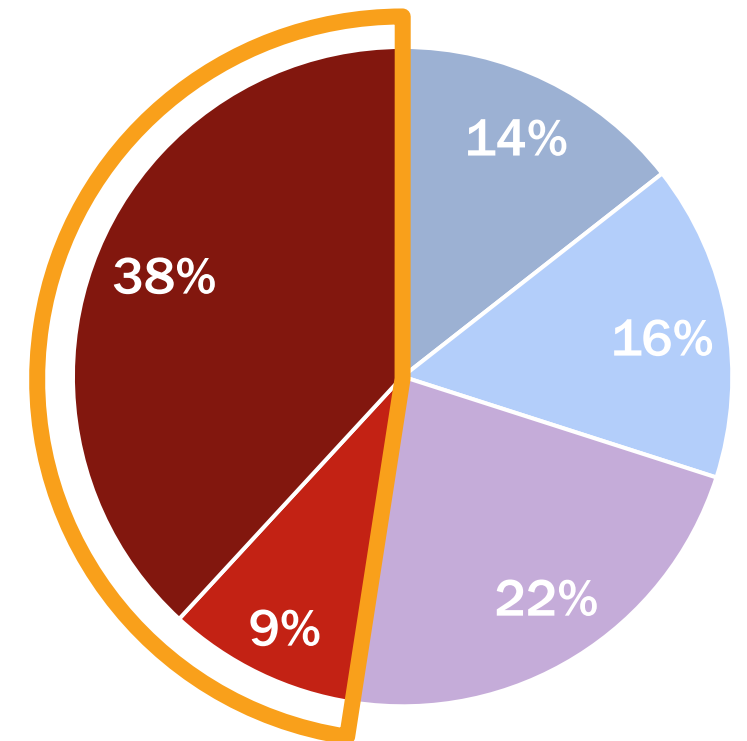


48% oppose Option #2

31% support Option #2

22% are neutral to Option #2

Option #3 – Balance Utilization



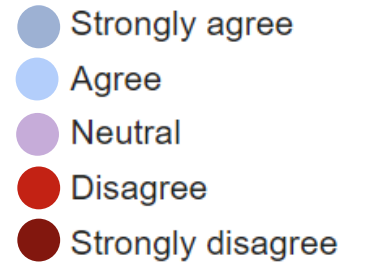
47% oppose Option #3

30% support Option #3

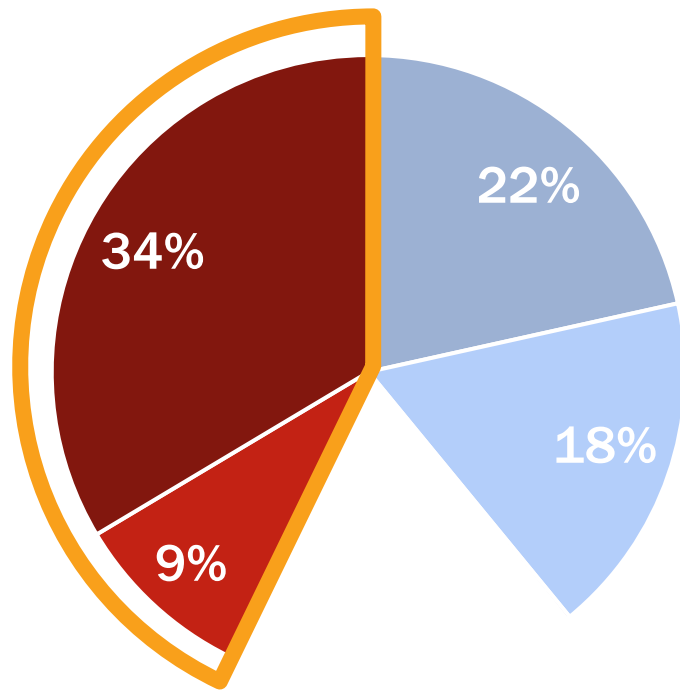
10% are neutral to Option #3

Community Survey #2

HS Options Weighted Summary (without neutrals)



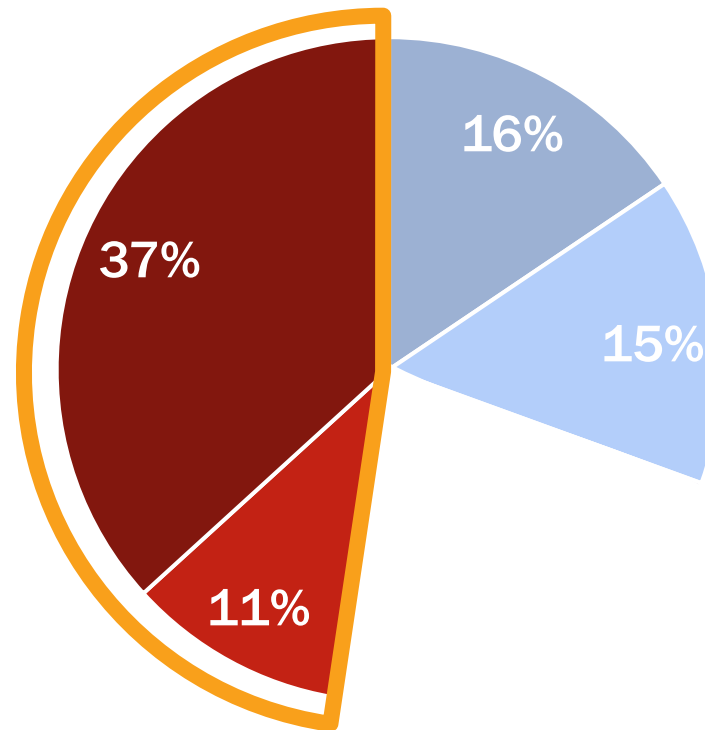
Option #1 – Balance Utilization



52% oppose Option #1

48% support Option #1

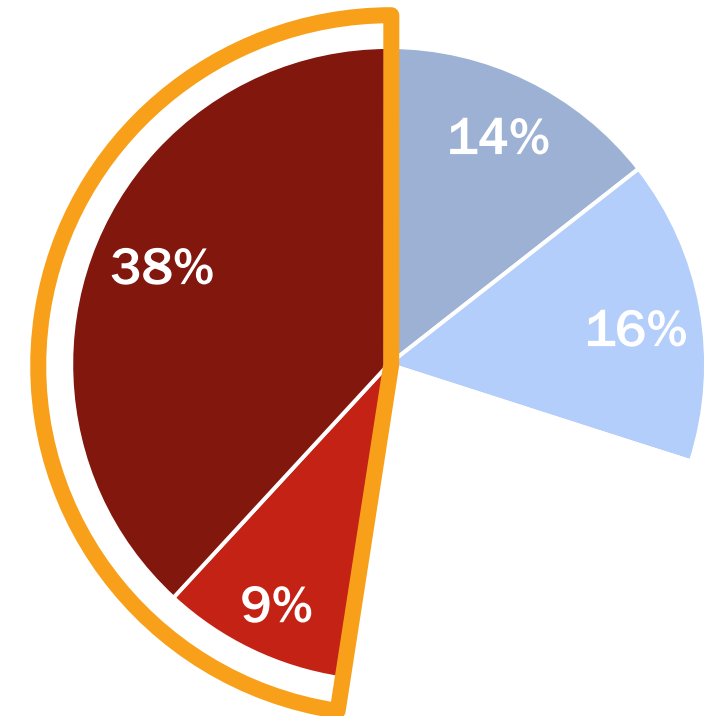
Option #2 – Balance Utilization



61% oppose Option #2

39% support Option #2

Option #3 – Balance Utilization



61% oppose Option #3

39% support Option #3

Community Survey #2 – Additional Comments Themes

- Probable
- Possible
- Remote

Feasibility
Indicator

● Grandfathering or Phased Implementation (150+ mentions)

As a measure to decrease disruption for students, many asked for grandfathering or a phasing plan to be considered as a mitigation strategy.

● Program Parity (60+ mentions)

Some expressed concerns about students receiving the same quality of instruction and opportunities if redistricted to another school

● Mental Health Repercussions (200+ mentions)

Community members expressed concerns about the impacts that redistricting will have on students' mental health due to new environments and potential broken friendships.

● Targeted Fixes or “Micro Shifts” (75+ mentions)

Many asked for emphasis to be placed on only redistricting where absolutely needed at the high school level rather than balancing the district at all levels.

Community Survey #2 – Additional Comments Themes

- Probable
- Possible
- Remote

Feasibility
Indicator

● Feeder Continuity (90+ mentions)

Similar to Survey #1 there was an ask to minimize disruption and keep students together. However, there was an emphasis on keeping students together from middle to high school.

● Transportation Impact (45+ mentions)

Concerns expressed about increased traffic, longer bus rides for students, and students potentially passing one school to reach another.

● Build New Schools or Additions (145+ mentions)

In lieu of redistricting many asked for increased capacity in the school district to absorb and potential growth.

Where We've Been Survey Outcomes CD Recommendation

Priorities from the School District

- Effective and efficient use of capital resources in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Optimized use of our facilities.
- Maximize opportunities for student achievement and allow for the delivery of the best instructional program possible within available facility and financial resources.
- Relieve Overcrowding



Additional Considerations

#1 - Priorities Expressed by the Community Across Two Community Surveys:

- Importance on Safety and Security
- Quality Programs and Opportunities for All
- Feeder Continuity
- Affecting the Fewest Families and Keeping Kids From the Same Neighborhoods Together
- Grandfathering or phased implementation

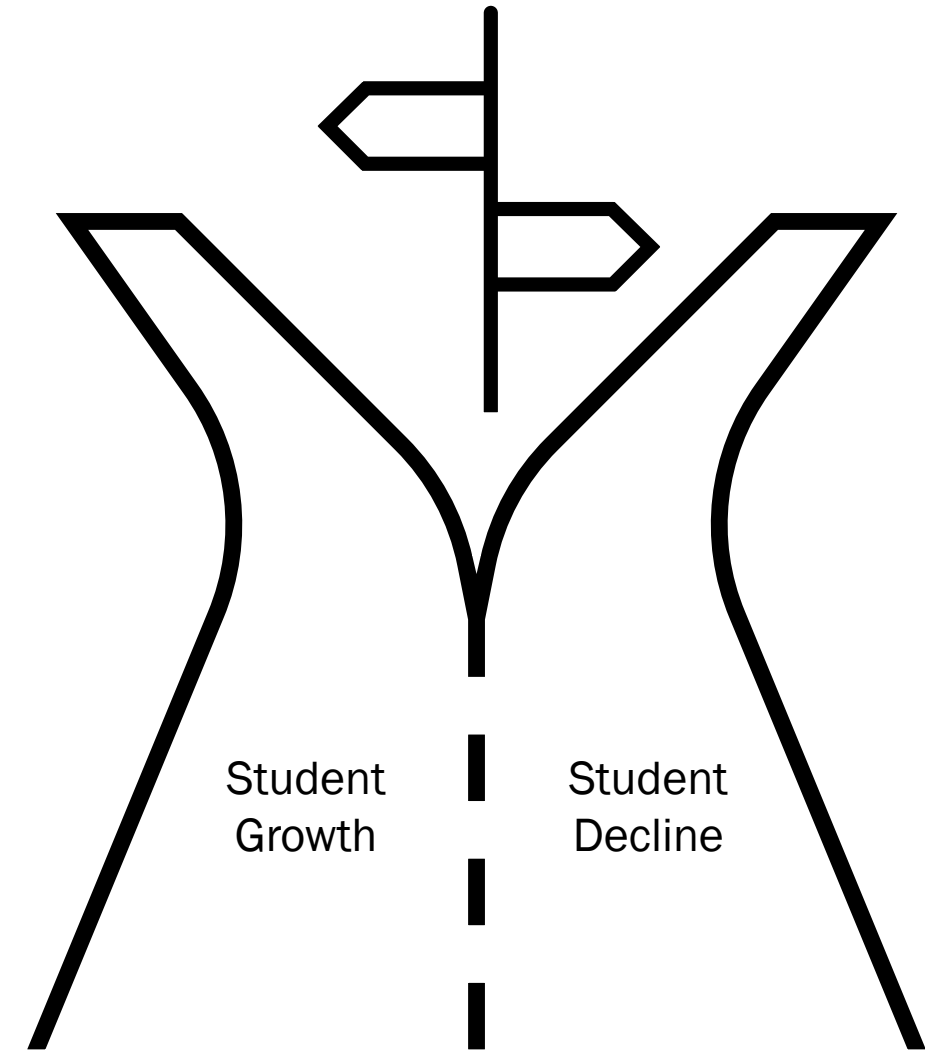
Additional Considerations

#2 - Current Decline Trend with Potential for Future Growth

Based on the data that we have gathered, SMCPS is at an enrollment inflection point.

Since the 19/20 school year the enrollment has dropped 600 students across all grade levels with significant excess capacity at the elementary school level.

Projections based on live birth data and cohort survival rates estimate that enrollments may rebound to SY19/20 levels in the next 10 years and current planned developments, particularly in and around Leonardtown, have the potential to yield additional students.



Development Yields

* school capacity x yield by grade level = new homes required
**new families, not migration from existing housing

Development + New School Potential

There are several developments earmarked for St. Mary’s County. However, the number of students needed to gain funding from the state would require a significant number housing units to be built and occupied with students. These number are in addition to what is required for each school to reach 100% capacity.

Data Points	HS	MS	ES
Current yield by geocoded students	0.369	0.369	0.369
Yield per grade level (K-12)	0.028	0.028	0.028
Yield per grade level x number of grade levels	.112	0.084	0.170
New School Capacity*	1,200*	1,000*	500*
Required number of housing units**	10,714	11,904	2,936

The current student yield of .476 per student was first adopted in September of 1990 and has continued to be utilized by St. Mary’s County government for the purpose of adequate public facilities.

Development Yields

* school capacity x yield by grade level = new homes required
**new families, not migration from existing housing

Development + New School Potential

These numbers are not cumulative. If within the school district **12,000 homes** were built and occupied after all existing schools had achieved 100% that would justify: **1 new high school, 1 new middle school, and 4 new elementary schools.**

Data Points	HS	MS	ES
Current yield by geocoded students	0.369	0.369	0.369
Yield per grade level (K-12)	0.028	0.028	0.028
Yield per grade level x number of grade levels	.112	0.084	0.170
New School Capacity*	1,200*	1,000*	500*
Required number of housing units**	10,714	11,904	2,936

Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

	Option 1: Balance Utilization	Option 2A: Alleviates Areas of Over/Under Utilization (100% feeder)	Option 2B: Alleviates Areas of Over/Under Utilization (split feeder for Benjamin Banneker ES and Oakville ES)	Option 3: Close White Marsh ES and Balance Utilization
Students Impacted	34% ES 17% MS	23% ES 22% MS	23% ES 19% MS	36% ES 17% MS
Utilization Ranges	81-91% ES 81-91% MS	77-94% ES 79-103% MS	77-94% ES 84-91% MS	77-94% ES 82-97% MS

The four possible options presented to the community ranged in their percentages of students impacted and resulting utilization for both elementary and middle school.

Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

Deferred Maintenance

Investment needs for White Marsh ES are significant. The county would need to contribute a minimum of \$4 million to address the minimum work required on the school building.

White Marsh Elementary School - Capital Investment Required

Original Building: 1956
Additions: 1970, 1978, and 1999
Square Feet: 32,379
Capacity: State 238 and Local 226

Full Renovation - \$16,800,000
Building sufficiency deficiencies: nurse/admin areas, media center, cafeteria/kitchen, fine arts, and ADA accessibility
Building infrastructure: roof, HVAC, electrical, water, flooring, building envelope

Minimum Work Required - \$8,834,000
Building infrastructure: roof, HVAC, fuel tank/lines, flooring/ACM, painting (interior/exterior), exterior refurbishment, generator
Relocatables: demolish and replace with a double unit to house music & art
Relocatables: demolish and provide interior changes for pupil personnel and student support services

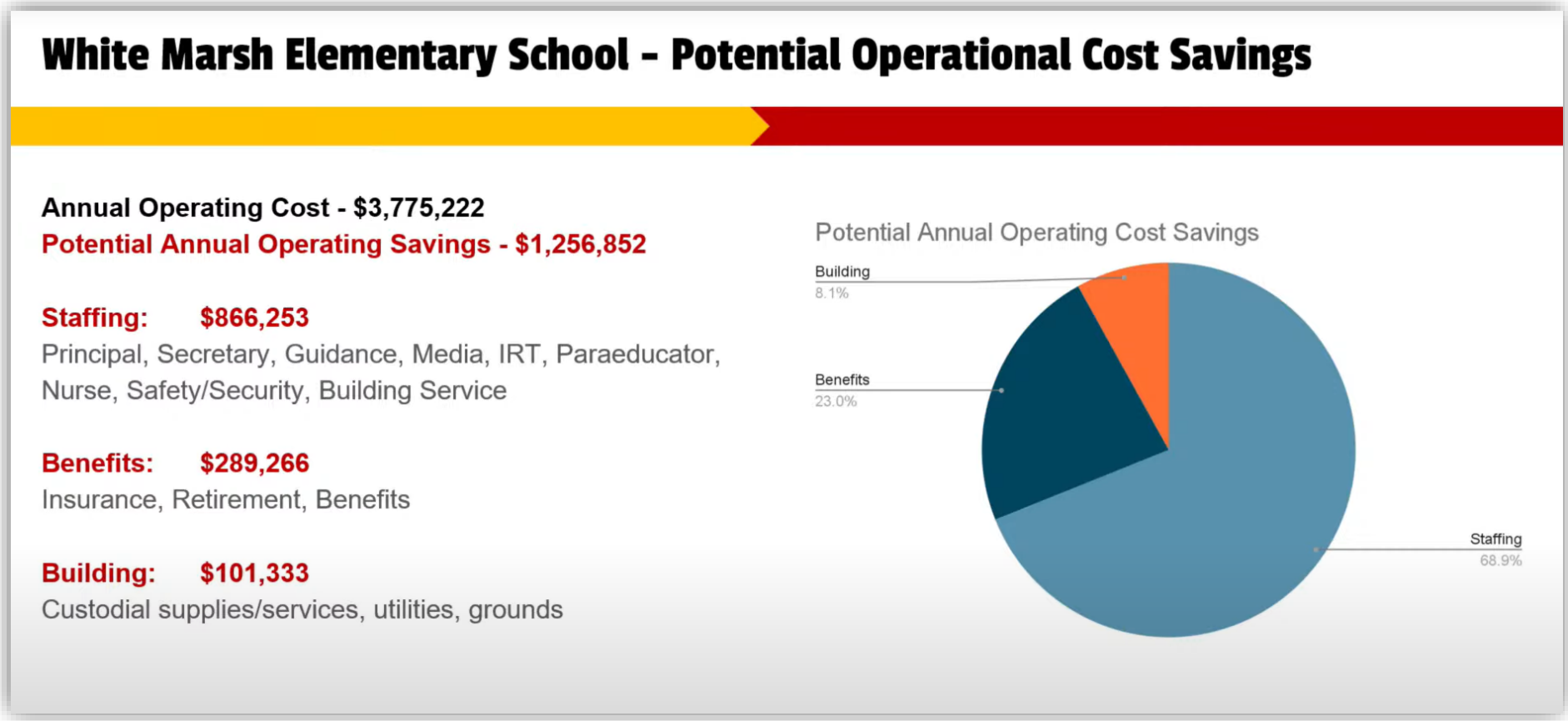
Room Type	State Rated Building Use
PreK	0
K	2
1-5	8
Special Ed	1
Total	11

18

Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

Possible Savings

Operational savings from closing White Marsh ES are estimated to be \$1.2 million annually.

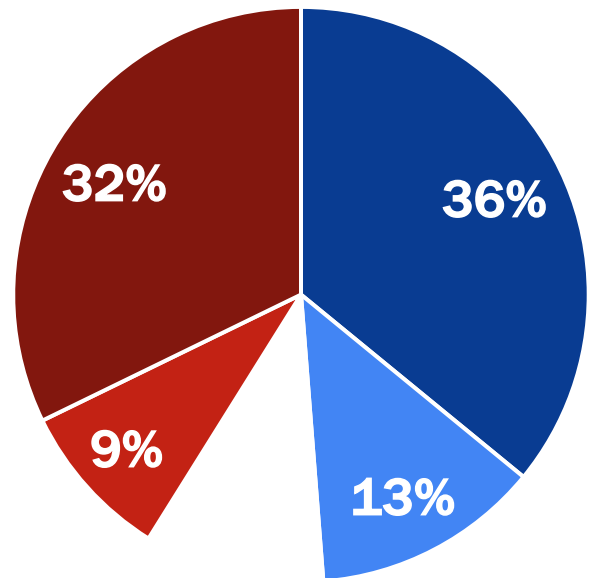


Community Survey #2

ES-MS Options Summary Weighted (without neutrals)



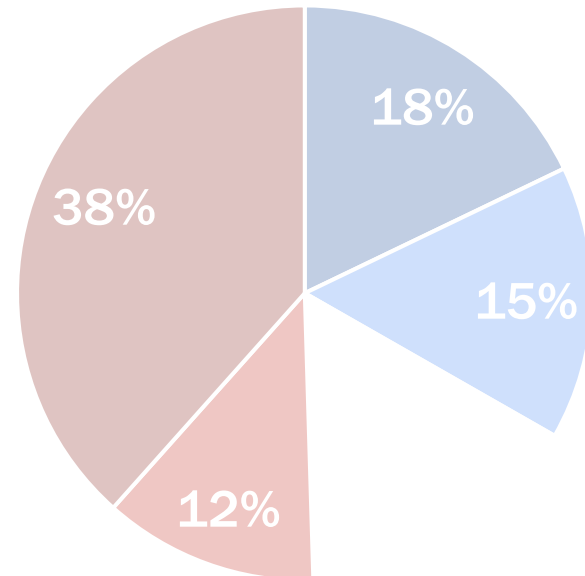
Option #1 – Balance Utilization



54% support Option #1

46% oppose Option #1

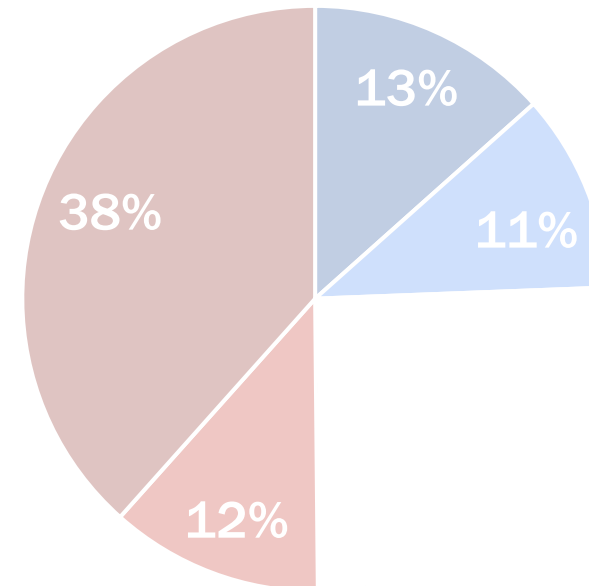
Option #2A – No split feeders



60% oppose Option #2A

40% support Option #2A

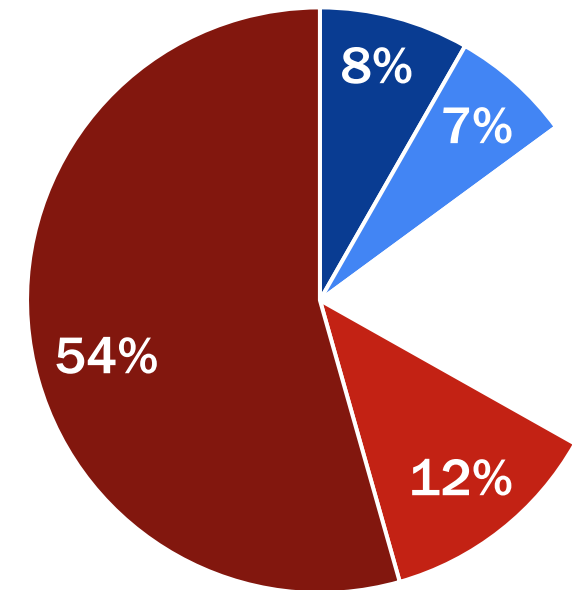
Option #2B – Split Benjamin Banneker ES and Oakville ES



67% oppose Option #2B

33% support Option #2B

Option #3 – Close White Marsh ES



82% oppose Option #3

18% support Option #3

Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

What option best sets the school district up for the future?

Criteria	Option 1 – Balance Utilization	Option 3 – Close White Marsh and Balance Utilization
Effective and efficient use of capital resources in a fiscally responsible manner	✓	✓ \$1.2m in annual savings
Optimized use of facilities	✓ 85% utilization ES districtwide	✓ 88% utilization ES districtwide
Maximize opportunities for student achievement and best instructional program possible	✓	✓
Relieve Overcrowding	✓	✓
Sets up the school district well for future decline	✗	✓
Sets up the school district well for future growth	✓	✓
Creates opportunities for new school in the future	✗	✓
Addresses CIP budgetary concerns (deferred maintenance)	✗	✓
Aligns with community feedback	✓	✗

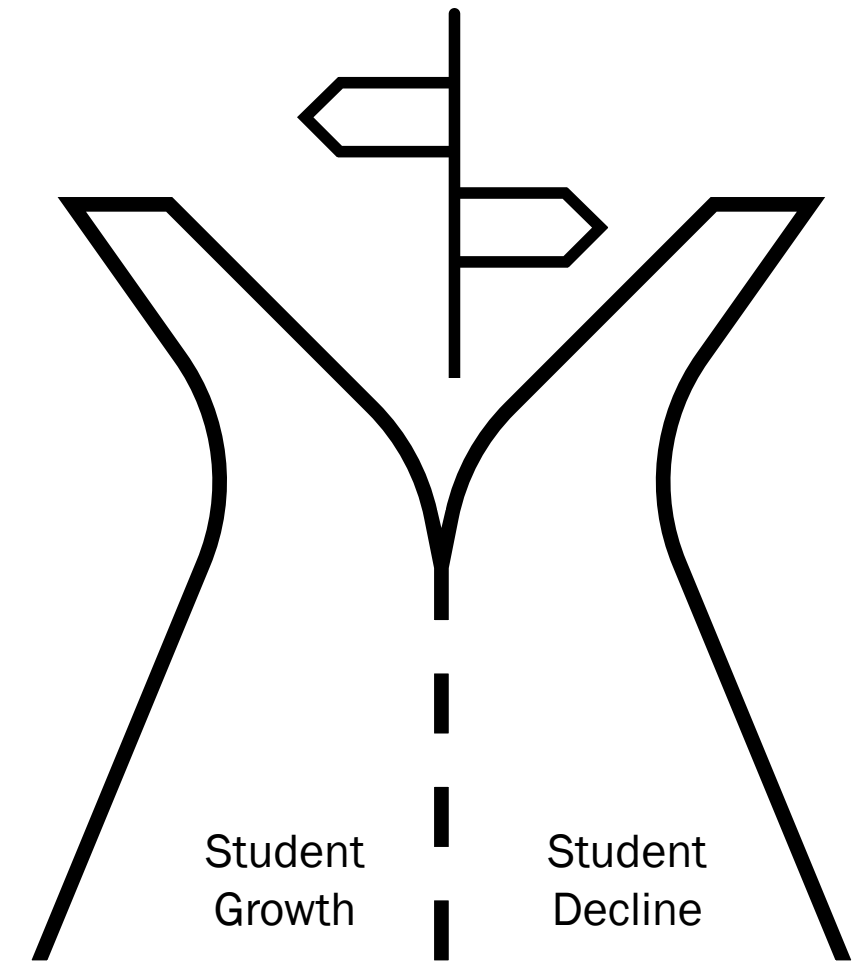
Elementary and Middle School Recommendation

CannonDesign's Short Term Recommendation:

Monitor enrollment over the next 2 years for growth or decline with a plan to follow through with **Option 3**.

CannonDesign's Long Term Recommendation:

Option 3 – Close White Marsh ES and Balance Utilization

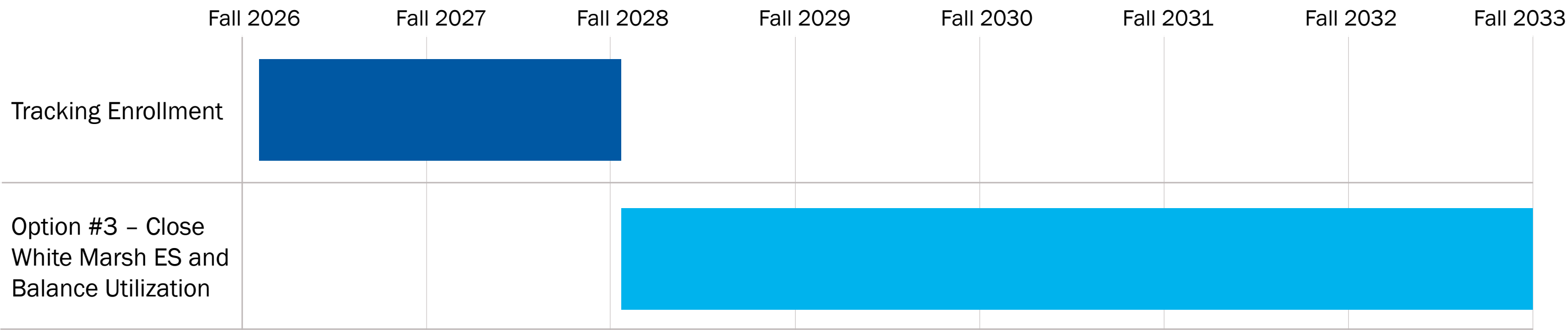


Although the community is strongly opposed to closing White Marsh Elementary School, we recommend it due to the financial strain that updating White Marsh ES would place on the school district. The school faces challenges including aging infrastructure, inadequate educational facilities, and a site too limited in size to allow for effective improvements. We believe Option 3 aligns best with the district's priorities and positions the entire district for future growth and prudent capital investment. To create the 100% feeder patterns, a desire expressed by the community across both community surveys, we recommend retaining the pairing of the Elementary and Middle School Option 3. With 84% of Community Survey One respondents believing that funding for school facilities should be allocated to benefit as many students as possible, we believe Option 3 best supports that.

We do not recommend micro-changes at the Elementary School and Middle School levels as they are hard to achieve without cascading effects throughout the district. Additionally, doing so would not prepare the district to manage growth or decline without further redistricting. We believe the district should continue with current pre-k operations but should review associated policies due to cost implications of transportation.

Elementary and Middle School Implementation Timeline

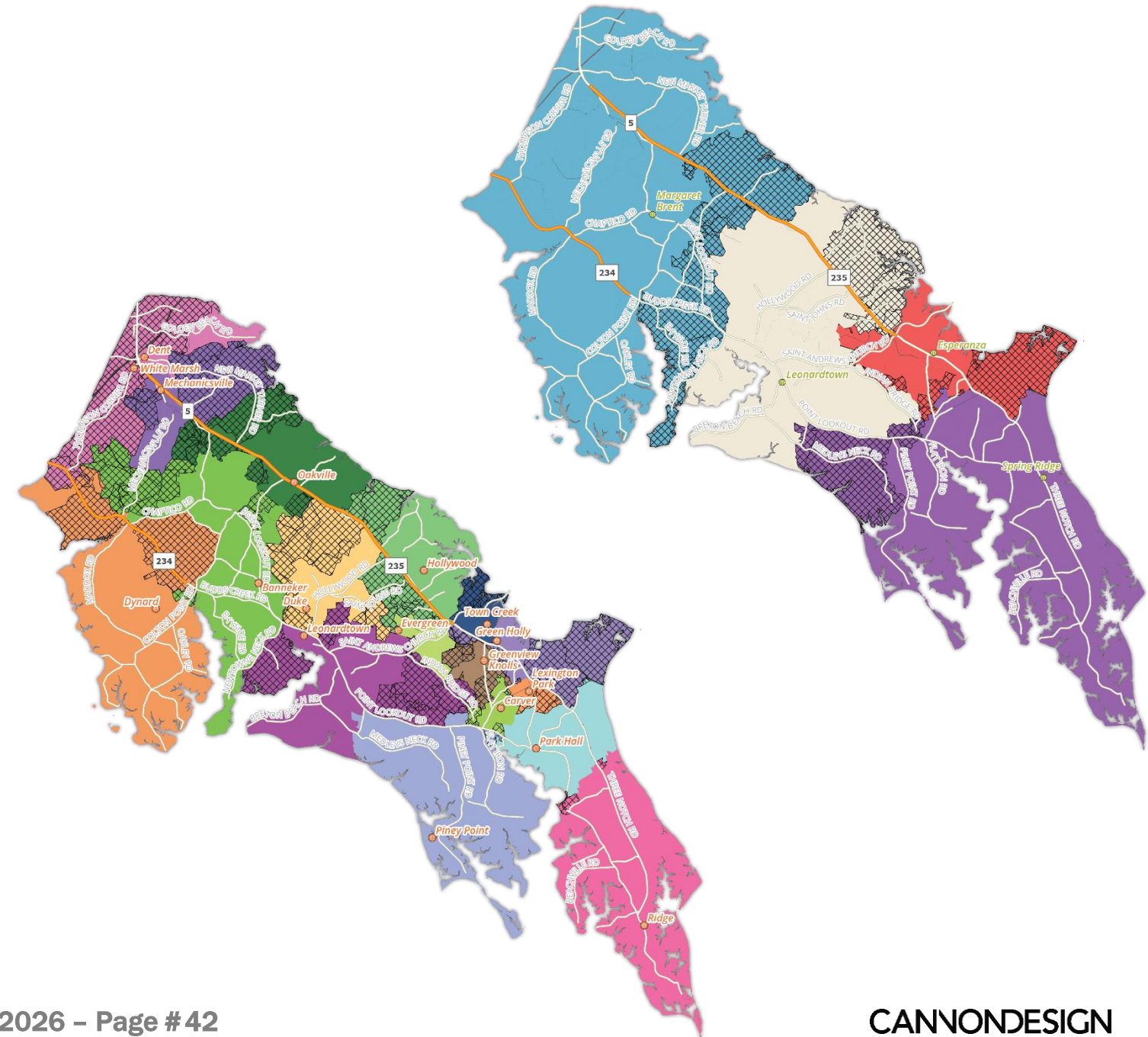
The timeline is intended to outline the general sequence of the redistricting efforts. Particularly for the elementary school and middle school options, we encourage the School District to keep tabs on enrollment trends.



Elementary and Middle School Impacts

Option Summary

- All elementary schools feed 100% into middle school
- 36% of elementary school students are affected
- 17% of middle school students are affected
- Helps to plan for long-term growth (allows for consideration of new buildings to address focused growth areas) by accelerating State funding eligibility
- Creates operational and capital cost savings (deferred maintenance)
- Former White Marsh ES students will have access to recently modernized facilities
- Closes a blue-ribbon school
- Longer transportation for some Benjamin Banneker ES students
- Longer transportation for some Spring Ridge MS students



High School Recommendation

High School Recommendation

	Option 1: Alleviates Areas of Over/Under Utilization	Option 2: Alleviates Areas of Over/Under Utilization	Option 3: Alleviates Areas of Over/Under Utilization
Students Impacted	12%	12%	11%
Utilization Ranges	103-106%	103-106%	103-105%

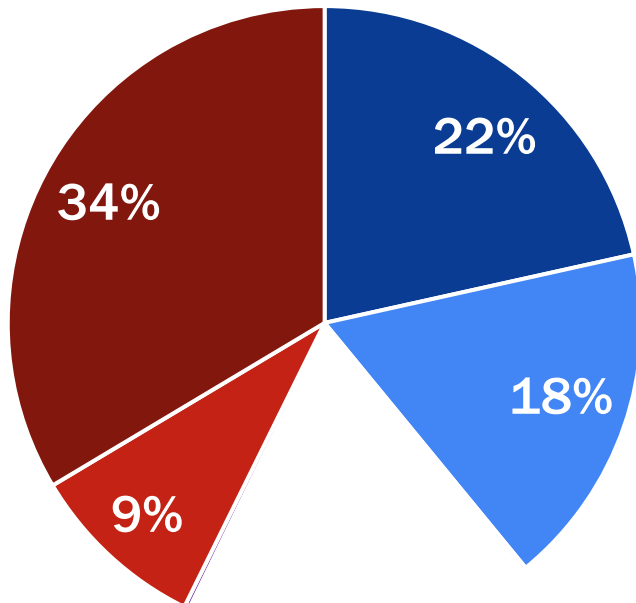
The three possible options presented to the community were similar in their percentages of students impacted and resulting utilization for the high schools. Given that there is a higher enrollment than capacity at the high school level, it is a challenge to balance utilization across the district without all high schools having a utilization over 100%.

Community Survey #2

HS Options Weighted Summary (without neutrals)



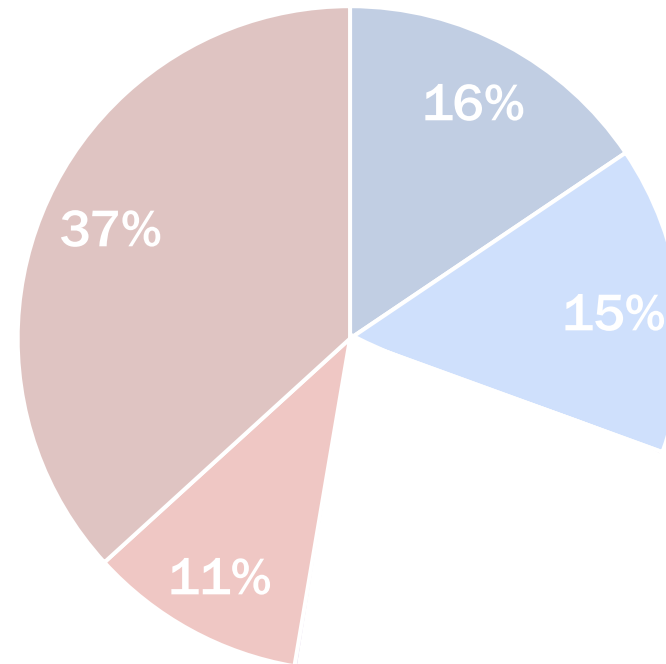
Option #1 – Balance Utilization



52% oppose Option #1

48% support Option #1

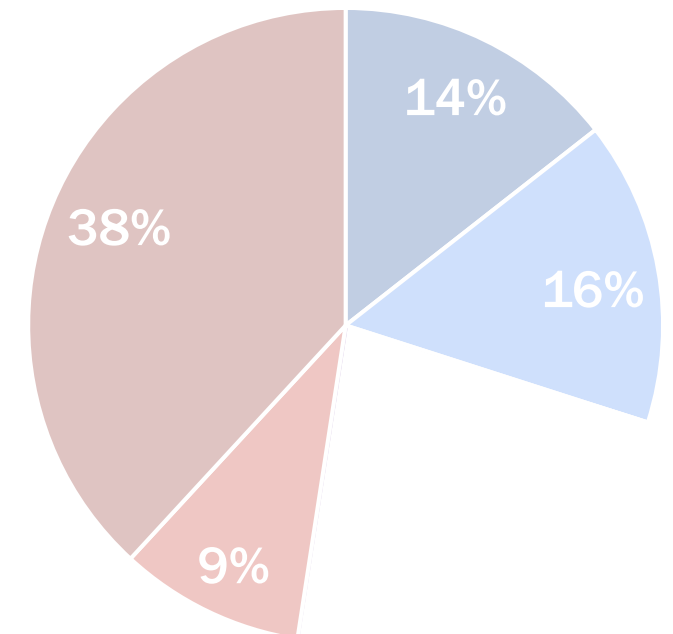
Option #2 – Balance Utilization



61% oppose Option #2

39% support Option #2

Option #3 – Balance Utilization



61% oppose Option #3

39% support Option #3

High School Recommendation

CannonDesign's Short Term Recommendation:

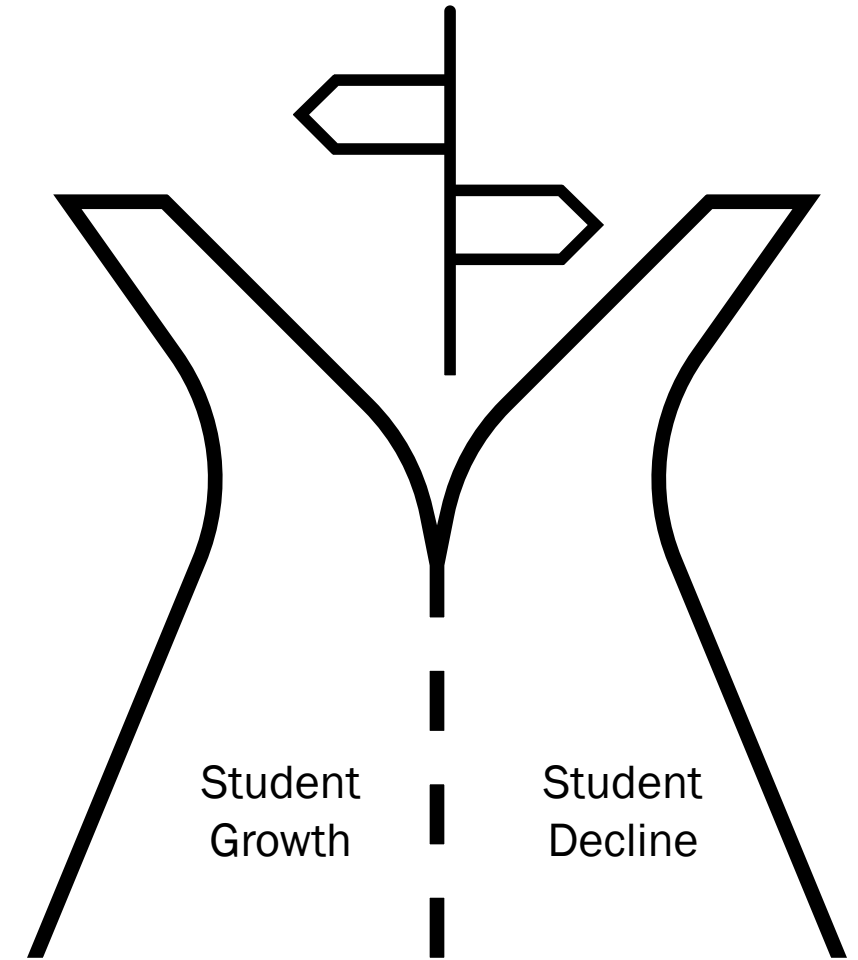
Balance utilization across the district with **Option 1**. As a trade-up opportunity, consider including popular programs such as GIS and Chinese at all high schools and beginning a Cyber Security pathway which the community showed support for in the first survey. Doing so can also provide natural migration of students even if they are not affected by redistricting.

CannonDesign's Long Term Recommendation:

Collaborate with secondary institutions throughout the county to address high school overutilization through offsite programs. Pathways in Health and Engineering had strong interest from the community in the first survey.

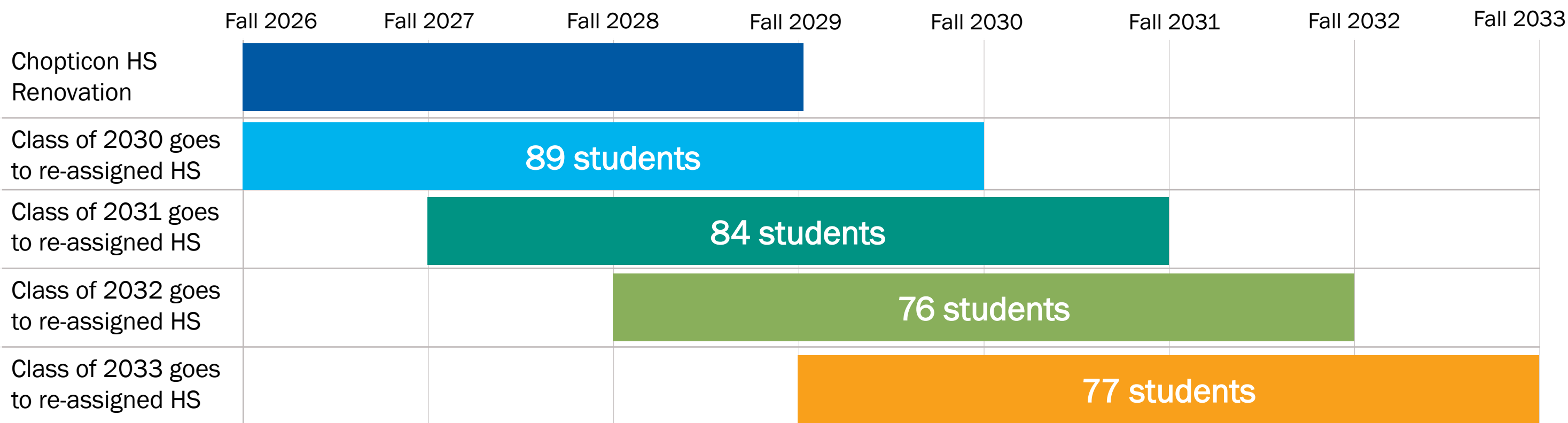
With there being more students than capacity at the high school level, getting all high schools below 100% utilization is not feasible, as a result the options presented focused on balancing enrollments across all three buildings. While there was no definitive support from the community for any of the high school options presented, our recommendation for Option 1 aligns with the community's preferences as it was the option that they supported the most and opposed the least in the second survey.

We believe Option 1 meets all district's priorities specifically by relieving overcrowding, with Leonardtown HS reducing from 123% to 103% utilized, and optimizing the use of facilities by increasing Chopticon HS utilization from 89% to 106%.



High School Implementation Timeline

The timeline is intended to outline the general sequence of the redistricting efforts for the high school. The timeline takes into consideration previously planned renovations at Chopticon HS and proposes a phased implementation of students being redistricted.



High School Implementation Timeline

Existing Zoning HS

New Zoning HS

Year 0
(SY25-26)

Class of '29 , '28, '27, '26

Year 1
(SY26-27)

Class of '30
24 to GMHS
65 to CHS

Class of '29, '28, '27

Year 2
(SY27-28)

Class of '30, '31
+19 to GMHS
+65 to CHS

Class of '29, '28

Year 3
(SY28-29)

Class of '32, '31, '30
+15 to GMHS
+61 to CHS

Class of
'29

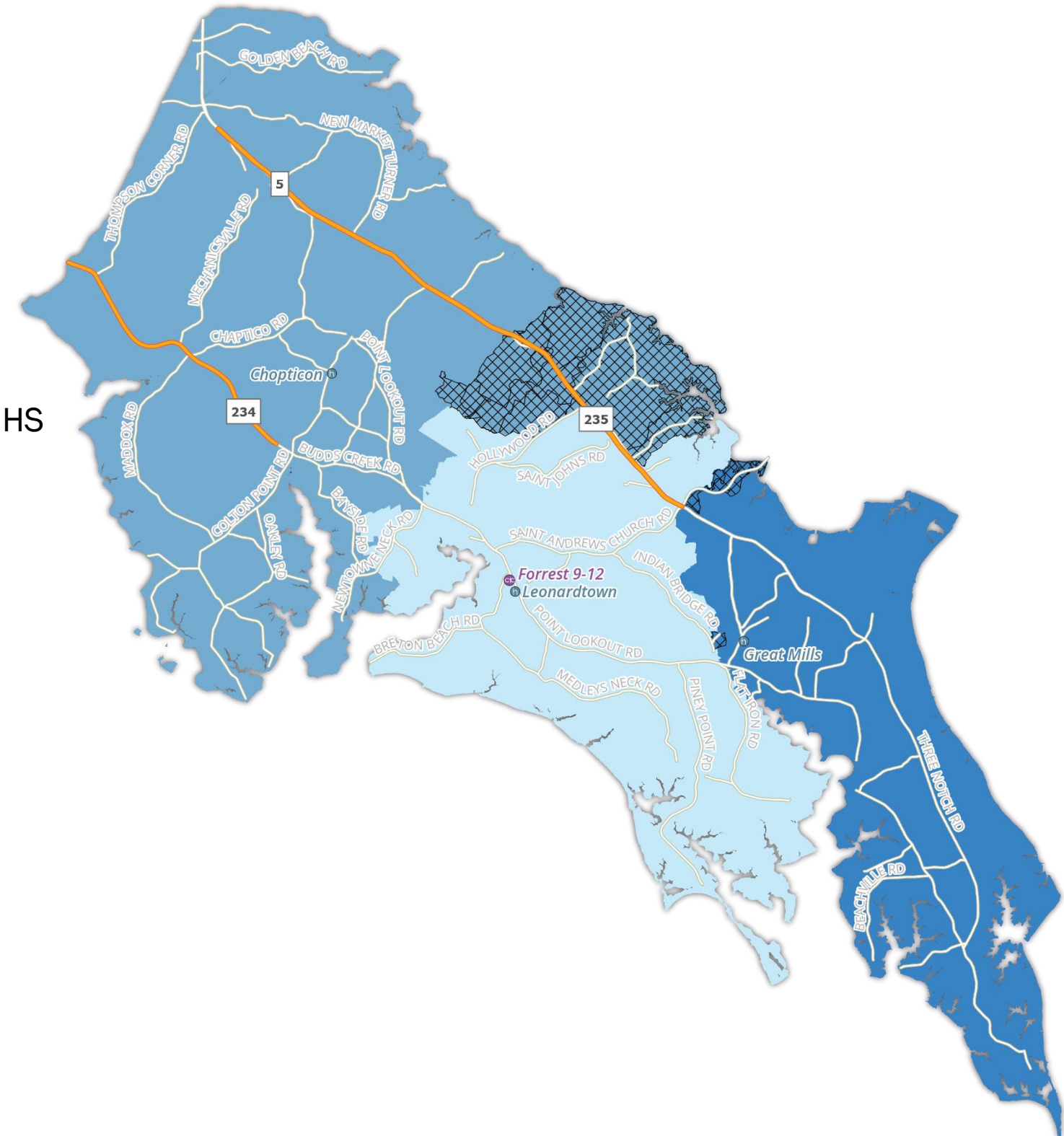
Year 4
(SY29-30)

Class of '33, '32, '31, '30
+18 to GMHS
+ 59 to CHS

High School Impacts

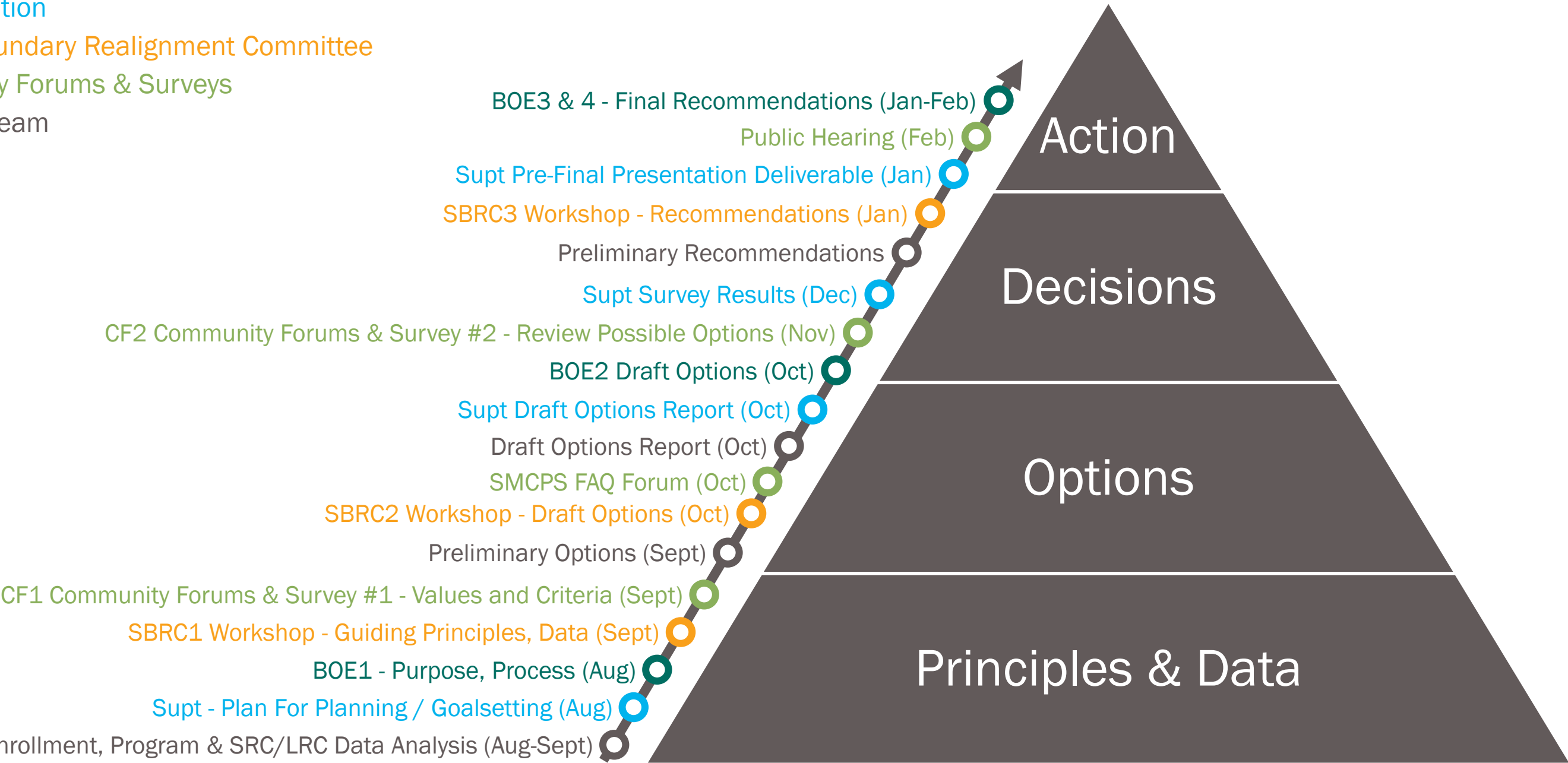
Option Summary

- Utilization percentages range between 103% - 106%
- 12% of high school students are affected
- Neighborhoods remain intact
- Northern portion of Leonardtown HS area is assigned to Chopticon HS
- Elizabeth Hills neighborhood is assigned to Great Mills HS
- Breton Bay may be assigned to Chopticon HS if anticipated growth materializes



Our Process

- School Board
- Administration
- School Boundary Realignment Committee
- Community Forums & Surveys
- Planning Team



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