



# *my school.* *my choice.*

their journey starts with you

**Building stakeholder support, buy-in and leadership for transforming RUSD Middle Schools**

**2018 NSPRA Gold Medallion Award Entry  
Special Communication Projects/Campaigns**

**Racine Unified School District**

**Office of Communication and Community Engagement  
3 staff members. Public K-12 District with 19,000+ students.**

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## Synopsis

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In fall 2012, RUSD began the journey to transform our middle schools to address major challenges including: declining enrollment, inefficient use of facilities and negative perception of our middle schools. Based on research, we knew our families wanted more choices and opportunities, safe and engaging learning environments and challenging curriculum to prepare students for college or career.

RUSD leadership developed a plan to transform our middle schools that included moving a school to a different building, closing an existing middle school, combining a high performing elementary school with a low performing middle school to create a K-8 and redistricting all middle schools. The biggest challenge we faced was of course stakeholder buy-in and support, primarily middle school staff and families.

The key to our success was a strategy we implemented early on called a Kaizen event (Lean Six Sigma). By spending five full days together with our stakeholders focused on this issue and plan, we were able to not only get the necessary people on board from the beginning but also to build strong relationships that would carry us through the planning and roll-out. Because of the success of the Kaizen, much of the actual work was led not by administrators, but teachers and other school staff.

The successful rollout required a strategic communication plan that:

- Engaged all stakeholders – families, staff and community partners – to build understanding and support for this transformational change.
- Engaged school staff to ensure they felt supported and informed.
- Included strong branding and messaging that clearly communicated and built excitement around the *My School. My Choice.* middle school plan.

This campaign succeeded in driving middle school families to make a school choice during our school choice enrollment window this winter. We saw a 212 percent increase over last year. In addition, we helped to educate our families about the transformational changes happening in our middle schools and demonstrated to our staff how we value their voices at the table and that working together we can successfully implement transformational change.

# Program Overview

## Research

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Racine Unified School District (RUSD) is the fifth largest school district in Wisconsin with approximately 19,000 students. We are a diverse, urban district that also includes some rural communities. Within our district, the city of Racine has for many years, had one of the highest unemployment rates in the state, while one of our villages (Caledonia) boasts one of the lowest. RUSD has experienced declining enrollment for more than five years, due in part to lower birth rates in our region, but also significantly impacted by a new voucher program and increasing competition for students among new and existing schools that accept vouchers for tuition. (Racine has no cap on the number of available vouchers and the income limit is more than \$80,000 for a family of four.) Enrollment data tells us that we lose most students at middle school.

### Focus Groups

In 2012, RUSD completed focus groups with District parents who had opted out of RUSD. We hired a research firm to conduct the focus groups to help us determine why families choose alternatives to our public schools. [The results](#) demonstrated that a significant concern among families is the safety, behavior and climate of our middle schools. Other themes that came through were that families are happy with our elementary schools and would like more options that meet the individual needs of their child (fine arts, virtual, advanced curriculum, etc.). These focus group results informed our work over the last five years. In 2016, we were finally ready to invest in a large-scale initiative to address our middle school challenges and we began a renewed effort to gather information.

### Stakeholder Engagement/Feedback

We survey our families for feedback yearly. Additionally, in fall 2016, we used a new engagement tool, Thoughtexchange, to conduct an engagement process specifically with our middle school families and staff to help determine how to transform our middle schools. We asked four questions:

1. If you were to describe an excellent, high-performing middle school, what characteristics do you believe would be evident in that school?
2. What positive characteristics already exist in RUSD middle schools?
3. What are some key characteristics you desire to see in RUSD middle schools that are currently missing?
4. What types of middle school program choices would you like RUSD to offer families?

We captured results in a [one-pager](#) that we disseminated widely. The results highlighted initiatives already underway as well as the needs/wants of our community including: more college/career prep, accelerated programming, choices and opportunities and reduced class size. These were areas we planned to address as part of the *My School. My Choice.* middle school transformation plan, especially the desire for more choices and opportunities within our middle schools.

### Facilities Study

A facilities study demonstrated how the declining number of students in grades 6-8 had resulted in inefficient use of our middle school buildings. For example, Gilmore Middle School has capacity to house 1,200 students, but 2017-2018 enrollment is only 530. The facilities study also analyzed the condition of our middle school buildings and reviewed the population trends in our community. Together, the needs/wants of our families, enrollment data and facilities information led to three goals for our middle school transformation plan:

- Stopping the trend of declining enrollment in RUSD, specifically at the middle school level;
- More efficient utilization of our middle school facilities (cost savings to the District); and
- Improving community/parent perception of our middle schools.

# Middle School Great Choices Concept: Input, Feedback and Planning

## Phase 1

*Spring - Fall  
2016*

### Listen

Middle  
Transformation  
Committee

Engage community  
through  
Thoughtexchange  
process

Gather input about  
RUSD middle  
schools from  
families, staff &  
community



## Phase 2

*Fall 2016 –  
Early Winter 2017*

### Plan

Review all  
Thoughtexchange  
feedback

Share results &  
feedback with  
Board of Education  
& community

Develop initial  
Middle School  
Choices concept  
based on input &  
priorities

Analysis of existing  
facilities &  
programs

## Phase 3

*Winter 2017*

### Share

Share initial Middle  
School Choices  
Concept with  
Board of Education,  
staff and  
community

Share proposed  
Middle School  
Choices concept  
timeline



## Phase 4

*Winter 2017 –  
Summer 2018*

### Prepare

Engage school  
families & staff in  
concept planning &  
communication

Revise and enhance  
Middle School  
Choices Concept  
based on input

Create work teams  
to plan and prepare  
for implementation



## Phase 5

*Fall 2018*

### Launch

Open RUSD Middle  
Schools with all  
components of  
Great Choices Plan



# Middle School Feedback

We asked our middle school families and staff for their thoughts regarding our middle schools:



## Our Families & Staff Appreciate:

1. **Teachers & Staff**
2. **Choices & Opportunities:**  
Extracurriculars, fine arts, music, sports
3. **Accelerated Programs & Enrichment**
4. **Parent Engagement**



## Areas We Can Improve:

1. **School Climate:**  
Student behavior & discipline, positive school environments
2. **Reduce Class Sizes**
3. **Resources & Support for Teachers**
4. **Emotional & Mental Health Support for Students**



## Families & Staff Want More...

1. **Preparation for Career & Life**
2. **Accelerated Programming**
3. **Choices & Opportunities:**  
Extracurriculars, fine arts, music, sports
4. **Reduced Class Sizes**

**We're Listening.** Here are the actions we're taking in response to your input:

1

### School Climate

Deputy Superintendent Dr. Eric Gallien engaged with educators across the District to complete a comprehensive review of school climate. This review informed the development of a three-year strategic plan focused on three areas: Mental Health, Services & Programming and Social Emotional Learning.

2

### Emotional & Mental Health Support

The School Climate Strategic Plan includes a strong focus on further expanding mental health supports, including development of a mental health task force and prioritizing the expansion of mental health clinics in our schools.

3

### Preparation for Career & Life + Accelerated Programming

We know that middle school is a critical link to future academic success. RUSD is working on refining the middle school experience through the Middle School Transformation initiative. Our goal is to ensure that every RUSD middle school provides an excellent educational experience that prepares students for high school, college and life and that all RUSD families have great middle school choices. More information coming soon.

4

### Class Size

In the last three years, we have reduced class size by one each year.

5

### Resources & Support for Teachers

The Office of Curriculum & Instruction and the Professional Learning Department are continuously enhancing and expanding professional development and resources for our teachers. The goal is to offer more opportunities customized to each teacher's needs.

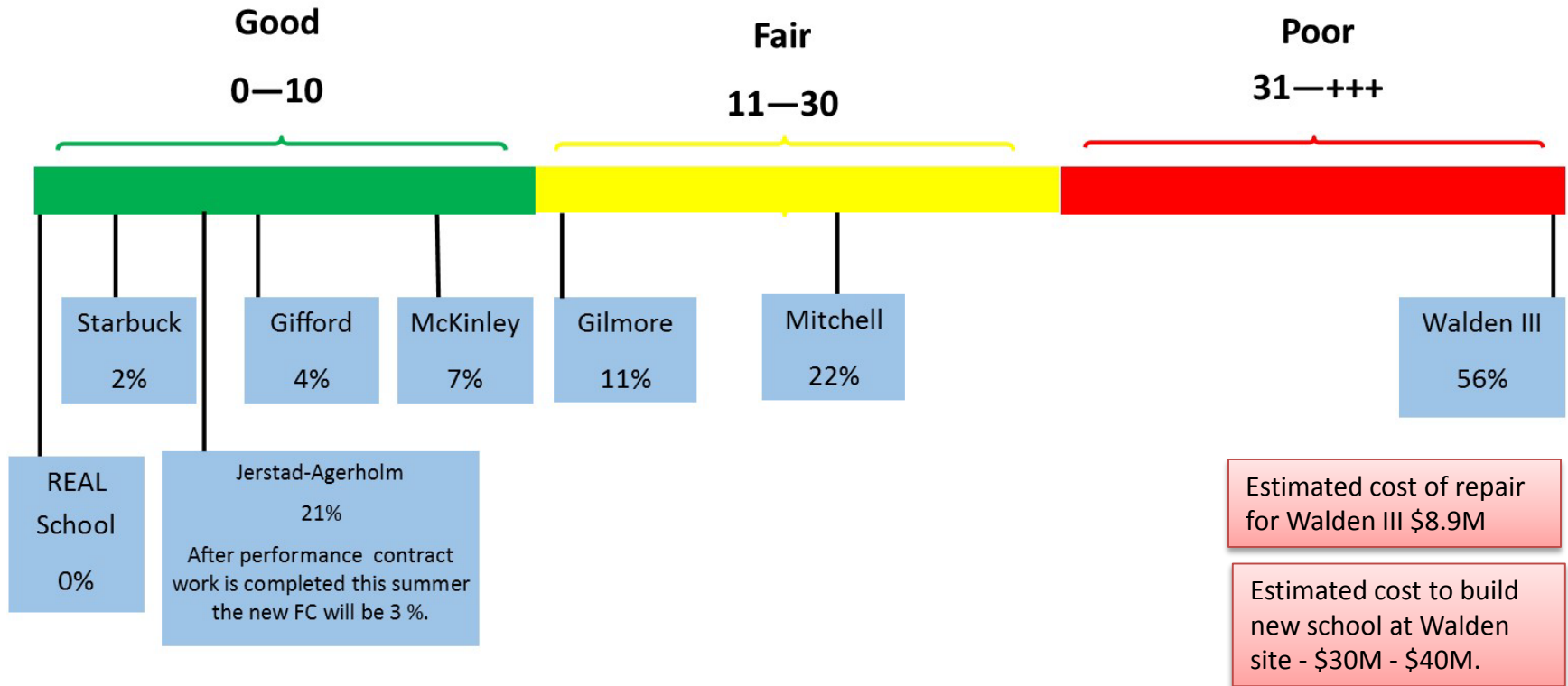


**We Asked.**

**You Shared.**

**We're Listening.**

# Middle School Facility Condition Ratings



# Middle School Capacity = Opportunities!

District schools have space for exciting, innovative solutions to propel Middle School success!

Middle School	17-18 Projected Enrollment	Capacity	Room for Growth
Gilmore	492	1205	713
Starbuck	538	882	344
Jerstad - Agerholm	570	880	310
McKinley	564	953	389
Mitchell	605	906	297
Gifford	366	576	146
REAL MS	190	225	Near Capacity (35)
Walden MS	245	225	Over Capacity (20)
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>3570</b>	<b>5852</b>	<b>2199</b>

## Analysis/Planning

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Based on this information, the RUSD senior leadership team embarked on developing a plan to transform our middle schools that would include:

- Moving Walden III, an alternative school (grades 6-12) out of its 1872 building (which will eventually be demolished) into an existing middle school building (McKinley).
- Moving McKinley Middle School (International Baccalaureate) into Starbuck Middle School, in essence combining the two student bodies and turning Starbuck into an IB middle school.
- Moving the hugely popular but very small (318 students) Bull Fine Arts Elementary School out of its current building and into an existing middle school building (Gilmore) to create a K-8 fine arts school. (Note: Gilmore has one of the poorest reputations in the District.)
- Redistricting all middle schools so that every middle school family would have the choice of either a K-8 boundary middle school (three options) or one of four “choice” middle schools.

Getting families and staff on board with moving buildings, combining schools and expanding a tiny, close-knit elementary into a middle school with a bad reputation would be challenging. Yet, a bigger challenge stood in our way. The School Board leaned toward supporting the teacher’s union and the teacher’s union would never support this plan. The only way to implement this plan without an ugly and public battle was to get the union on board. Unfortunately, the relationship between the superintendent and union leadership was difficult at best. The School Board had already stopped another District initiative earlier that year when the union vocalized their opposition.

### What is a Kaizen?

One event changed our trajectory. Earlier in the school year, in an effort to address some process issues within the District’s enrollment department, RUSD hired a consultant with a Lean Six Sigma black belt to hold a Kaizen event. A Kaizen is a tool that gathers owners of a process in one place, maps the existing process, improves on the existing process and solicits buy-in from all parties. This event had proved successful in bringing a cross-section of employees together to solve a problem.

The communication team suggested this process as a way to encourage the union not only to buy-in to the plan, but to partner with District administration in implementing the plan to transform our middle schools. The superintendent agreed to try it. The process required a diverse group from across the District including administrators, teachers, school leaders, union recommended representatives (teachers) from each impacted school and union leaders, parents and a middle school student to meet for five full days to complete this intense Kaizen event.

The work was challenging and intense. The Kaizen required that we communicate honestly and openly, that we drop titles at the door and that we commit to getting the work done together in the best interest of our students. The first day was spent with administration [presenting why we needed to transform our middle schools](#) followed by tough conversations about trust and past problems, what is best for our students, current challenges and possible solutions. By day two, we had agreed to work on the plan proposed by the administrative team. By the end of the week, four committees had developed work plans to make the transformation plan happen for fall 2018. Amazingly, the teams were led by teachers and school staff, not administration. The teams each included representation from all stakeholder groups and were as follows:

- **Communication & Marketing** – This team developed the tag line *My School. My Choice.*, a teacher on the committee’s brainchild. We developed a marketing and communication timeline and a budget that included funds (apx. \$40,000) to support the marketing and communication efforts.



- **Transportation, Enrollment & Boundaries** – This team developed a timeline and plan for deciding and bringing to the Board for approval new middle school boundaries as well as a plan for accommodating transportation to choice schools.
- **Programming** – This team focused on the underlying issues plaguing our middle schools and plans for addressing them including curriculum, programming, family engagement, etc.
- **Staffing** – This team focused on how the middle schools would be staffed and communicating that process to middle school teachers throughout the year.

### Campaign audiences

Our primary audiences included middle (and some elementary) school staff and middle school families. Middle school families in RUSD are very diverse. An important communication goal was to reach *all* of them. If we were not able to convince even the most disconnected and disenfranchised families to make a school choice, we would face a situation of overcrowding at some schools and low enrollment at others. Our transformation plan would not work. A significant strength of our plan was that teachers and staff were leading it, which would help us gain trust and buy-in from families and staff more quickly – which was important since our timeline was extremely condensed.

## Communication/Implementation

### Timeline

March – October	Initial communication to families and staff; flesh out details of plan and develop communication and marketing plan for school choice enrollment campaign.
October - January	Communication/marketing campaign to educate families and encourage them to make a school choice.
Dec. 1, 2017 – Jan. 15, 2018	School Choice Enrollment window; full implementation of communication/marketing campaign.

### [My School. My Choice. Marketing](#)

**Direct mail to families** - We introduced families to the *My School. My Choice.* middle school transformation plan [via letters](#) home.

**Middle School Family FAQ** - An FAQ document was developed by the Kaizen communication committee and mailed with the letter to middle school families.

**Media Relations** - Media relations for the *My School. My Choice.* middle school initiative began early on as we engaged our community through the research, planning and implementation phases. Late March, once the Kaizen team developed a final implementation plan, we developed a presentation for the [Journal Times Editorial Board](#). With the hope that our daily paper would endorse our plan (or at minimum, not criticize it), we met with them to explain the needs and preview the plan. We were successful in getting a positive endorsement. Additionally, we encouraged the paper to continuously provide updates to our families and community. Below is a sampling of our coverage:

[RUSD middle school survey results released](#) - Jan. 4, 2017

[RUSD looks to make middle school changes](#) - March 21, 2017

[Journal Times editorial: Racine Unified right to review middle schools](#) - March 25, 2017

[Big changes for middle schools](#) - April 14, 2017

[New middle school boundaries set ahead of 2018 changes](#) - July 25, 2017

[Time to make a decision: Unified middle school choice starts Friday](#) - Nov. 29, 2017

[Racine Unified enrollment choice window closes soon](#) - Dec. 29, 2017

**Branding Development** - During summer 2017, the communication department worked with the communication committee and partnered with a local ad agency to come up with a concept for our marketing campaign. It was important to us that we developed a campaign that would attract attention and resonate with our middle school families. So, we held [focus groups](#) with a diverse group of parents eventually landing on the tagline: *Their journey starts with you.* Eleven percent of our RUSD families are Spanish-speaking, so every marketing tool we used was available in both English and Spanish.

**[Yard signs \(\\$2,850\)](#)** – Five hundred English and 100 [Spanish yard signs](#) were printed and distributed for display across the community. The various Kaizen work teams (about 100 staff members), our District Superintendent Advisory Council, Parent Key Communicators and other community partners helped with distribution. Additionally, we put a call out to all staff members who live in the community to consider posting signs in their own yards or businesses.

***My School. My Choice. Booklet (10,000 English, 2,500 Spanish/\$11,279)*** – One of our primary and most comprehensive marketing tools was a booklet that described the middle school transformation, our middle school choices and how to apply. Booklets were direct mailed to RUSD middle school families as well as private and parochial school families. They were also placed at middle schools, the enrollment center and throughout the community at partner sites, daycare and early childhood centers and were brought to District events and information nights.

**[:30 Marcus Movie Theatre Ads \(Eight weeks, 13 screens/\\$9,115\)](#)** – Working with an ad agency, we created a :30 *My School. My Choice.* video ad to be shown in our local Marcus Theatre during the enrollment window, which included winter break, the holiday season and the release of the newest Star Wars movie.

**[English and Spanish Pandora Radio Ads \(October-November/\\$8,235\)](#)** – Over the past two years, Pandora has been a popular and cost-effective advertising tool for our District. Pandora allows us to target listeners based on geography for a fairly low investment. We are also able to include [on-screen graphics](#) to further capitalize on this medium.

**[School One-pagers \(\\$900\)](#)** – We created a high-quality one-pager or sell sheet to market each middle school option. Each was created in English and Spanish front-to-back.

**[My School. My Choice. One-pagers \(\\$1,840\)](#)** - We also developed two flyers we used in various ways: as backpack mail, to distribute to organizations throughout the community and to display at school events, etc. One was a true [one-pager](#), incorporating both Spanish and English. One included more comprehensive information, but required printed two version, [Spanish](#) and [English](#).

**My School. My Choice. Web Page** - We used our website strategically throughout the campaign - including fun [My School. My Choice. image sliders](#) to drive parents to the [My School. My Choice web page](#) with all of the information on our transformed middle schools and how to enroll.

**Autodialer Message Campaign** – Our [autodialer](#) campaign was structured, playful and targeted to specific audiences. We developed a calendar of scripts for each school so that school principals could target their own students and we also did District-wide autodialers with general information about *My School. My Choice.* and included private and parochial families in the messaging.

**Social Media Campaign** – Our [social media campaign](#) utilizing Facebook and Twitter began prior to Dec. 1 and continued through the last day of the school choice enrollment window. We used creative graphics and customized information about individual schools to target various audiences.

**Digital Ads (October - December/\$5,525) & Print Advertising (\$1,952)** - With this relatively small investment in digital advertising, we saw big impact by targeting zip codes and demographics, use of both [Spanish](#) and [English](#) versions and a variety of ad sizes and placements (e.g. top banners, vertical towers). Print ads were utilized in local publications October through December.

**School Videos** – Internally, the communication team worked with school leadership and staff to develop custom marketing videos for each middle school that were used on the school and District websites, on social media and at school events and informational meetings.

- [Gilmore Fine Arts K-8 School](#)
- [Gifford K-8 School](#)
- [Jerstad-Agerholm K-8 School](#)
- [Mitchell K-8 School](#)
- [Starbuck International Baccalaureate Middle School](#)
- [The R.E.A.L. School](#)
- [Walden III](#)

**Van Magnets (\$670)** - RUSD has more than 50 vehicles, primarily large white and red vans that make deliveries throughout the District all day long. They are highly visible across the community, so we utilized them as very low cost traveling ads during the school choice enrollment window.

### **Internal Communication**

Initial introduction to the plan and the process for developing the plan was shared with staff through [email communication](#), a [video](#) and a [Q&A](#) that answered staff questions and concerns. When the school choice enrollment window opened, we shared a special *My School. My Choice.* edition of our Friday Focus newsletter with all teachers. We also provided elementary and middle school secretaries a [My School. My Choice. Q&A](#). We utilized a Google Community for school secretaries to provide an avenue for them to pose questions, get answers and also share examples and suggestions to their colleagues across the District. We armed the secretaries with updates and key messages on a regular basis so they could support families with accurate information.

### **Family Engagement**

**Letters and information nights for families** - Fifth grade families received targeted letters explaining the *My School. My Choice.* middle school transformation and what their options were for enrollment in middle school. The letters were customized by school and updated lists ensured that we only followed up with families who had not yet submitted applications. Principals at each elementary school were also required to hold information nights for their fifth grade families.

**Outreach to churches** - The communication committee and the communication team reached out to local churches to as that they provide information to their congregations through Sunday bulletins, announcements, special meetings, etc. We delivered materials directly to them.

**School Choice Fairs** – These two events were multi-purposed. Our goal was to create opportunities for prospective RUSD middle school families to come inside one of our middle schools to: 1) Learn what all of our middle schools have to offer by visiting booths for each middle school; 2) Provide a venue for families to ask questions, pick-up materials and speak directly to school principals, staff and students; 3) Get very specific information on services and special programs like dual language, transportation and special education; and 4) Get hands-on support with the online application. The events were extremely successful with great attendance and some families enrolling on site. Anecdotally, families were extremely thankful for the level of support provided.

# BOE Facilities & Budget Guidance: Support for a New Middle School Concept

## The 'Why'

1. Deferred maintenance costs of \$95 million is too high and unsustainable.
  2. Enrollment loss at 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade is linked to lower confidence in middle school choices and experience, so focus on these schools is a priority.
  3. The District has distinct race and socio-economic areas of difference, which should be considered in facility decisions.
  4. Some inefficient and low enrollment schools affect the District's ability to concentrate resources for improved student outcomes.
1. Declining enrollment, open enrollment, and voucher schools impact the District's finances.
  7. Significant facility needs exist beyond the funds the 2014 referendum will provide.
  8. Current facility infrastructure in schools is not designed for efficiency (small schools are inefficient, old buildings are inefficient, etc.).

## The 'What'

### Alignment of Planning

1. Supports changes and transitions for students, families and staff in a proactive and planned manner.  
Operates with a clear and transparent approach to early learning for programming, partnerships, location, facilities, and alignment.

### Market Attraction

7. Creates schools and programs that attract and retain families.
8. Designs schools with a combination of choice, capacity and relative equity in quality and access
9. Design and develop athletic, arts, extra-curricular fields, venues and spaces for true Division I student/District experience.

### Effective Resource Management

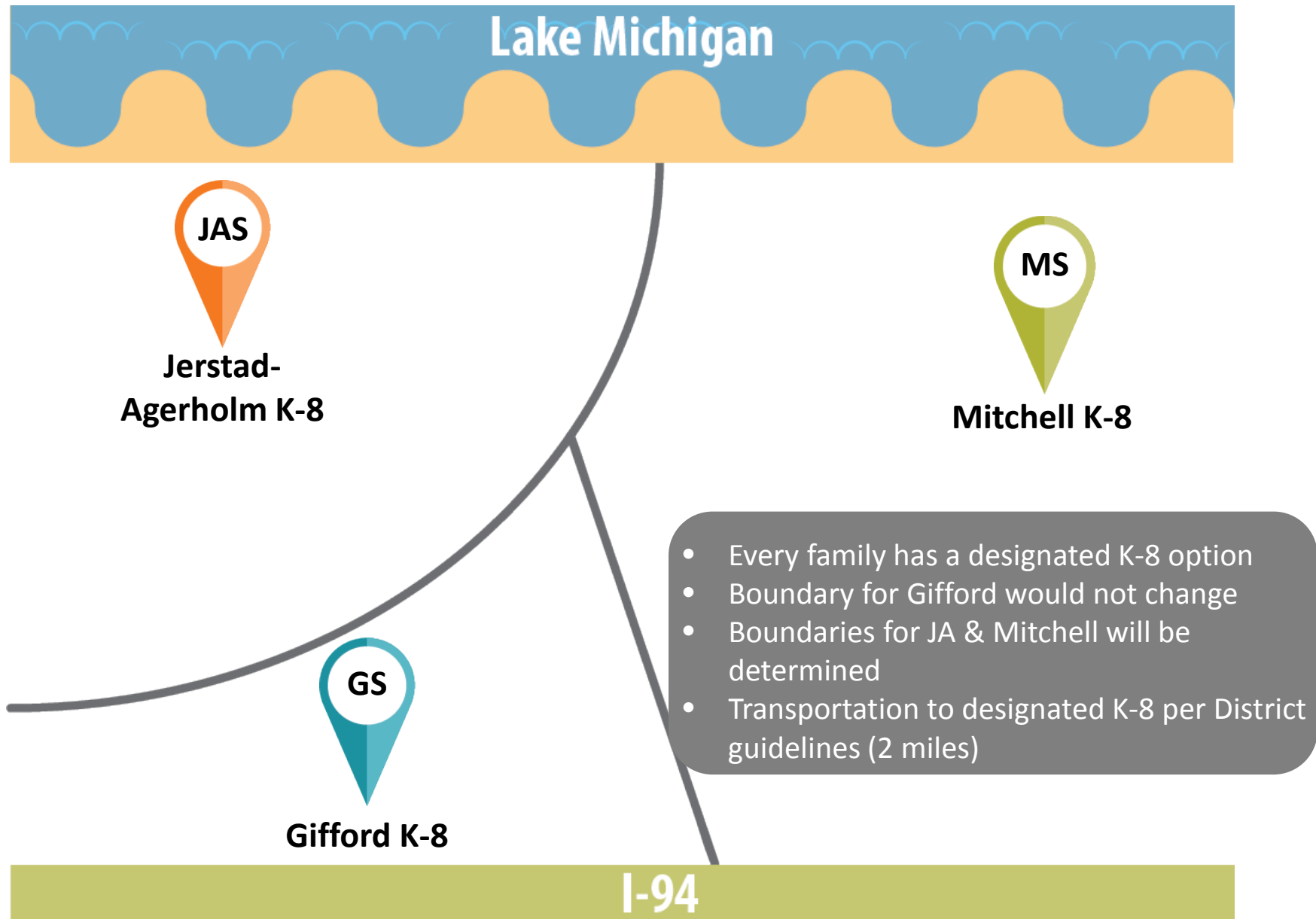
11. Strives for increasing efficiency of scale for staffing and services to students in consolidating and construction of schools.

### Sound Public Engagement to Build Community Clarity, Confidence and Trust

16. Utilize research and public engagement strategies to understand the public's needs and its capacity to fund.
  17. Implement this plan in ways that will build community trust and confidence in the District.
9. Scrutinize current expenditures for effectiveness, efficiency and impact on goals, priorities and student outcomes.

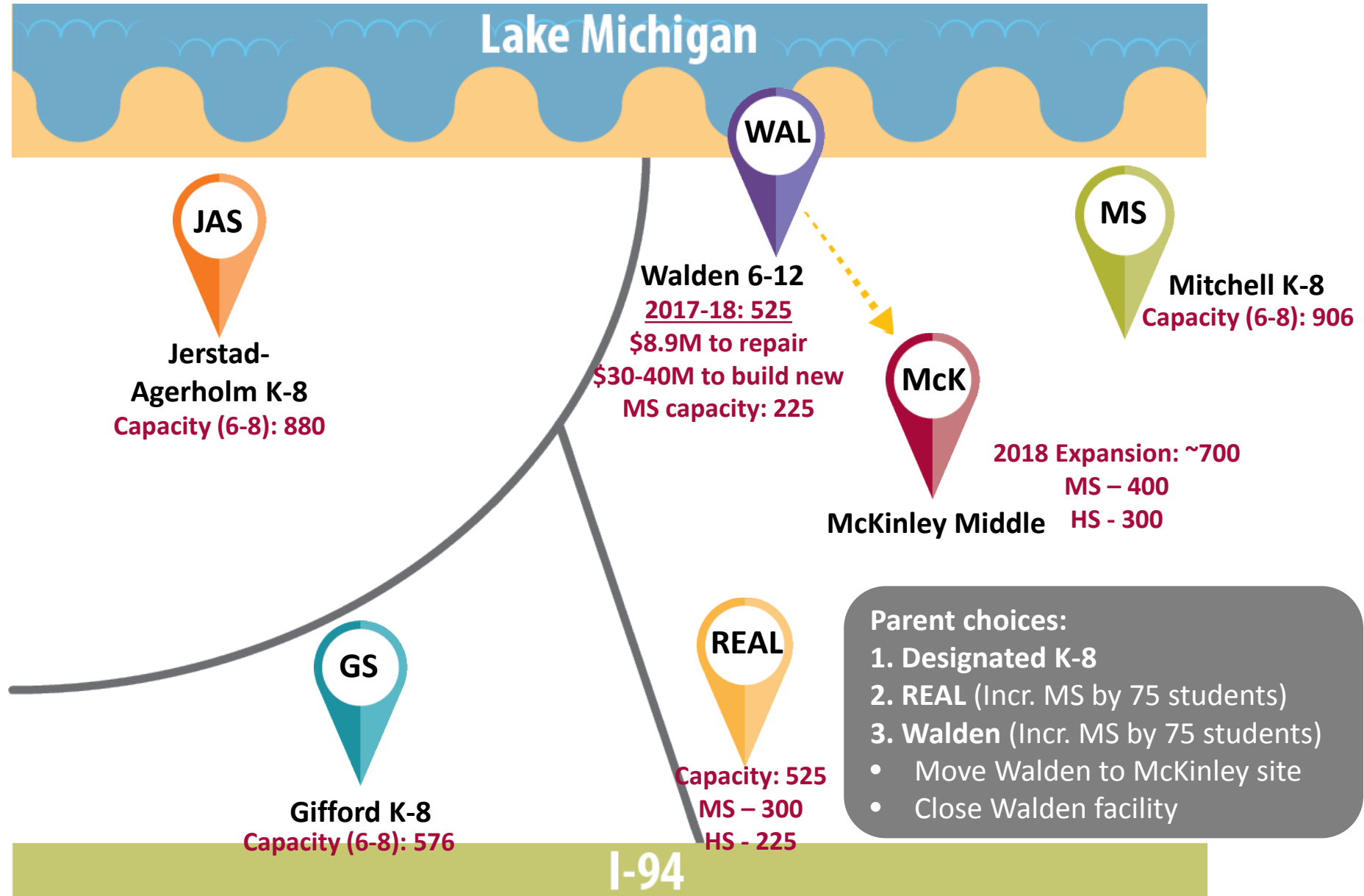
# Goals - Choices for Middle School Families

## Efficient Use of Facilities



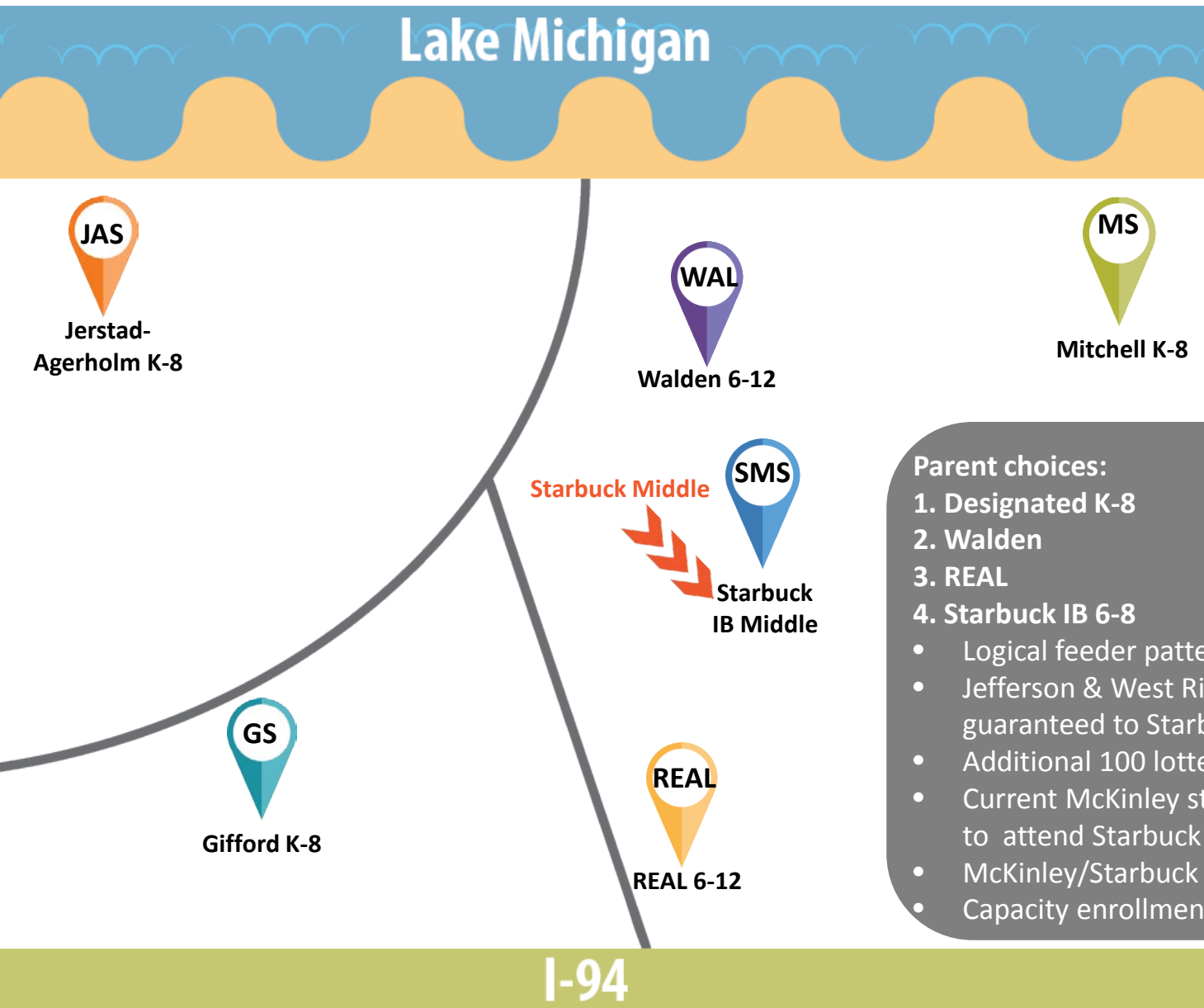
# Goals - Choices for Middle School Families

## Efficient Use of Facilities → MS Capacity



# Choices for Middle School Families

## Efficient Use of Facilities → Alignment of IB K-12

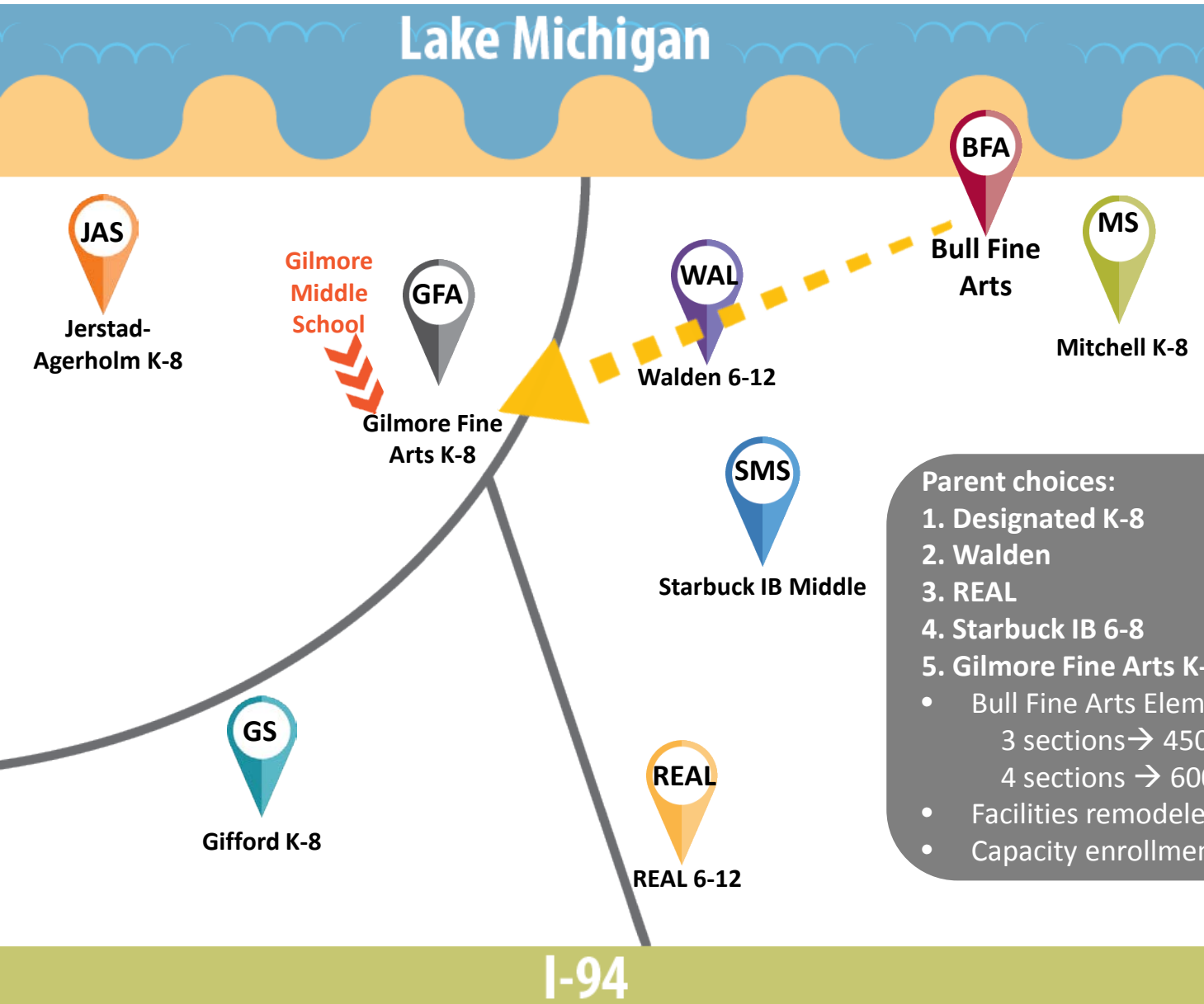


### Parent choices:

1. Designated K-8
2. Walden
3. REAL
4. Starbuck IB 6-8
  - Logical feeder pattern to Case
  - Jefferson & West Ridge 5<sup>th</sup> gr. first choice guaranteed to Starbuck
  - Additional 100 lottery seats per grade
  - Current McKinley students automatically able to attend Starbuck
  - McKinley/Starbuck staff – task force work
  - Capacity enrollment: 882

# Choices for Middle School Families

## Efficient Use of Facilities → K-8 Fine Arts School



### Parent choices:

1. Designated K-8
2. Walden
3. REAL
4. Starbuck IB 6-8
5. Gilmore Fine Arts K-8
  - Bull Fine Arts Elementary to Gilmore  
3 sections → 450 ES, 755 MS OR  
4 sections → 600 ES, 600 MS
  - Facilities remodeled for Fine Arts design
  - Capacity enrollment: 1,200





*my school.*  
*my choice.*  
their journey starts with you

Choose your school Dec 1, 2017 – Jan 15, 2018

[www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)



# my school. my choice.

their journey starts with you

## Which Middle School is right for your child? Now YOU get to decide!

You know your child's unique interests, talents and dreams. And now through My School. My Choice. from Racine Unified School District, you have the chance to pick the Middle School that you feel is the best fit.\*

Choosing your child's school is just part of the My School. My Choice. story. RUSD Middle Schools have been reinvented - **new experiences, new opportunities, new learning environments** - to now give every family high-quality choices for the Middle School years.

You can choose your designated Boundary School, or pick from one of four Choice Schools. Simply rank your school choices in order of preference (1-3). A lottery that considers your ranked choices will be used to determine your child's school assignment.

\*Special education students and families are encouraged to make a school choice. However, please work with your IEP team to determine whether the school of choice can meet your student's needs.



### 1 RESEARCH

Learn about the new Middle School options and talk about them with your child.



### 2 VISIT

Tour your top schools and meet with staff.



### 3 CHOOSE

Decide which Middle School option is the best fit for your child.



### 4 APPLY

Beginning Dec. 1 go to [www.RUSD.org](http://www.RUSD.org) to rank your school choices in order of preference.

## Boundary School or Choice School. It's up to you.

### Boundary School options

Boundary Schools host 4-year-old kindergarten through 8th grades in the same facility. As a parent, one of your My School. My Choice. options is to select your Boundary School, which is based on your home address. The Boundary Schools are: Gifford, Jerstad-Agerholm and Mitchell.

### Choice School options

To broaden the options for Middle School parents, RUSD is opening enrollment in four Choice Schools to all Middle School students. Each of these schools offers unique learning environments and areas of educational emphasis for students. The Choice Schools are: Gilmore Fine Arts, Walden III, Starbuck Middle School and The R.E.A.L. School.

Choose your school Dec. 1, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018 Enroll at [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)

## Boundary School options

### Gifford | 4K-8 (262) 619-4550

The largest 4K-8 campus in RUSD with a mission to prepare students for the future. The Gifford staff works daily to prepare children to reach their potential and beyond.



The Planetarium inside Gifford provides the most current trends in astronomy and space exploration.



Artist in Residence program works with students on an art project that becomes part of the collection at Gifford.



Gifford offers Reading Dog Therapy Teams that can help reluctant students become confident and motivated readers.



Gifford Big Buddies Program pairs older students with younger learners, who benefit from shared activities, mentoring and encouragement.



Gifford School offers intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country as well as band and choir.

### Jerstad-Agerholm | 4K-8 (262) 664-6050

The focus is on the future. Jerstad-Agerholm students are in a position to be 21st Century leaders in the Racine community and beyond.



Jerstad-Agerholm offers the dual language program which encourages students to become bilingual in English and Spanish.



Accelerated track classes are available for students who demonstrate strength in core academic subjects.



Arts electives include music, visual arts, drama and dance.



Basic business, finance and economics lessons serve the students and community as we develop leaders of tomorrow.



Many extracurricular activities including AfterZones, National Junior Honor Society, golf, basketball, cross country, volleyball, flag football, floor hockey and track.

### Mitchell | 4K-8 (262) 664-6400

A premiere choice for an academically challenging, personalized educational program. Featuring small learning communities, Mitchell offers the dual language program which encourages students to become bilingual in English and Spanish.



Mitchell offers four business electives, including a student-created daily news program. Students have an opportunity to take part in the student-led school news program.



Mitchell AfterZones after-school programs include dance, soccer, gamers' club, homework help, art, technical education, including Project Lead the Way, ELL support for reading and math, STEM clubs, Fine Arts Club and Youth Leadership Club.



Fine arts electives including choir and a national award-winning band.



Mitchell School will offer intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country.

## Choice School options

### Gilmore Fine Arts | K-8 (262) 619-4260

Gilmore Fine Arts offers students a world-class fine arts education from kindergarten through 8th grade.



Offering specialized instruction in these disciplines: art, instrumental music, choral music, drama and dance.



Located near the Racine Theater Guild and Wustum Museum of Fine Arts offering unique learning opportunities.



Encouraging students to develop creativity, self-expression, focus and identity, while increasing academic success.



Gilmore Fine Arts will offer intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country.

### Walden III | 6-12 (262) 664-6250

Walden III encourages its students to "march to the beat of a different drummer." Offering a small family atmosphere, that gives students the freedom of an open campus. Named one of the best high schools in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.



Student-centered and staff-driven, Walden III curriculum is designed to add educational value to each student's life.



Through individualized assessments, faculty members work to find unique ways to motivate each student.



Staff develops relationships with the students and their parents/guardians to effectively reach educational goals.



Walden III offers intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country as well as band and choir.

### Starbuck Middle School | 6-8 (262) 664-6500

A Middle Years Programme International Baccalaureate school that features a challenging framework to encourage students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world.



Curriculum is designed to develop active learners through rigorous curriculum and project-based learning.



Empowers students to inquire into a wide range of issues and ideas of significance locally, nationally and globally.



IB prepares students to enter the full Diploma Programme or career-related programme at Case High School.



The IB curriculum encourages independent thinking while developing skills in working with others. Additionally, Starbuck Middle School offers the dual language program which encourages students to become bilingual in English and Spanish.



Starbuck Middle School will offer intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country as well as band and choir.

### The R.E.A.L. School | 6-12 (262) 664-8100

The Racine Engineering, Arts & Leadership (R.E.A.L.) School was founded in 2000 to cultivate an environment that encourages young people to become excited about learning.



Offers a small, tight-knit, grade 6-12 learning environment in a beautiful, newly re-designed facility.



Service-learning projects and activities help develop awareness of responsibility to the community and others.



In partnership with Gateway Technical College, The R.E.A.L. School offers engineering classes at the SC Johnson iMET center for its High School students. Upon graduation, students who successfully complete all of the pathway courses could receive up to 27 college credits in engineering.



The R.E.A.L. School offers intramurals including: boys and girls basketball, volleyball, track and cross country as well as band and choir.


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Dec. 1, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018  
Enroll at [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)



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-0:26



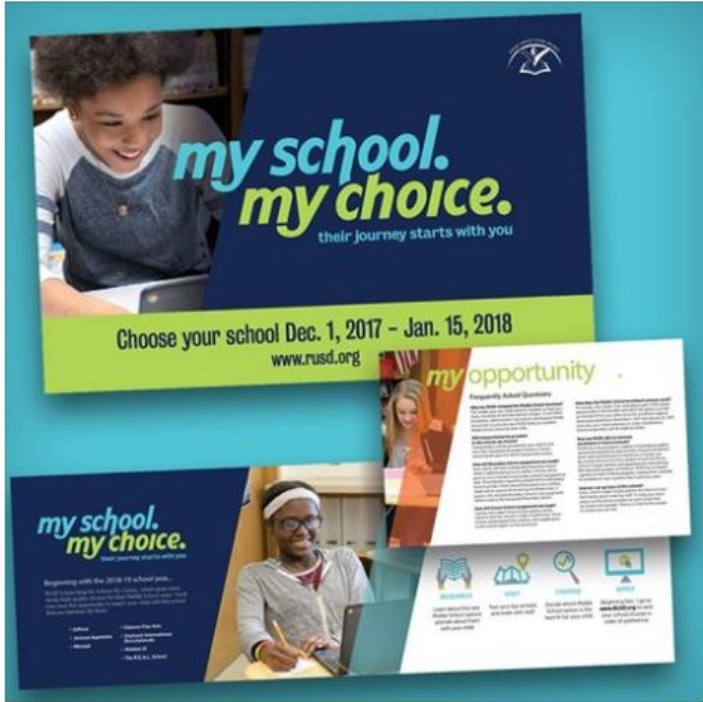


**Racine Unified Schools**

Published by Dave Olson [?] · November 20, 2017 ·

Attention 5th, 6th and 7th grade families! Watch for this 'My School. My Choice.' booklet coming to your mailbox this week! Inside you'll find information regarding all our 'My School. My Choice.' middle schools including our three boundary school options and four choice school options. The School Choice window will open Dec. 1 and run through Jan. 15.

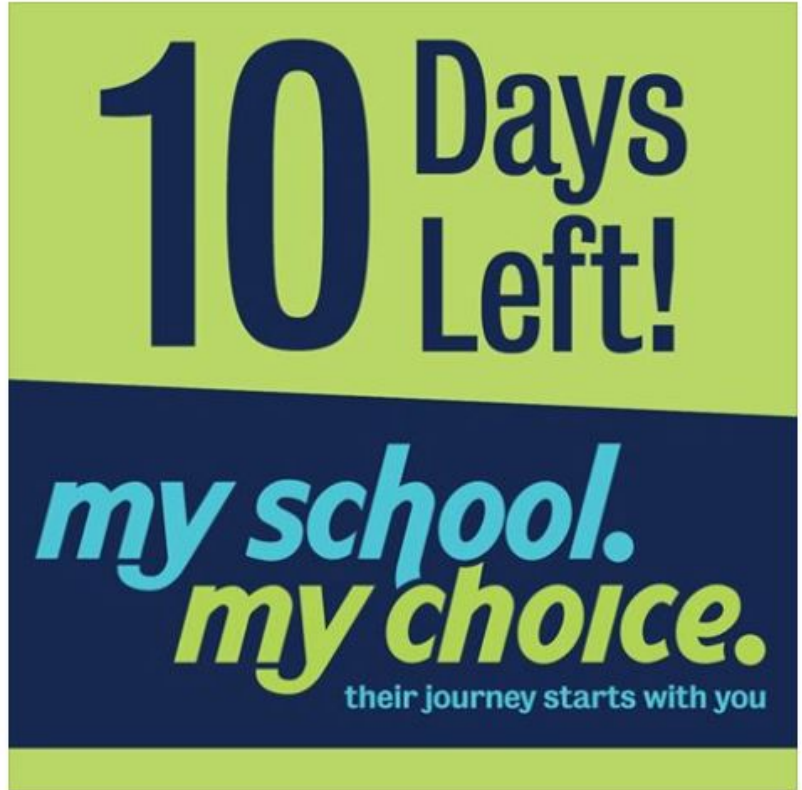
For more information, visit our 'My School. My Choice.' page at [www.rusd.org/district/my-school-my-choice](http://www.rusd.org/district/my-school-my-choice)



**Racine Unified Schools**

Published by Hootsuite [?] · January 6 ·

Middle School families and students! The window to make your selections for 'My School. My Choice.' closes on the 15th. Head over to <http://ow.ly/OTIc30hAalf> to get started.



**Racine Unified Schools**

Published by Hootsuite [?] · January 11 ·

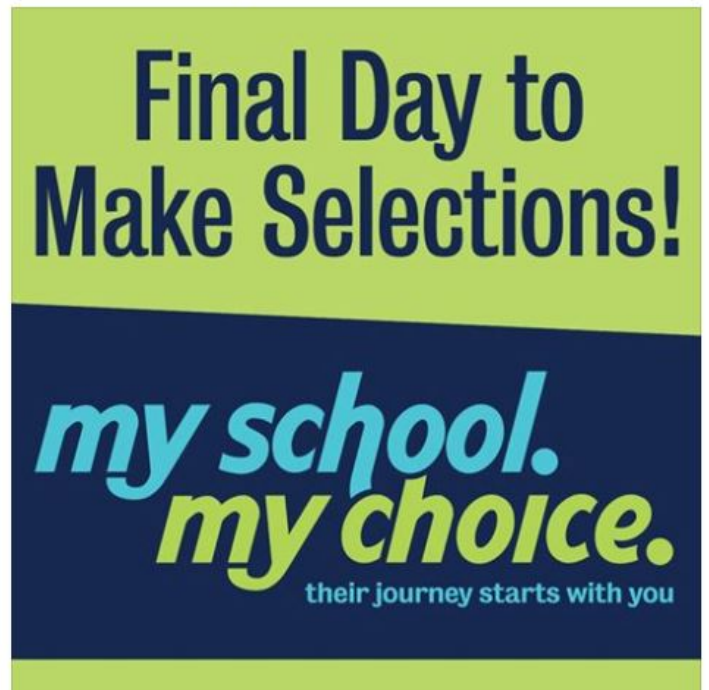
The 'My School. My Choice' window is closing soon! If you have a middle schooler, please visit <http://ow.ly/Fy8130hAbdj> to make your selections.



**Racine Unified Schools**

Published by Hootsuite [?] · January 15 ·

Middle School families and students, you have until midnight to make your selections for 'My School. My Choice'. Please visit <http://ow.ly/ODCC30hAcjR> to make your choice!



## Evaluation

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### Ongoing Evaluation and Action

We evaluated our progress throughout the school choice enrollment window. When we saw that there were still several middle school families who had not made a choice, we worked with school staff to follow up. For some of our families, the best way to get a response is for a teacher or principal that the family has a relationship with to call them directly and help them through the process. This was a very effective strategy in support of our communication and marketing. Middle school staff who were part of the Kaizen teams were more than willing to step in and help.

### Enrollment Results

In 2016-2017, 592 middle school students made a school choice during the enrollment window. During the *My School. My Choice.* campaign in 2017-2018, 1,848 middle school students selected a middle school, a 212 percent increase.

Not only did our enrollment numbers show success, we had the buy-in of our staff, including the teachers' union and our School Board. As previously mentioned, the union had swayed the School Board on another District initiative a few months prior to *My School. My Choice.* That was not the case with this effort due in large part to the Kaizen and the collaborative implementation process. Not only did school staff (from the Kaizen teams) take leadership roles on this initiative, they regularly participated in joint presentations to the Board showing unity throughout the process. This entire process and campaign has helped RUSD to build trust with our staff and demonstrate that we value the voices of our employees and want to work together for our students.

Another measure of success was to ensure that we filled the seats at our brand new schools, Gilmore Fine Arts and Starbuck (an IB World School). We faced some barriers with fear expressed by families who were leery of sending their children to a larger, more diverse school with poor reputations. We worked closely with the principals and parent leaders to listen and respond to concerns and involve families in the process. As a result, filled all grades at both schools. A secondary impact was an overall increase in school choice enrollments for all grades (see results below).

As we analyze the impact of our advertising and marketing efforts, we are thrilled with the results of our digital campaigns. For digital advertising, industry standard click-through rate (CTR) is .05-.07 percent. Our ads saw monthly results almost three times higher (.15%, .16% and .15%). For Pandora our CTR for October was .05 percent while November was .32 percent!

In addition to driving thousands of families to make a school choice, during our school choice enrollment window, we helped to educate our families about the transformational changes happening in all of our RUSD middle schools. In the coming years, we hope the impact of this work will also include a decline in the number of middle school families open enrolling out of RUSD.

## ***My School. My Choice. Enrollment Results***

	<b>2017-2018 Choice Enrollments</b>	<b>2018-2019 Choice Enrollments</b>	<b>Percent Increase/Decrease</b>
<b>PK-K4</b>	392	537	<b>+37%</b>
<b>K-5</b>	814	1,203	<b>+48%</b>
<b>6-8</b>	592	1,848	<b>+212%</b>
<b>9-12</b>	503	523	<b>+4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	2,301	4,111	<b>+77%</b>



<u>Digital Component</u>	<u>Flight Dates</u>	<u>Reported data through</u>	<u>Investment</u>	<u>Impressions Contracted</u>	<u>Delivered</u>	<u>Clicks</u>	<u>CTR</u>	<u>Over/Under Delivery</u>	<u>Cost per Click</u>	<u>Ad Unit</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Pandora (Spanish &amp; English targeting)</b>	October	25-Oct	\$4,117.50	175,000	231,922	120	0.05%	56,922	\$34.31	300 x 250 and 500 x 500	Current frequency level = 5.43 which means on average, the target has seen the message 5.4x
	November	30-Nov	\$4,117.50	175,000	122,409	388	0.32%	-52,591	\$10.61	300 x 250 and 500 x 500	Higher overall clicks for November which drove down the monthly cost per click and the overall cost per click. Good performance overall.
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$8,235.00</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>354,331</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>0.14%</b>	<b>4,331</b>	<b>\$16.21</b>		<b>\$8,235 total investment</b>
<b>Programmatic Targeting (Spanish &amp; English targeting)</b>	October	25-Oct	\$1,000.00	106,250	125,898	190	0.15%	19,648	\$5.26	300 x 250, 320 x 50, 160 x 600, 728 x 90, 160 x 600	Industry standard CTR is .05 - .07% so the initial results are double the industry standard which is a tremendous result so far
	November	30-Nov	\$1,000.00	106,250	106,432	167	0.16%	182	\$5.99	300 x 250, 320 x 50, 160 x 600, 728 x 90, 160 x 600	Consistent CTR and slightly better than results from October. Slight overage on impressions.
	December	31-Dec	\$1,000.00	106,250	106,826	156	0.15%	576	\$6.41	300 x 250, 320 x 50, 160 x 600, 728 x 90, 160 x 600	December saw clicks dip slightly but understandable since the campaign ran for 3 months. Overall the month still performed almost 3x better than the national average
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$3,000.00</b>	<b>318,750</b>	<b>339,156</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>20,406</b>	<b>\$1.95</b>		<b>\$3,000 total investment</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>			<b>\$11,235.00</b>	<b>668,750</b>	<b>693,487</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>24,737</b>	<b>\$11.00</b>		<b>\$11,235 total investment</b>