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PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Distribution

Ellington Board of Education Recommends 'Renovate to New' Windermere Elementary School Building Project

ELLINGTON, CT – On Monday, January 13, 2020 at a special meeting of the Ellington Board of Education, Board members unanimously approved an approximately \$56 million 'renovate to new' Windermere Elementary School building project with an anticipated State of Connecticut reimbursement rate of 54.29% or approximately \$28 to \$30 million returned to the Town of Ellington.

Moving forward the Ellington Public Schools' (EPS) administration with Tecton Architects will present to the Board of Selectmen at a special meeting to be held on Thursday, January 30, 2020 at the Ellington Town Hall at 7:00 P.M. A possible Town referendum may occur in the Spring 2020.

The Ellington Board of Education began this process approximately two years ago by establishing a Facilities Study Committee comprised of representatives from Ellington's Boards of Education, Selectmen, and Finance, Permanent Building Committee and the school district's and town's administration. During that period of time, all EPS schools including Windermere Elementary were publicly discussed at approximately twenty meetings and community forums.

In particular, the Board of Education has received feedback at meetings from members of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, Permanent Building Committee and Planning and Zoning Commission as collaborative partners.

The Ellington Board of Education, as advised by the Facilities Study Committee, has prioritized Windermere Elementary School as the school that needs to be addressed immediately.

The Ellington Board of Education weighed three Windermere building project options: One - Renovate, Two – New (at two locations), and Three - Renovate to New. Option One - a straight renovation - was not supported by the State of Connecticut. The Board closely examined Options Two and Three discussing student safety, probable traffic implications, neighborhood aesthetics, educational programming and short and long term financial costs.

Ultimately, the Board felt both options were comparable excluding the financial cost. Option Two – a new build – would cost approximately \$8 million more than Option Three – renovate to new.

The Board unanimously agreed that a 'renovate to new' Windermere Elementary School building project was a fiscally responsible approach that would meet the educational needs of the Ellington Public Schools for decades to come.

All interested residents are encouraged to attend the special Board of Selectmen's meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2020 at the Ellington Town Hall at 7:00 P.M. Additional information may be found at the [Ellington Public Schools' website.](#)

On behalf of the Ellington Board of Education –

Kerry Socha
Operations Committee Chair

Jennifer Mullin
Communications Committee Chair

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