

Putting 'Unity' in Community

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- ❖ **Daniel Conaway, Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture**
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SCAN ME!



Putting 'Unity' in Community



Consolidated District Dynamics



Overview of MWGL PK-12 District Trends

Inter-Community Relationships & Bond Vote Success

Approaching Consensus with Care



Community Engagement Process

Ensuring a Two-Way Dialogue Between Project Team, Voters

Achieving Transparency in Communication

Understanding Who We're Talking to & What We Say to Them



Active Committee Involvement

Polling Voters to Improve Our Ability to Communicate

Taking Control of Messaging Channels

Satellite Voting Location a Game-Changer

Live Polling



Mentimeter

Consolidated District Dynamics



Emily Bannick, Boyd Jones Construction

Learning Objective:

Understand the strategies that prepared the project team to successfully work with district and community stakeholders in the face of pandemic-imposed limitations to engagement and a vocal minority of project opponents.

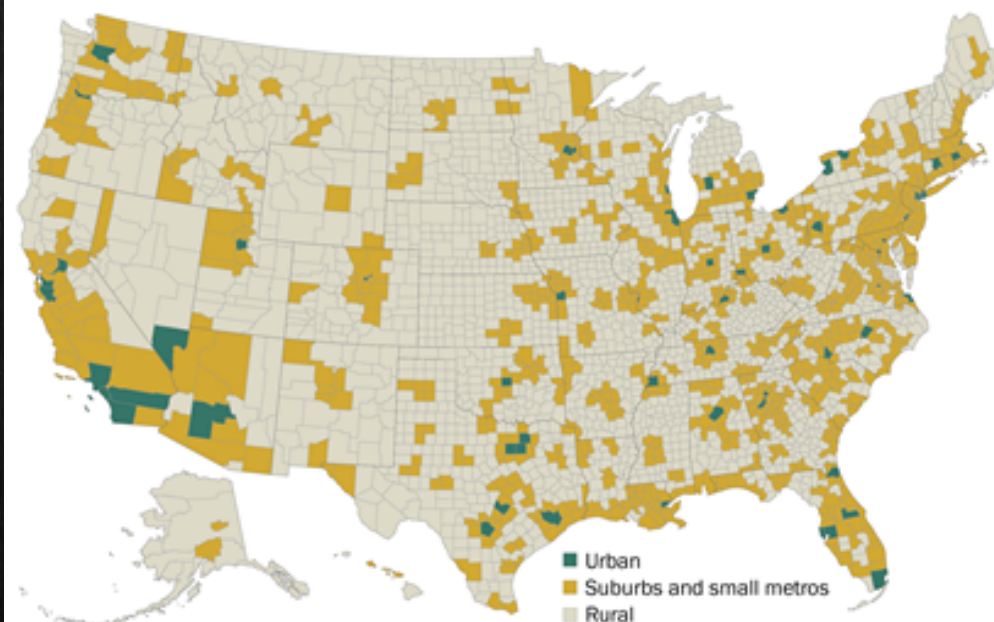
PreK-12 District Clients

Common Challenges

- ◇ Declining Population / Enrollment
- ◇ Expenses > Revenue
- ◇ Facility O&M Costs High
- ◇ Recruitment And Retention Of Faculty

What is the bigger picture – why are so many districts struggling with the same challenges, and what can we do to help?

Majority of U.S. counties are rural, especially in the Midwest



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties.

"What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Consolidation - Number of School Districts

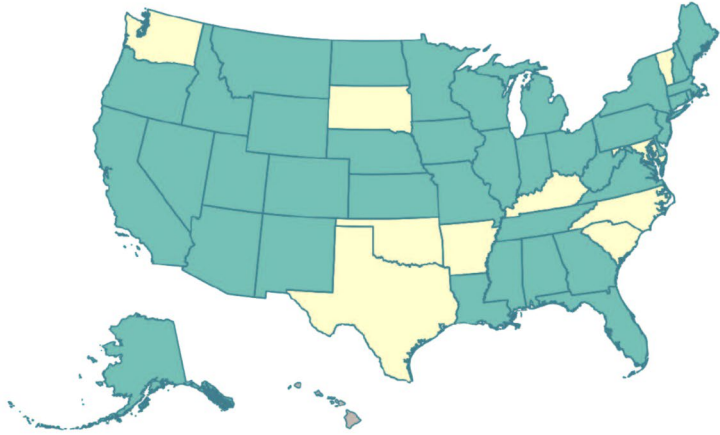
- ◇ What does the data tell us about consolidation – is this situation as common as it seems?
 - ◇ 10 yrs – 2010 to 2020
 - ◇ Average decrease – 3%
 - ◇ 53 yrs – 1967 to 2020
 - ◇ Average decrease – 43%
 - ◇ Observation – consolidation could have happened a long time ago, but there are still social & political impacts

State	1967-68	2010-11	2020-21	10 yr decrease	53 yr decrease
Illinois	1315	868	852	2%	35%
Indiana	395	293	290	1%	27%
Iowa	455	359	327	9%	28%
Kansas	336	312	286	8%	15%
Michigan	718	551	537	3%	25%
Minnesota	1100	337	325	4%	70%
Missouri	765	522	518	1%	32%
Nebraska	2175	251	244	3%	89%
North Dakota	498	179	171	4%	66%
Ohio	691	615	612	0%	11%
South Dakota	1804	152	149	2%	92%
Wisconsin	490	424	421	1%	14%
Ontario, Canada	170		72		58%
MWGL Region - 53 year average decrease					43%

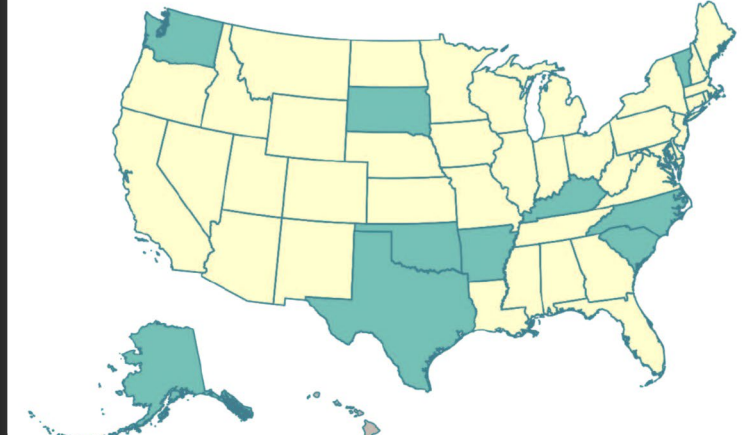
Consolidation Incentives / Pressure

Source: edbuild's "stranded: how states maroon districts in financial distress" report, published July 2017

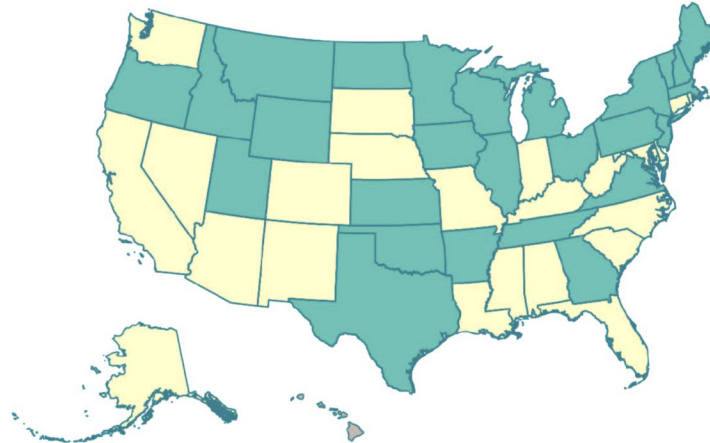
States Where Consolidations May Only Happen Voluntarily



States With a Defined Process to Mandate Consolidation

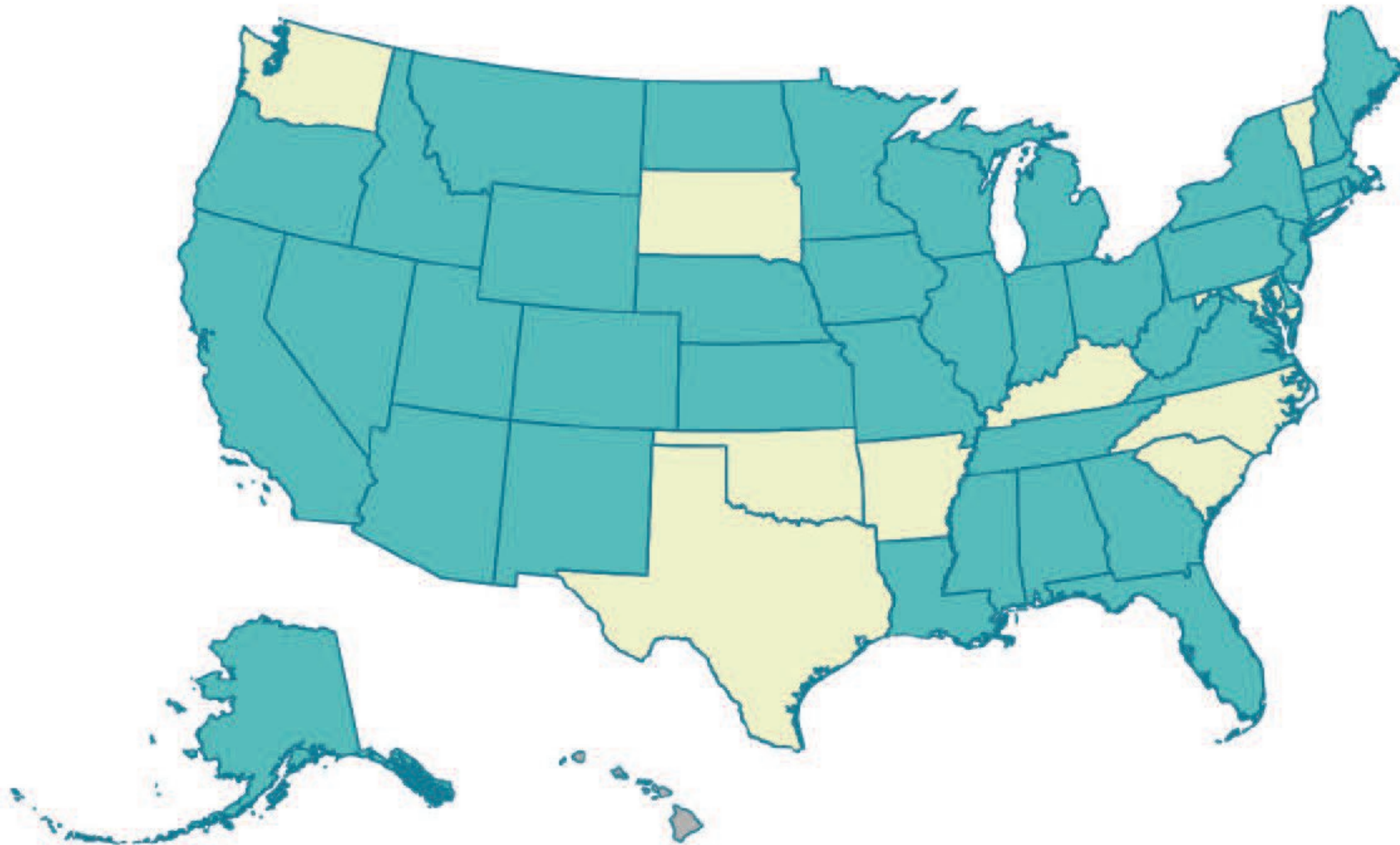


States With Financial Incentives for Consolidation

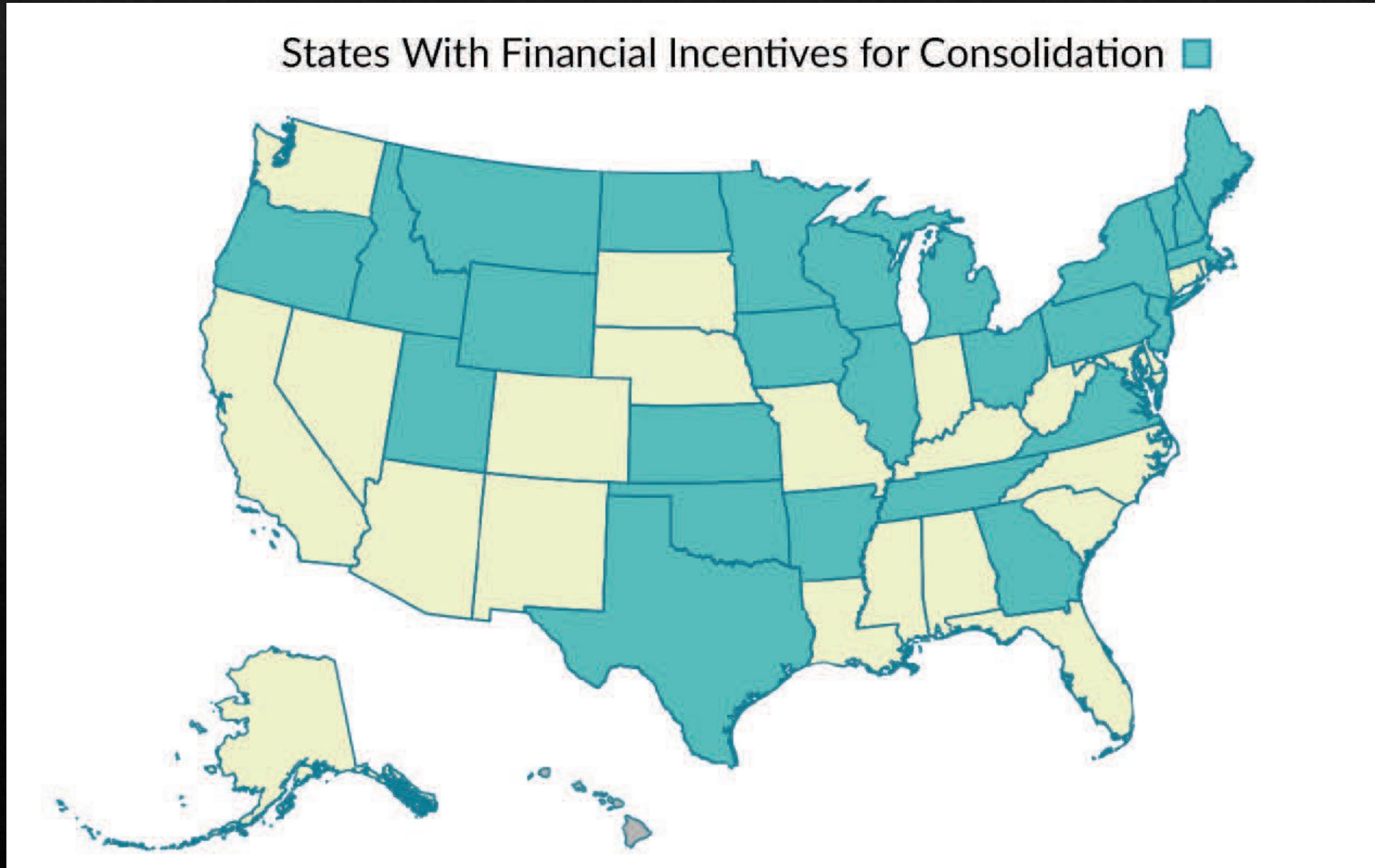


Consolidation Incentives / Pressure

States Where Consolidations May Only Happen Voluntarily ■

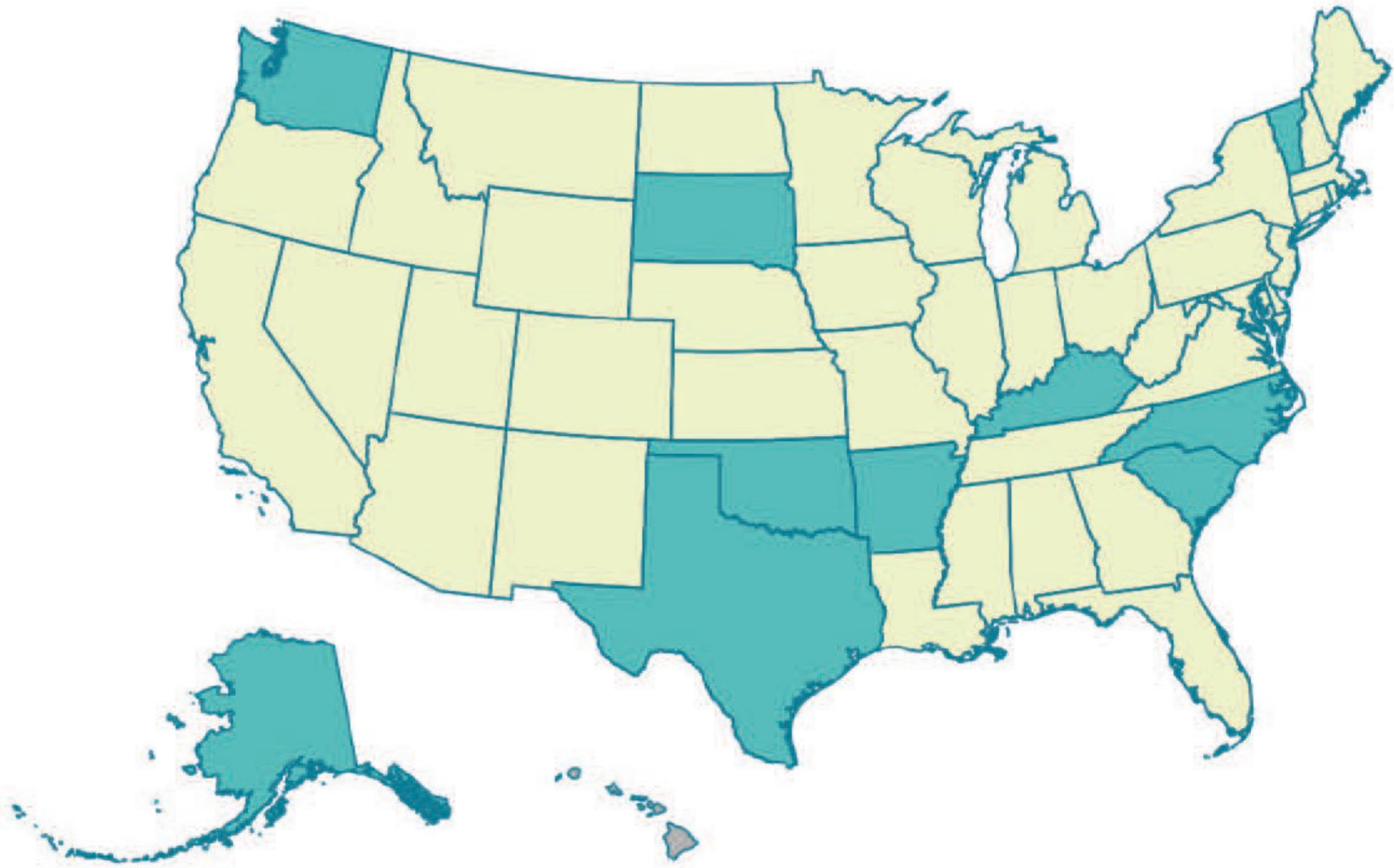


Consolidation Incentives / Pressure



Consolidation Incentives / Pressure

States With a Defined Process to Mandate Consolidation ■



Consolidation Incentives / Pressure within MWGL Region

Source: Legislative research; state departments of education; state-level education trade groups; edbuild

- ◇ Set Minimum Enrollments
- ◇ State Level Funding To Incentivize Sharing Of Resources Or Cover Consolidation Expenses
- ◇ Issue Of Local Control

Illinois	Consolidation incentives in place since 1980's, state has paid approximately \$165 million in incentives
Indiana	Legislation in place since 2017 to offset consolidation expenses, minimum district enrollment of 2000 students
Iowa	State funding for districts that share resources, ie. Administrators or teachers
Kansas	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
Michigan	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
Minnesota	Legislation in place since 1994 to provide early retirement incentives for faculty/staff affected by consolidation
Missouri	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
Nebraska	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
North Dakota	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
Ohio	No state level policies that actively encourage consolidation
South Dakota	Minimum district enrollment of 100 students
Wisconsin	State equalization aid is greater for consolidated districts
Ontario, Canada	Supplemental funding for school boards to share space and preserve presence in rural communities

Facility Trends - Number of buildings

Source: National Center for Education Statistics; State Departments of Education

- ◇ At the same time districts are consolidating, what is happening with the facilities in the districts?
 - ◇ 10 yrs – 2010 to 2020
 - ◇ Average decrease – 6%
 - ◇ Prior 20 yrs – 1990 to 2010
 - ◇ Average increase – 1%
 - ◇ Observation – more new buildings constructed before aging facilities taken out of service

State	1990-1991	2010-2011	2020-2021	1990 to 2010	2010 to 2020
Illinois	4239	4361	3849	3%	-12%
Indiana	1915	1936	1910	1%	-1%
Iowa	1588	1436	1310	-10%	-9%
Kansas	1477	1378	1299	-7%	-6%
Michigan	3313	3877	3384	17%	-13%
Minnesota	1590	2392	2221	50%	-7%
Missouri	2199	2410	2393	10%	-1%
Nebraska	1506	1096	985	-27%	-10%
North Dakota	663	516	508	-22%	-2%
Ohio	3731	3758	3340	1%	-11%
South Dakota	802	710	717	-11%	1%
Wisconsin	2018	2238	2190	11%	-2%
Ontario, Canada	N/A	4913	4844		-1%

Facility Costs and Funding

Types of Costs

- ◆ Utilities - Electric, Gas, Water, Septic/Sewer, Propane, Internet/Data
- ◆ Maintenance – HVAC/Plumbing/Lighting Supplies And Parts
- ◆ Staffing – Maintenance/Custodial, Food Service, Support Staff
- ◆ Transportation – Between Buildings

Funds

- ◆ General Fund/Operating Expenses
 - ◆ This is where faculty & staff salaries come from also
 - ◆ In many districts, #1 concern is recruitment and retention of quality faculty & staff
 - ◆ In many places, the majority of this funding comes from local property tax

Result – Conflicting Goals

“Fewer and Newer” Buildings

- ◇ Reduced maintenance cost
- ◇ Reduced personnel expense
- ◇ Property tax relief
- ◇ Long term fiscal responsibility

Political & Emotional Attachment to Community Schools

- ◇ Fear of towns declining without a school
- ◇ Loss of employment opportunities
- ◇ Loss of community facilities
- ◇ Loss of identity

East Mills History- 1960 Consolidations

Malvern School District

- Malvern
- Benton
- Wearin
- Golden Hill
- Box Elder

Nishna Valley School District

- Emerson
- Hastings
- Henderson
- Strahan



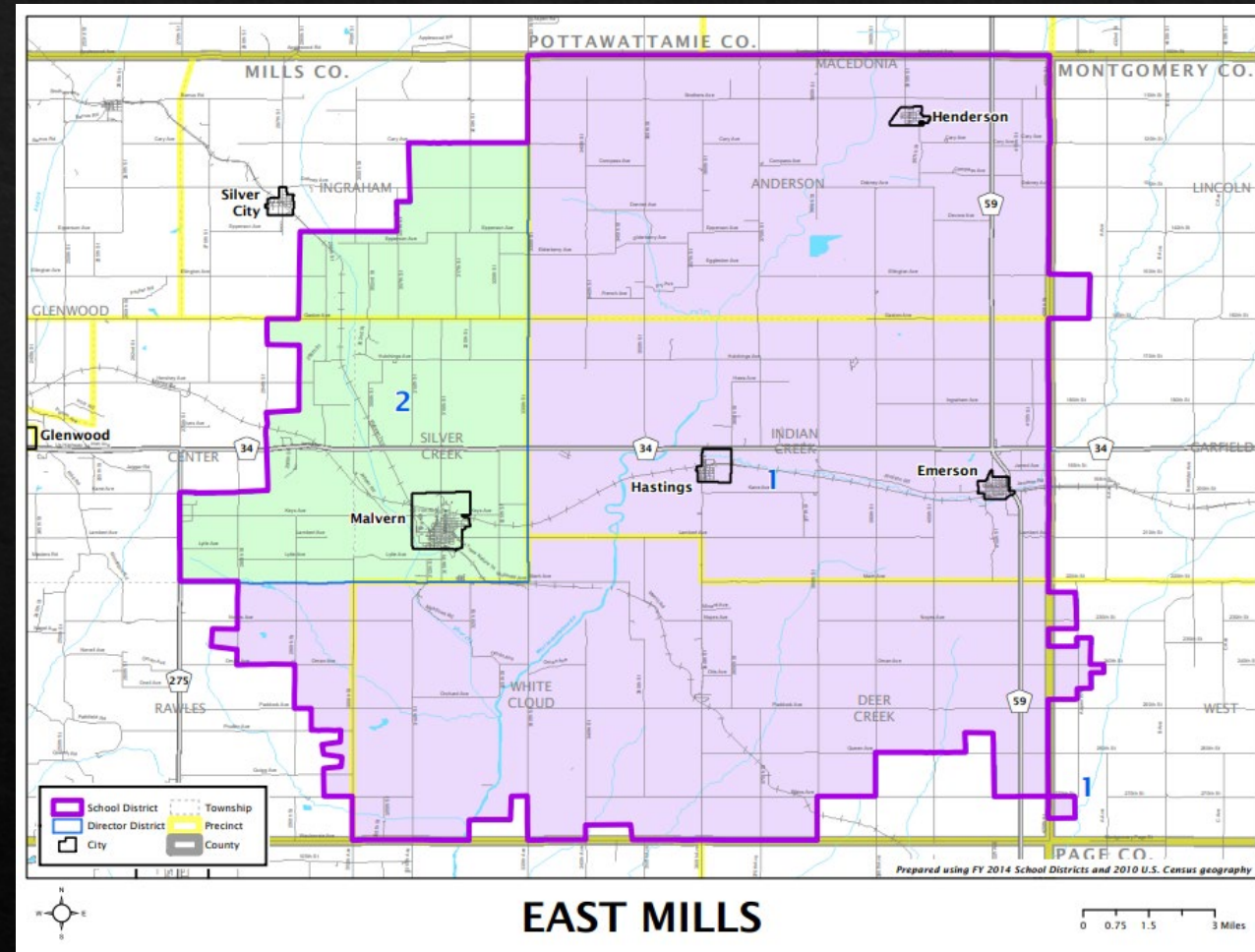
East Mills History

East Mills – formed July 2011

- ◇ Malvern & Nishna Valley districts started whole grade sharing in 2007
- ◇ Voted 6-1 to consolidate in 2011

Buildings - 2011

- ◇ Nishna Valley: PreK-6
- ◇ Chantry Elementary (in Malvern) & Annex: PreK-6
- ◇ Malvern Jr Sr High: 7-12



East Mills History

Facility Study 2014

- ◇ Iowa Schoolhouse Construction & Planning Services
 - ◇ Short Term option – Close Chantry / Annex building and move to two facilities (completed)
 - ◇ Long Term option – single PreK-12 facility in one location

Facility Study 2019

- ◇ APMA & Boyd Jones hired in 2019 to complete Facility Study & Master Plan

Community Engagement Process



**Daniel Conaway, Alley Poyner
Macchietto Architecture**

Learning Objective:

Identify the most appropriate strategic messaging for the right subset(s) of community members & organizations and disseminate that information through various channels.

Community Engagement Process

- ◆ Ensuring a Two-Way Dialogue Between Project Team, Voters
- ◆ Achieving Transparency in Communication
- ◆ Understanding Who We're Talking to & What We Say to Them

**Where Are
We Now?**

**Where Do We
Want To Be?**

**How Do We
Get There?**

Where Are We Now?

Step One

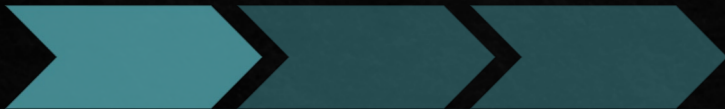
Assess Current Deficiencies
& Needs

Step Two

Evaluate Operational
Deficiencies

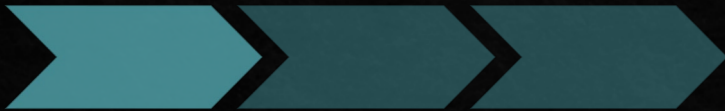
Step Three

Provide Comparable
Information



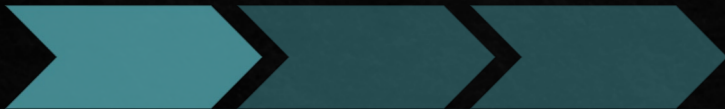
Where Are We Now?

- ◇ Walkthrough of existing facilities
 - ◇ Analysis of systems and programming
- ◇ Assess scheduling issues and redundancies with two campuses
 - ◇ Compare to local districts with a single campus



Where Are We Now?

- ◇ Result:
 - ◇ Determined that a single-campus would be most beneficial for operating and efficiency costs
 - ◇ Next step was to determine where the single-campus location would be and if the community would support the project



Where Do We Want To Be?

Step Four

Educate Diverse Community
Committee

Step Five

Create Options and
Scenarios Based on
Assessment and Input



Where Do We Want To Be?

- ◇ 7 Facilities Committee Meetings
 - ◇ Group formed by the school to oversee the process and advocate for the school's needs
- ◇ 6 Community Engagement Meetings
 - ◇ Surveys were used to narrow down design options, needs, and wants
 - ◇ **Transparency of the process was key to build trust with the community**



Where Do We Want To Be?

- ◇ Result:
 - ◇ Facilities Committee and Community agreed to move forward with a single-campus plan at the current Jr/Sr High School location
- ◇ Roadblocks:
 - ◇ Location of K-12 facility was very divisive due to desire for facility at both sides of district
 - ◇ Ultimately determined the Malvern site was best viable option with the most support



How Do We Get There?

Step Six

Look at Sources & Uses of
Funding

Step Seven

Generate Master Plan &
Implementation Concepts

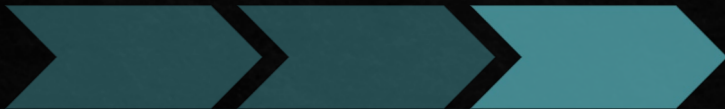
Step Eight

Make Recommendations to
School Board for Adoption
of Master Plan



How Do We Get There?

- ◆ Worked with a Financial Consultant to determine the best way of funding the project
 - ◆ Determined a bond vote would be the best route to take
- ◆ Presented to the public the master plan and process of the bond vote
 - ◆ Surveyed the public to gauge interest and support of the chosen master plan



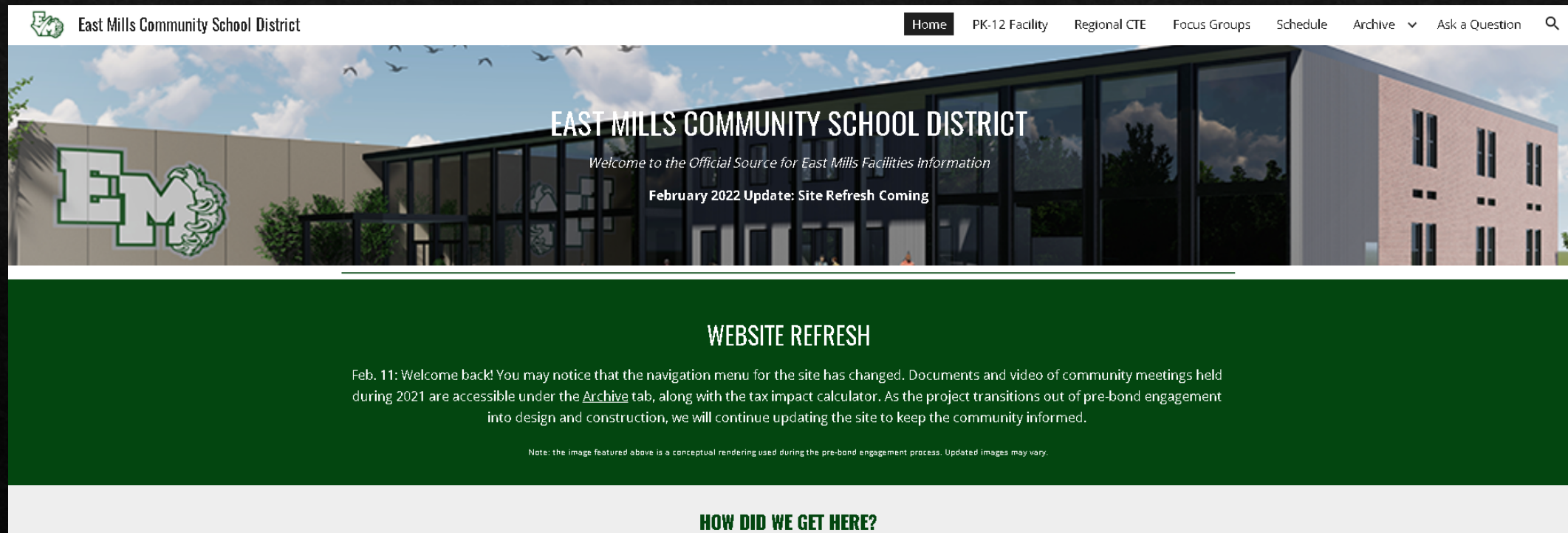
How Do We Get There?

- ◇ Result:
 - ◇ School Board voted to pursue a Bond Vote to fund a single-campus project at the Jr/Sr High School site
 - ◇ Created a Bond Campaign to help build support and spread information about the upcoming Bond Vote



East Mills Bond Campaign

- ◆ APMA and Boyd Jones operated a project website that was used as a source of information



The screenshot shows the website for the East Mills Community School District. At the top left is the district logo and name. The navigation menu includes: Home, PK-12 Facility, Regional CTE, Focus Groups, Schedule, Archive (with a dropdown arrow), Ask a Question, and a search icon. The main banner features a conceptual rendering of a school building with the text: "EAST MILLS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT", "Welcome to the Official Source for East Mills Facilities Information", and "February 2022 Update: Site Refresh Coming". Below the banner is a green section with the heading "WEBSITE REFRESH" and the following text: "Feb. 11: Welcome back! You may notice that the navigation menu for the site has changed. Documents and video of community meetings held during 2021 are accessible under the [Archive](#) tab, along with the tax impact calculator. As the project transitions out of pre-bond engagement into design and construction, we will continue updating the site to keep the community informed." A small note at the bottom of the green section reads: "Note: the image featured above is a conceptual rendering used during the pre-bond engagement process. Updated images may vary." At the bottom of the page is a white section with the heading "HOW DID WE GET HERE?"

Active Committee Involvement



**Meagan Schnoor, East Mills Parent
& HDR Inc.**

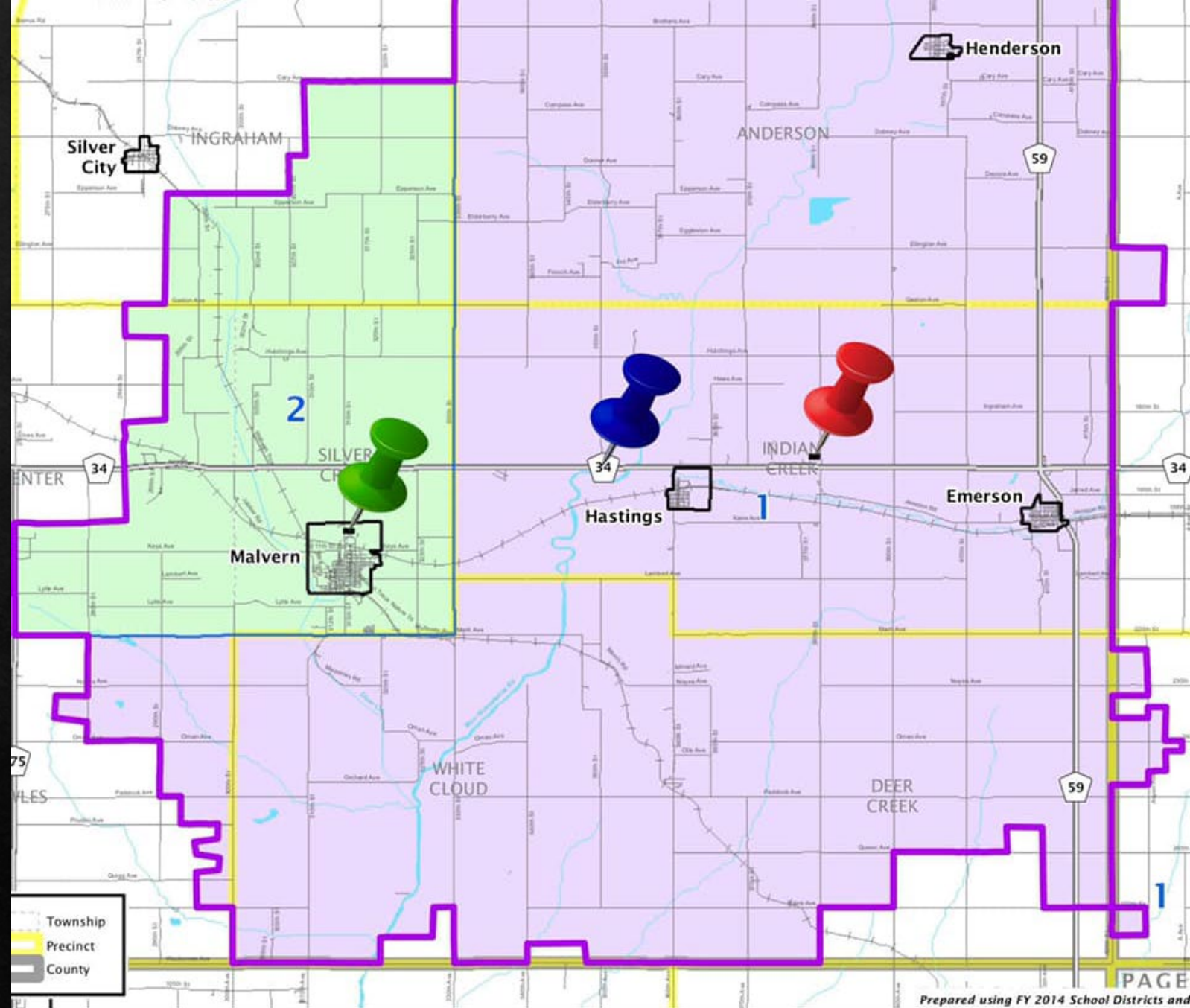
Learning Objectives:

Understand how multiple modes of communication with voters combined with the impact of the satellite voting location to influence a successful outcome.

Acknowledge the importance of the CTE center as the point of unity for the former Nishna Valley CSD voters, many of whom opposed the campaign.

Campaign Committee

- ◇ Invited via Facebook
- ◇ Kickoff meeting July 21, 2021
- ◇ School staff, lifelong community members (MABA), parents
- ◇ “Both” sides of district
- ◇ Outsider perspective
- ◇ ~7 weeks to election held on September 14



THANK YOU



FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS OF
\$5,000 EACH TO THE
VOTE YES FOR EAST MILLS COMMITTEE'S
CAMPAIGN FUND



Building our Future Together

Starting Off Strong

- ◇ \$10,000 donation from two community banks
 - ◇ No fundraising
 - ◇ Community support
- ◇ Experienced superintendent
 - ◇ Knows the bond process
 - ◇ Oversees three districts
- ◇ 51% registered voters in Malvern

Committee Focus Areas

- ◆ Slogan: Building Our Future Together
- ◆ Media: Print, Radio, TV, and Online
- ◆ Branding: Yard signs and banners
- ◆ Voter engagement: satellite voting, door-to-door, community meetings
- ◆ Content: talking points, fact sheets



Visibility

- ◆ Newspaper (Glenwood, Malvern, Red Oak)
- ◆ Radio (KMA – Shenandoah)
- ◆ Yard signs
- ◆ Banners along US Highway 34
- ◆ Letters to the Editor
- ◆ Facebook support videos
- ◆ Window decals

**BUILDING
OUR FUTURE
TOGETHER**



**VOTE YES!
SEPT. 14**

Paid for by: Vote Yes for East Mills



Edit



Vote YES for East Mills Committee

@VoteYESforEastMills · Political Organization

Edit Send Email

Facebook

- ◆ Primary means of communicating with voters
- ◆ Staffed by school board member volunteer/retiree
- ◆ Ability to put out factual information
- ◆ Ability to react to comments/questions

“Anti” Facebook Page

- ◇ Handful of passionate “no” voters
- ◇ Committee members to answer questions
- ◇ “Rubberneckers”
- ◇ Would not approve posts from Vote Yes for East Mills



Types of Community Member Questions

- ◇ School closing/financial status
- ◇ What will happen to current elementary/former HS building
- ◇ Open enrollment
- ◇ Miles/time on the bus
- ◇ Requested renderings of all options
- ◇ Amount of tax impact

Community Meetings/Presence

- ◇ Government meetings
- ◇ Church groups
- ◇ Emergency responder groups
- ◇ East Mills Boosters
- ◇ “Farmer” meeting at Agricultural Museum
- ◇ HS students with parade banner
- ◇ Kitchen table meetings





**EAST MILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL ELECTION**

**SATELLITE
LOCATION**

**SEPTEMBER 7,
2021**

**OPEN FROM
2 PM - 8 PM**

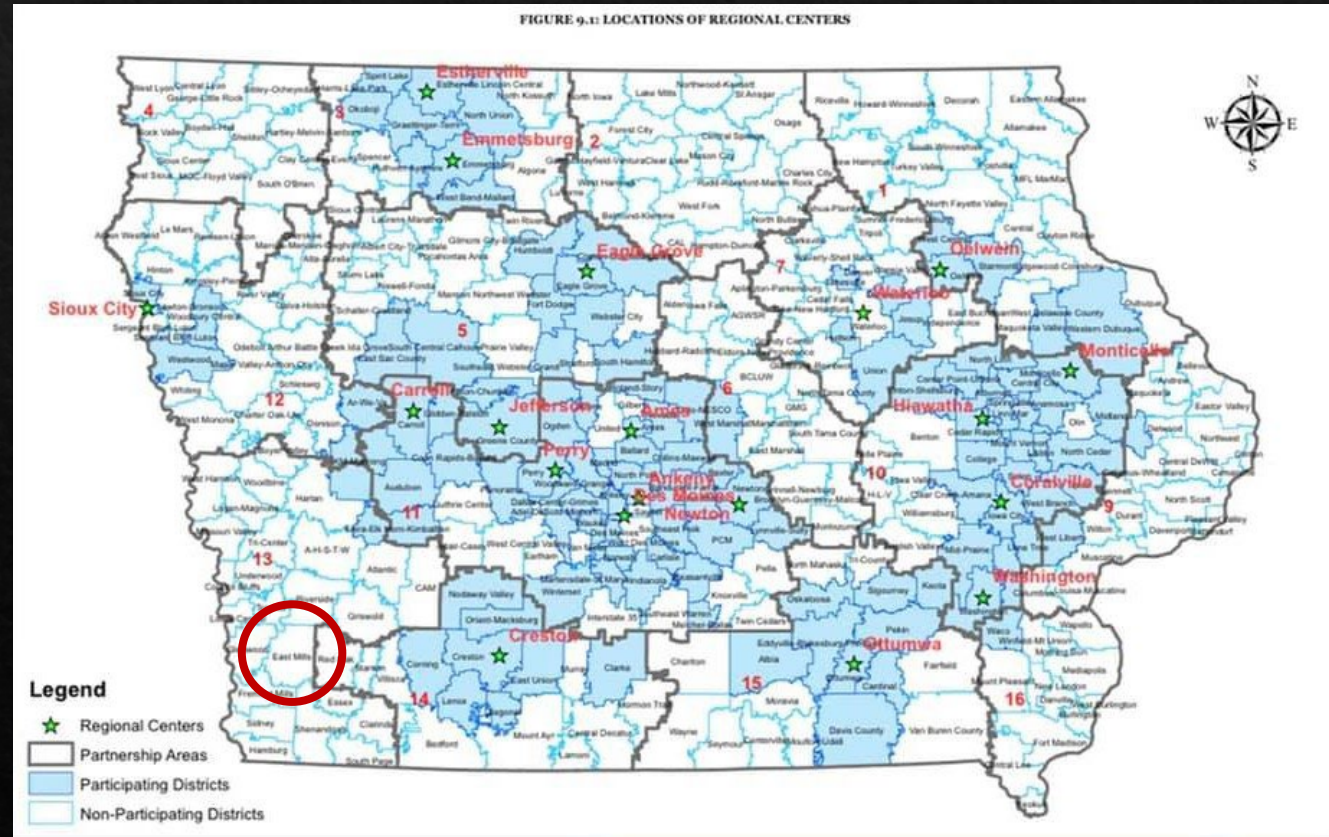
**Satellite Location:
East Mills High School**

Gamechanger: Satellite Voting

- ◇ Option in Iowa
- ◇ Process to set up
 - ◇ Request date and time from Auditor's Office
 - ◇ 100 signatures needed for petition
- ◇ During home volleyball game
- ◇ Staffed by Auditor's Office
- ◇ Paid for by school district
- ◇ No Vote Yes signage within 3,000 feet

Gamechanger: Announcement of Regional Career and Technical Education Center

- ◇ Proposed Regional Center for Career Technical Education in elementary building
- ◇ Partnerships with:
 - ◇ Iowa Western Community College (IWCC) – Dr. Daniel Kinney
 - ◇ Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates (iJAG)
- ◇ Charles E. Lakin Foundation
 - ◇ No position on bond issue
 - ◇ Supportive of Regional Center
- ◇ Mills County Economic Development



Missteps

- ◇ Complaints to Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board (IECDB)
 - ◇ PAC filing deadline
 - ◇ Facebook page name
- ◇ Limited door-to-door voter engagement
- ◇ Reminder to vote postcards did not ship





Election Day Strategies

- ◇ Contacting those on a "Yes" voter spreadsheet
- ◇ Calling/texting from voter registration list
- ◇ Reminders on Facebook
- ◇ Call/text friends, neighbors, family
- ◇ NO rides to polls

Election Day Results

- ◇ 60% yes on both propositions needed
 - ◇ L for bonds
 - ◇ M for tax levy
- ◇ Proposition L 63.68%
- ◇ Proposition M 62.42%

Sep 14, 2021 8:57 PM

Election Summary Report
East Mills Special School Election
Mills County, Iowa
Tuesday, September 14, 2021
All Votes
Unofficial Results - All Votes

Date: 9/16/2022
Time: 9:02:37 PM CDT
Page 1/1

Registered Voters 2,420 - Total Ballots 1,071 : 44.26%

2 of 2 Precincts Reporting 100.00%

East Mills CSD Prop L		
Number of Precincts	2	
Precincts Reporting	2	100.00%
Total Votes	1,060	
YES	675	63.68%
NO	385	36.32%

East Mills CSD Prop M		
Number of Precincts	2	
Precincts Reporting	2	100.00%
Total Votes	1,067	
YES	666	62.42%
NO	401	37.58%

	Proposition L		Proposition M	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Absentee	194	37	193	39
Indian Creek	126	313	127	316
Lakin Building	355	35	346	46
Total By Answer	675	385	666	401
Total by Proposition	1,060		1,067	

	Lakin Voters by Age	Indian Creek Voters by Age
18 - 34	74	58
35 - 49	95	93
50 - 64	111	130
65 +	113	165

Digging Into Those Numbers

Comparison of Other 2021 Iowa Bond Votes

- ◇ 6 district bond votes passed
- ◇ 7 district bond votes failed

2021				
GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS				
<u>Election Date</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>%YES</u>	<u>%NO</u>	<u>Result</u>
September 2021				
	Akron-Westfield	64.81%	35.19%	PASS
	East Mills CSD	63.68%	36.32%	PASS
	East Mills CSD (\$4.05)	62.42%	37.58%	PASS
	Fairfield	48.97%	51.03%	FAIL
	IKM-Manning CSD	56.00%	44.00%	FAIL
	Keokuk	37.64%	62.36%	FAIL
	Melcher-Dallas	65.90%	34.10%	PASS
	New London	67.63%	32.37%	PASS
	North Butler	20.56%	79.44%	FAIL
	North Butler (\$4.05)	20.78%	79.22%	FAIL
	North Linn	87.20%	12.80%	PASS
	Pocahontas Area	48.27%	51.73%	FAIL
	Tipton	47.92%	52.08%	FAIL
	Washington	75.55%	24.45%	PASS
	Winfield-Mt Union	45.00%	55.00%	FAIL

Uniting Support within the Community

- ◇ Do Your Research
- ◇ Community Buy-In Before Going To The Polls Is Critical
- ◇ Prepare for the Opposition You Will Encounter

Q&A