

School Modernization in Vermont

A Brief Presentation to House Education Committee

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The Context: Working Group

- **H209**
 - **Misc. Education Bill**
 - **Ad Hoc Group formed**
 - Superintendents
 - Architects
 - Facility Directors
 - Agency of Education
 - VT Community Bond Bank
 - **Met Summer and Fall 2019**
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The Context: Historical

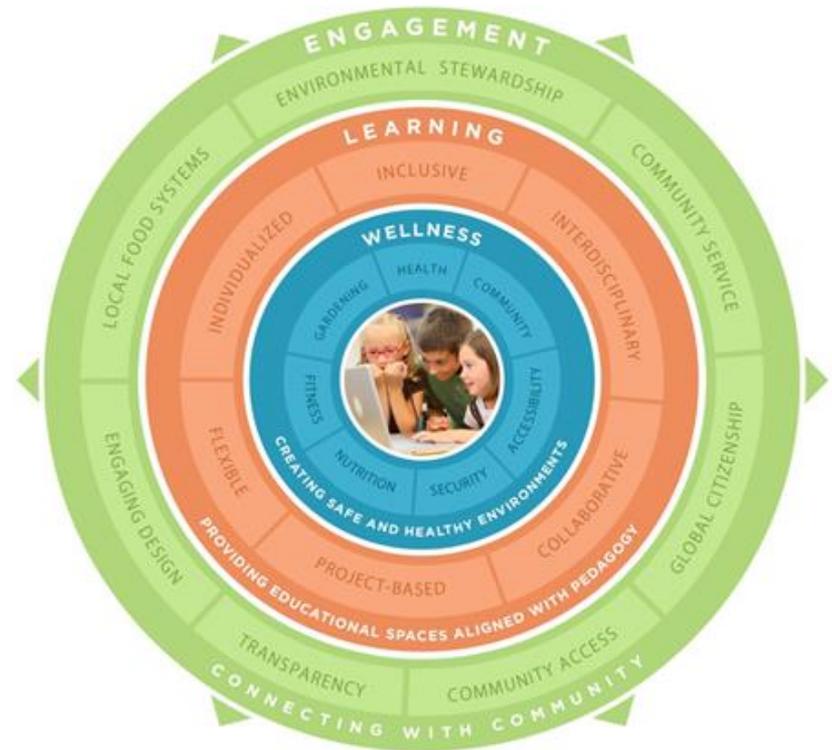
- **1892**: Local towns were forced to consolidate their 2500 boards into 279.
 - **1923**: Supervisory Unions formed
 - **1950-60s** Union High School era
 - **1990s** - Last population boom - additions built - that work is now 30 years old
 - Little significant work since then - result is **many buildings in poor condition**
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The Context: Facility Conditions



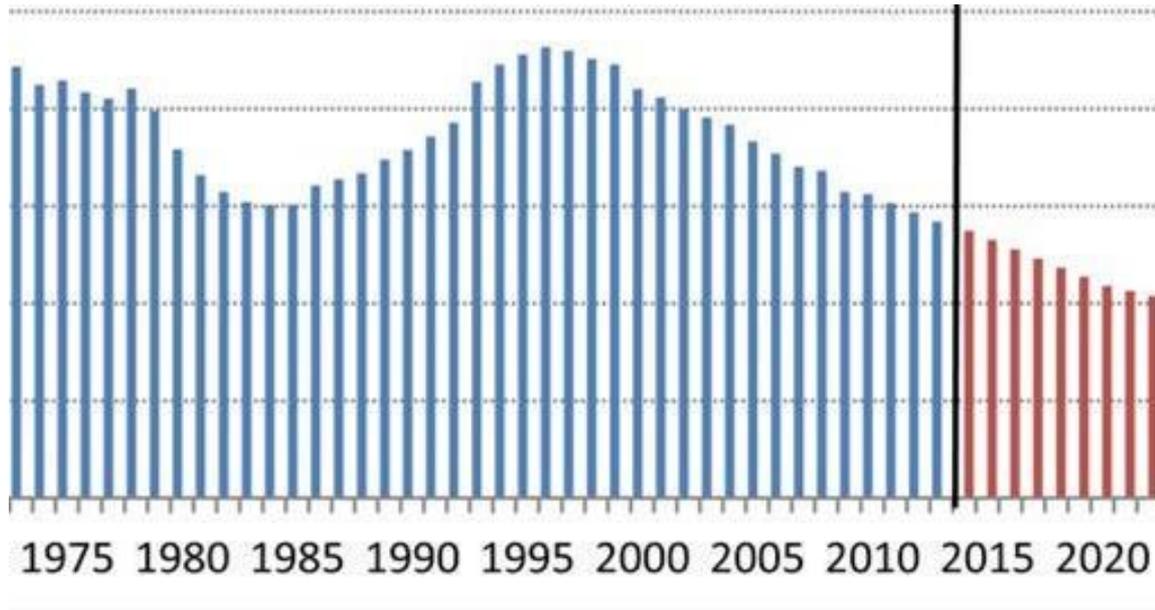
The Context: Education

- Changed from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered learning
- More student needs – more support services
- New paradigm has different space needs than past
- Education has changed – buildings have not



The Context: Enrollment

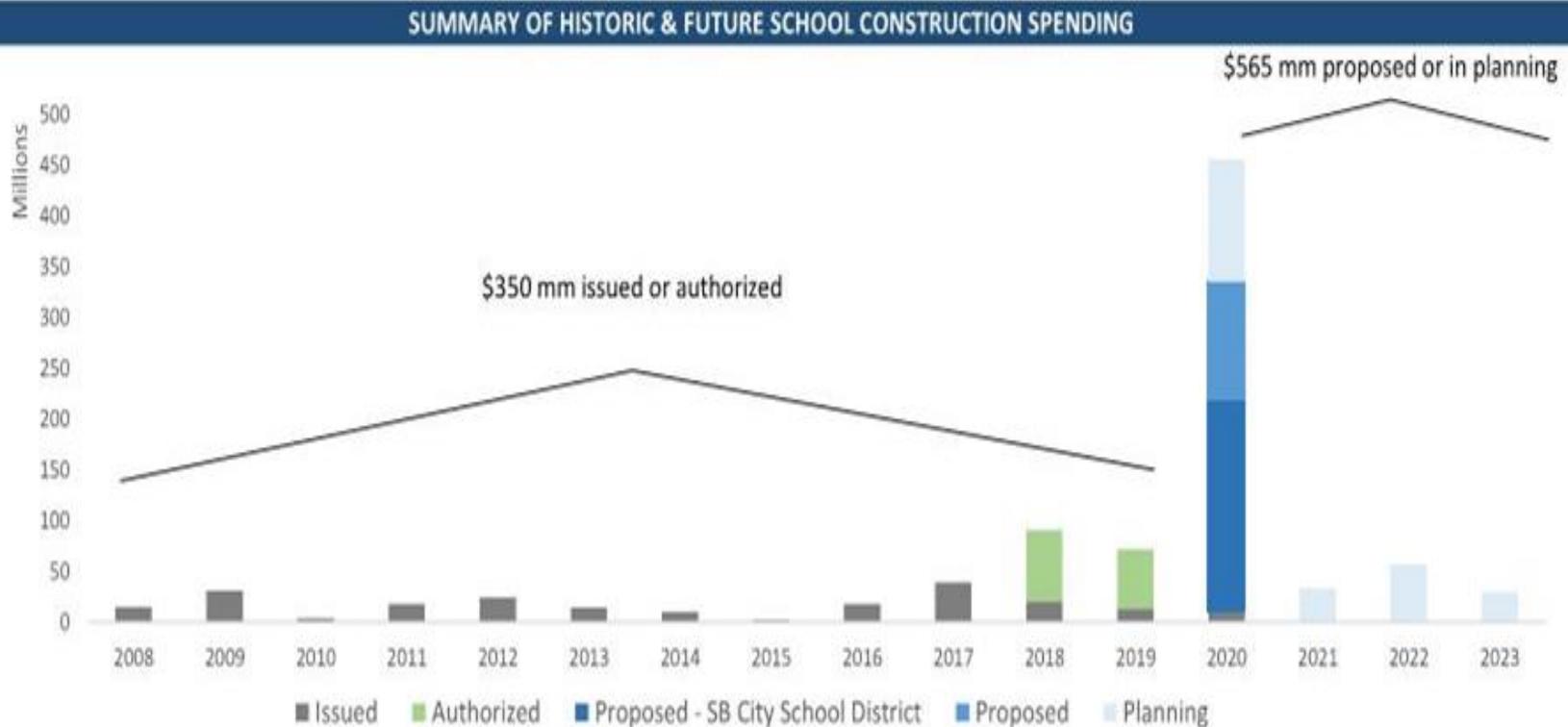
- Declining enrollment throughout the state



The Context: Moratorium

- Enacted in 2007 due to backlog of projects
 - No state school construction program since then - now huge backlog of projects and demand
 - Consequence: state does not have a big hand in directing how resources are allocated across the state.
 - Result is increased inequity in the quality of education between rich and poor towns
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The Context: Growing Needs



SUMMARY OF HISTORIC & FUTURE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION SPENDING

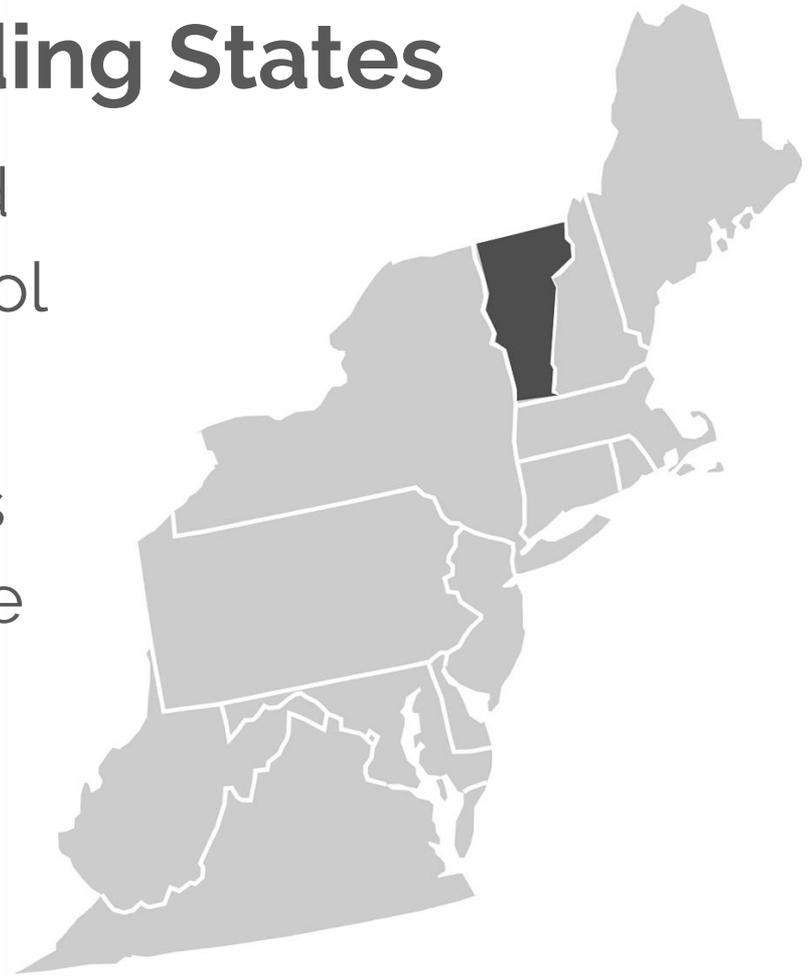
- **\$350m issued or authorized from 2008 to 2019**

*information compiled by VT Community Bond Bank

- **\$565m proposed or in planning (includes SB)**

The Context: Surrounding States

- All surrounding states (and all states in NE) have school construction programs.
- Vermont will fall behind its neighbors and will become less competitive in attracting companies and individuals to the state



The Context: Surrounding States

	VT	RI	NH	ME	MA
State Information					
State Population	626,299	1,057,000	1,356,000	1,338,000	6,902,000
Number of Schools	250	304	481	600	1863
Number of Students	83,710	143,436	177,365	182,496	951,631
School Construction Program					
Moratorium	2007 to present	2011 - 2015	2011-2020	None	2004-2007
Estimate of Need	Unknown	\$3b	Unknown	Unknown	\$24b audited to date
Governing Body	N/A	AOE/SBA	AOE	AOE	MSBA
Funding Source	N/A	\$250m bond 2018	Appropriation	Appropriation	1% Sales Tax
Max Reimbursement	N/A	None	\$50m per project	None	None
Percentage Reimbursement range	N/A	35% to 90%	30% to 60%	Unknown	31% to 80%
Criteria/Bonus Incentives	N/A	Health/Safety, Replacement, Consolidation, Educational Enhancements, Decrease Overcrowding, Increase Utilization	Maintenance, FRL, Security, Consolidation, Energy Efficiency, Historic Pres	Safety, Health, Educational Appropriatenes, System Deficiencies, Overcrowding, Enrollment	Community Income, Wealth, Poverty, Energy Efficiency, Maintenance, Overlay Zoning, Renovation
Ranking System	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guaranteed Reimbursement	N/A	Yes?	No	Unknown	No

The Opportunities

- **Educational Quality**

- Better learning environments help lead to better educational outcomes
- Reggio Familia: the learning environment as The Third Teacher

- **Educational Equity**

- Helps poorer communities improve their facilities
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The Opportunities

- **Economic Development**

- Attracts people to the state
- Provides design and construction jobs

- **Workforce Development**

- Provides modern facilities geared towards today's industries

- **Resource efficiency**

- Helps shape how taxpayer dollars are directed
 - Helps reduce duplication of effort in nearby towns
 - Directs school development in alignment with state goals
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Program Framework Ideas

- A statewide **stewardship program** for K-12 public schools in Vermont **that promotes modern high-quality learning environments** throughout the state



Program Framework Ideas

- The components of this program should include:
 - A **statewide survey** and database of all schools that includes important facility data
 - **Financial incentives** to school districts to modernize their facilities
 - **Criteria** to rank school needs
 - Healthy and energy efficient **building standards**
 - A **Facilities Director** or equivalent at each school district
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Program Framework Ideas

- The components of this program should include:
 - Requirement that each district provide an updated **Facilities Master Plan** every 5 years
 - **Additional Staff** and Advisory Board as required to support this program at the AOE
 - **Planning grants** for communities to create strategies for re-purposing of closing schools
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Moving Forward

- Fund a **statewide assessment** of school buildings to determine the scope of the issue.
 - Step 1: Snapshot of statewide facilities re condition and cost
 - Step 2: Consultants works with committee to develop new program
 - Step 3: Full-statewide assessment of school facilities and database based on new proposed program criteria.
 - Create an **official committee** with appropriate stakeholders to craft a proposal for consideration by legislature next year
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Moving Forward

- Direct the **state treasurer's** office to work with the study committee to model multiple funding options.
 - **Fund an AOE position** to support this effort.
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