

# Rhode Island School Building Task Force

## Summary of Principles and Goals

(DRAFT as of September 29, 2017)

**Overriding Goal:** Make all Rhode Island schools warm safe and dry as quickly as possible and then equip every school with the resources to prepare students for success in the 21st century

### **Principle 1: Invest More**

**Why:** What we have been doing is not enough to make our schools warm, safe and dry, let alone prepare the next generation for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

How:

- *It's time for everyone –the state, school districts, and community partners– to step-up and make a commitment to fix our schools*
- *Get behind a single game-plan that allows Rhode Island to overcome this challenge once-and-for-all*
- *Move quickly, because there is a cost to inaction*
- *Preserve state funding for current projects*
  - *State share of this year's new projects cannot be reduced*
  - *Any increases in state share can be applied to this year's projects*

### **Principle 2: Invest Smarter**

**Why:** We need to prioritize 'warm, safe and dry' first, and then transition all schools to 21st century learning environments

How:

- *Incentivize early projects that address priority 1 & 2 concerns*
- *Incentivize projects that maximize targeted STEAM upgrades*
- *Continue to use district master planning*
- *State should work collaboratively with districts to reduce overcrowding and underutilization where appropriate*

### **Principle 3: Invest Efficiently**

**Why:** Currently, nearly 40% of all school construction spending goes to paying interest on past projects, and the state subsidizes municipalities with low credit ratings for their higher cost of borrowing

How:

- *Lower cost of municipal borrowing*
- *Reduce amount of state money going to pay for interest on municipal debt*
- *Invest in cost-saving energy efficiency projects*
- *Help districts manage construction costs*