

# Whittier Tech Building Project Public Forum West Newbury Select Board



January 17, 2024



# Forum Overview

- Objective
- Presentation
  - District/Student Information
  - Current Building
  - Proposed Building
  - Cost/Funding
- Questions and Comments
- Ground Rules



# Whitter District Communities



★ Location of Whittier Regional



# Whittier Tech 2023 Programs

Advanced Manufacturing	Engineering
Auto Body	Health Assisting
Auto Technology	Hospitality
CAD Drafting	HVAC & Refrigeration
Carpentry	Marine Technology
Child Care	Marketing
Cosmetology	Masonry
Culinary Arts	Medical Assisting
Dental Assisting	Metal Fabrication
Design & Visual Com. [DVC]	Plumbing & Heating
Electrical	Welding
Electrical/Robotics	

1,280 Day Students    400 Night Students    Summer CTI

Source: Whittier Tech Presentation to West Newbury Selectboard, November 13, 2023



# District and Regional Agreement

- Whittier district formed in 1967
- Original construction funded by State
- Ongoing operation cost allocation
- Ongoing capital cost allocation
- Agreement modification
- Agreement withdrawal requirements



# Municipality Involvement

- Whittier School Committee consists of:
  - Two members from each City
  - One member from each Town
- Appointed by School Committees
- No formal role for municipal officials
- Rely on Whittier for updates, financial information, long term planning



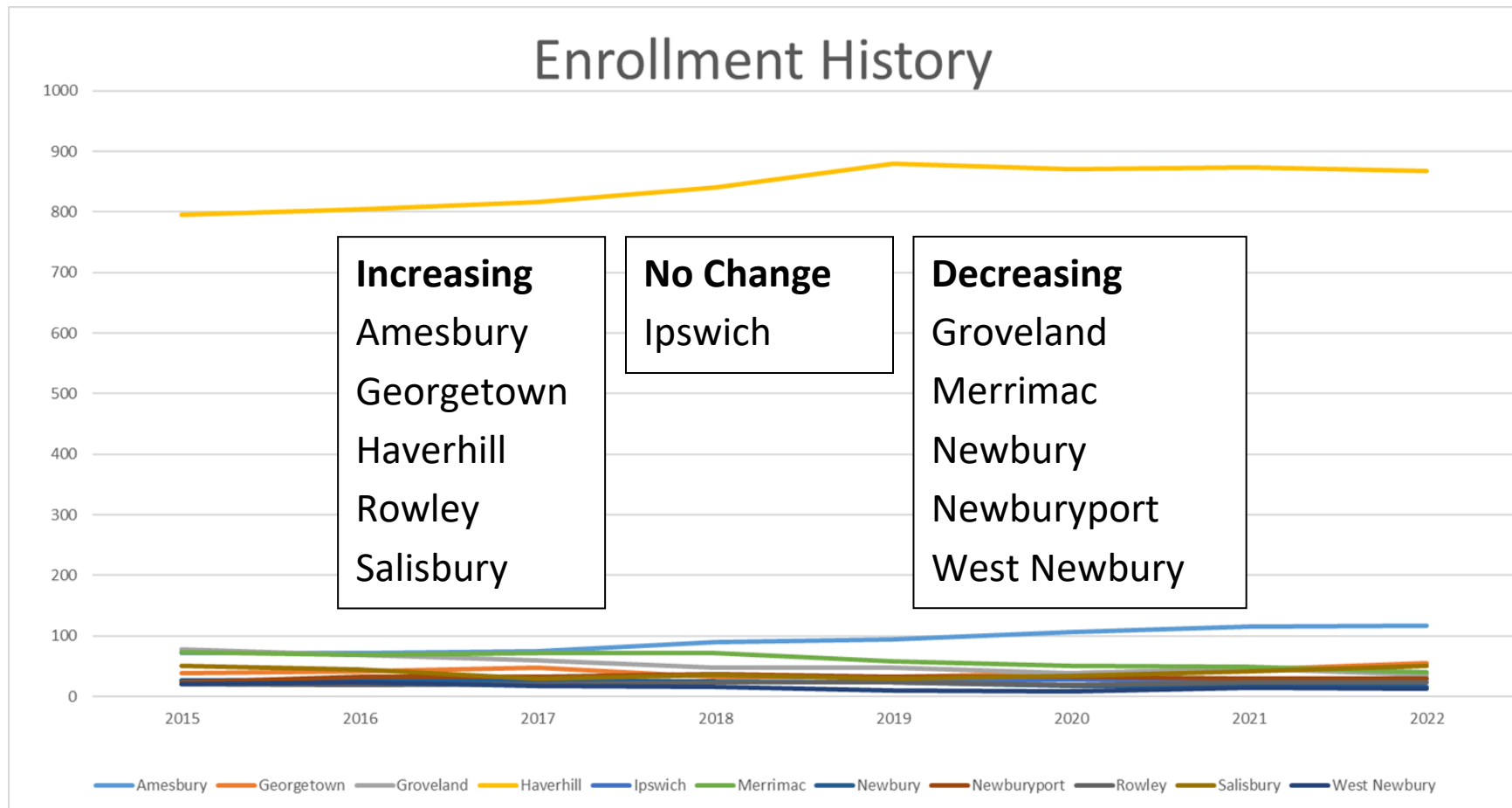
## Whittier Tech District Makeup

City/Town	Whittier Enrollment		Total City/Town Students		Difference
	# Students	Percentage	# Students	Percentage	
Haverhill	867	68%	8,406	42%	-26.4%
Salisbury	50	4%	849	4%	0.3%
Amesbury	117	9%	1,968	10%	0.6%
Merrimac	40	3%	789	4%	0.8%
Groveland	35	3%	851	4%	1.5%
Rowley	23	2%	738	4%	1.8%
West Newbury	13	1%	622	3%	2.1%
Newbury	16	1%	672	3%	2.1%
Georgetown	55	4%	1,406	7%	2.6%
Ipswich	30	2%	1,576	8%	5.4%
Newburyport	29	2%	2,331	12%	9.3%
Total	1,275	100%	20,208	100%	

Source: Whittier Tech FY24 Budget



# Student Enrollment 2015-2022



Source: [whittiertech.org](http://whittiertech.org)





# Student Acceptance

- Evaluation criteria

- Scholastic Achievement (30 points)
- Attendance (20 points)
- School Discipline/Conduct (10 points)
- Sending School Recommendation (10 points)
- Interview (30 points)

- West Newbury acceptance history

Year	#Applied	#Accepted	Year	#Applied	#Accepted	Year	#Applied	#Accepted
2013/14	11	9	2017/18	2	2	2021/22	11	8
2014/15	5	4	2018/19	5	5	2022/23	4	1
2015/16	6	6	2019/20	3	3	2023/24	12	4
2016/17	7	7	2020/21	8	6			

Source: Whittier Tech Business Manager - January 11, 2024



# Existing Building Issues

- Building age (50-years)
- Outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems
- No fire suppression system
- Inadequate access road
- Aging wastewater treatment plant
- Not ADA compliant



# Capital Spending: 2014-2023

Capital Item	Cost	Years
Buses	\$ 360,000	2014-2016
Saw Dust Collector	\$ 230,000	2015-2016
Bleacher Replacement	\$ 795,000	2016-2017
Boiler Replacement	\$ 195,000	2017-2018
Electrical Panels	\$ 225,000	2017-2018
Greenhouse Repair	\$ 75,000	2017-2018
Athletic Turf Fields	\$ 1,735,000	2018-2021
MSBA Feasibility Study	\$ 1,586,600	2020-2024
Exterior Repairs	\$ 295,000	2021-2022
Vocational Area Redeployment	\$ 295,000	2022-2023
Technology Infrastructure	\$ 258,400	2023-2024

Source: Ma Department of Revenue, Whittier Tech approved Budget Books



# Estimated Renovation Costs

Renovation Item	MSBA PSR <sup>1</sup>	Leftfield <sup>2</sup>	Consigli <sup>3</sup>
Wastewater Treatment Plant	\$ 3.0 M	\$ 11.7 M	\$ 12.8 M
Sprinkler System	\$ 7.8 M	\$ 12.1 M	\$ 11.3 M
New Access Road	\$ 3.9 M	\$ 11.4 M	\$ 9.4 M
Code Upgrade	\$ 150.5 M	\$ 328.9 M	\$ 316.8 M
Total	\$ 165.2 M	\$ 364.2 M	\$ 350.2 M

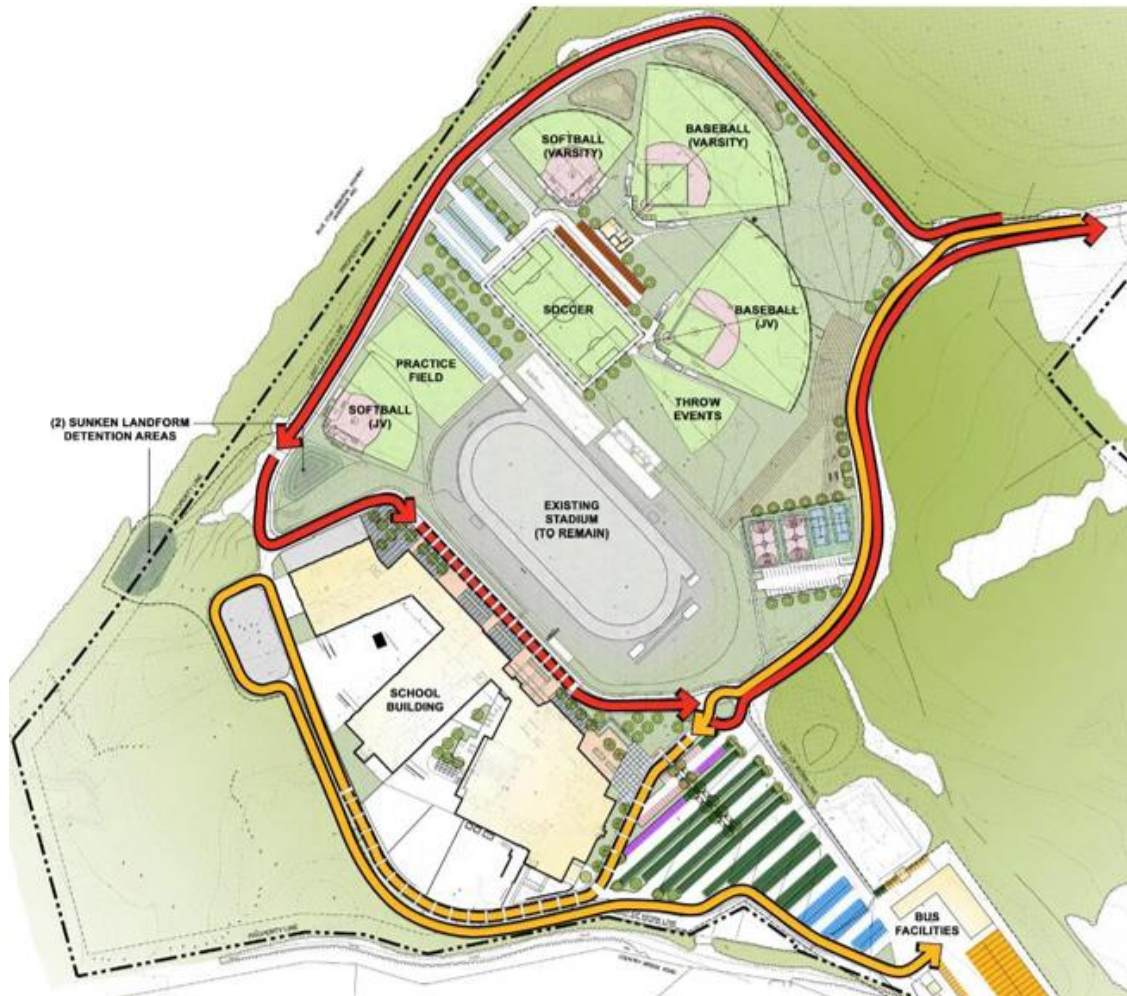
<sup>1</sup>Source: MSBA Preferred Schematic Report Combined Submittal, March 2, 2023  
(applied 56% Design/Pricing Contingency and Engineering costs to unburdened totals)

<sup>2</sup>Leftfield Construction Estimate, September 20, 2023

<sup>3</sup>Consigli Construction Estimate, January 5, 2024



# Proposed Building Project



- First and second floors – vocational, specialty, support and community spaces
- Third floor – academic classes
- Theater, gymnasium, band and chorus rooms, fitness room
- 4 baseball diamonds, 4 sport courts and 2 fields (original stadium remains)
- Student enrollment remains the same (1,280 students)



# Project Cost/Funding

Total Estimated Project Cost	\$444.6M
MSBA Grant*	\$159.7M
Fed/State Contributions	\$15.4M
District Members	\$ 269.5M

\*As of December 13, 2023 based on final MSBA grant



# Comparable Projects

School	Cost	Completed	\$/sf	Cost Allocation
Whittier Tech	\$ 445 M	N/A	\$1,169	Community # students
Essex Tech	\$ 133 M	2017	\$ 394	Student enrollment
North East Metro Tech	\$ 317 M	Under construction	\$ 822	Student enrollment
Diman Voc Tech	\$ 300 M	Under construction	\$ 743	Student enrollment
Tri-County Voc Tech	\$ 286 M	Under construction	\$1,003	Student enrollment

Source: Newburyport Public Forum - Whittier Tech Building Project, January 9, 2024



# Member Cost Breakdown

City/Town	# Students	Principal	Interest <sup>1</sup>	Total
West Newbury	622	\$ 8.3 M	\$ 7.9 M	\$ 16.2 M
Newbury	672	\$ 9.0 M	\$ 8.5 M	\$ 17.5 M
Rowley	738	\$ 9.8 M	\$ 9.4 M	\$ 19.2 M
Merrimac	789	\$ 10.5 M	\$ 10.1 M	\$ 20.6 M
Salisbury	849	\$ 11.3 M	\$ 10.8 M	\$ 22.1 M
Groveland	851	\$ 11.3 M	\$ 10.9 M	\$ 22.2 M
Georgetown	1,406	\$ 18.8 M	\$ 17.8 M	\$ 36.6 M
Ipswich	1,576	\$ 21.1 M	\$ 20.0 M	\$ 41.1 M
Amesbury	1,968	\$ 26.2 M	\$ 25.1 M	\$ 51.3 M
Newburyport	2,331	\$ 31.1 M	\$ 29.6 M	\$ 60.7 M
Haverhill	8,406	\$ 112.1 M	\$ 107.0 M	\$ 219.1 M

<sup>1</sup>Projected interest rate of 4% on short-term notes and 5% on bonds





# Annual Debt Service

City/Town	Whittier Students	ADS <sup>1</sup>	ADS/Student
Haverhill	867	\$ 7,302,391	\$ 8,423
Amesbury	117	\$ 1,709,625	\$ 14,612
Salisbury	50	\$ 737,536	\$ 14,751
Merrimac	40	\$ 685,414	\$ 17,135
Groveland	35	\$ 739,274	\$ 21,122
Georgetown	55	\$ 1,221,409	\$ 22,207
Rowley	23	\$ 641,109	\$ 27,874
Newbury	16	\$ 583,774	\$ 36,486
West Newbury	13	\$ 540,339	\$ 41,565
Ipswich	30	\$ 1,369,090	\$ 45,636
Newburyport	29	\$ 2,024,967	\$ 69,826

<sup>1</sup> Maximum borrowing term of 30 years per state law (G.L. c. 70B § 6)



# Options for Project Funding

- Fund within property tax levy limit
- Fund above property tax levy limit
  - Override
  - Debt exclusion
- Make budget reductions
- Use other available funds (free cash, stabilization etc.)



# January 23, 2023 Vote:

“Do you approve of the vote of the Regional District School committee of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District, adopted on December 13, 2023, to authorize the borrowing of four hundred forty-four million, six-hundred thirteen thousand, eight-hundred thirteen dollars (\$444,613,813) to pay costs of designing, constructing, originally equipping and furnishing a new District high school to be located at 115 Amesbury Line Road, Haverhill, Massachusetts including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto.”



# What Will a Yes Vote Mean?

- A simple majority of the total of all district members casting a vote on Jan 23
- Whittier is authorized to borrow funds
- District members will have to come up with funding independently
- Members will be committed to all costs above project estimates



# What Will a No Vote Mean?

- Project loses current MSBA funding (\$ 159.7 M) but can reapply
- Alternative projects or renovations will have to be explored
- Whittier will have to obtain 2/3 approval for any capital expenses from 11 District Members



# District Voter Turnout

City/Town	Dec 2009 Primary		April 2013 Primary	
	Turnout	% Total	Turnout	% Total
Rowley	717	4%	857	4%
Merrimac	742	4%	951	4%
West Newbury	747	4%	916	4%
Groveland	817	5%	971	4%
Salisbury	956	6%	1,866	8%
Georgetown	1,051	6%	1,316	6%
Newbury	1,295	8%	1,432	6%
Amesbury	1,590	9%	2,023	9%
Ipswich	1,702	10%	2,196	10%
Newburyport	2,754	16%	3,413	15%
Haverhill	4,863	28%	6,468	29%
Total	17,234	100%	22,409	100%

Source: West Newbury Town Clerk, January 12, 2024



Whittier Tech Building Project  
Public Forum

# Questions and Comment

January 16, 2024