



# **Merger Feasibility Committee**

## **Pennsbury School District and Morrisville School District**

### **Transportation and Facilities**

**PFM Group Consulting, LLC**

October 3, 2022



# Agenda

- ◆ Overview of work to date
- ◆ Student Transportation
- ◆ Morrisville SD Facilities
- ◆ Pennsbury SD Facilities
- ◆ Discussion
- ◆ Public comment



## Overview of work to date

- ◆ As described at the September 19 meeting of the Feasibility Committee, PFM has been completing initial reviews of various areas affected by the merger or tuition scenarios
- ◆ Our team has examined academic, financial, and operational information from both school districts to frame our review
- ◆ Our team has also visited both school districts multiple times to conduct interviews with staff in the finance, transportation, facilities, operations and academic areas to understand how programs and operations are currently structured, and how they would be impacted by a merger or tuition scenario
- ◆ Tonight, we will review preliminary observations from the site visits and data analysis for student transportation and facilities
  - Accompanied by our experts in transportation and facilities, we have met with both districts, and also completed building site visits
  - Our initial observations will be further informed by your comments and suggestions, as well as follow up work with the staff of the two districts
- ◆ Over the next two meetings, we tentatively plan to cover the remaining topics:
  - Monday, October 17: Workforce and finance
  - Monday, November 14: Academic programs and curriculum



# Student Transportation



# Transportation overview

- Due to the different geographies of the two school districts, Pennsbury and Morrisville vary in terms of the transportation services that are offered to students
- We have met with the transportation group in each districts, and reviewed updated internal and Transfinder routing information, bus assignments, rolling stock, and costs

	Pennsbury SD	Morrisville SD
Transportation Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking for some communities near school buildings</li> <li>Students are transported if they meet these criteria:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary: more than 1.0 mile</li> <li>Middle: more than 1.5 miles</li> <li>High: more than 1.8 miles</li> </ul> </li> <li>Students crossing hazardous routes may be transported at distances under those limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking for most students in the school district</li> <li>Some students walk and then are transported to the Technical HS</li> <li>Transportation for special education students and students in vocational school</li> </ul>
Vehicle Counts (2022-23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School buses: 96 operated by PSD</li> <li>Vans: 6 operated by PSD</li> <li>Specialized service from BCIU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School buses: 1 contracted</li> <li>Vans: 3 operated by MSD</li> <li>Specialized service from BCIU</li> </ul>
Pupils Transported (2019-20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9,827 students               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public non-hazardous: 6,813</li> <li>Public hazardous: 2,005</li> <li>Non-public: 1,009</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>64 students (non-hazardous)</li> </ul>

Note: The count of pupils transported is taken from the pupil transportation subsidy reports submitted by both school districts to the Department of Education.



## Morrisville SD operations

- ◆ In the Morrisville School District, the majority of students walk to school at the District's two buildings (Grandview ES and Morrisville MS/HS)
- ◆ Students attending the Bucks County Technical High School walk to Morrisville MS/HS before being transported to school
  - MSD reported that some of these students walk around an hour to school for this transportation
  - MSD currently contracts with the Neshaminy School District for a bus to transport BCTHS students
- ◆ Some students receive transportation for special education services provided at Morrisville buildings, charter schools, or other specialized programs operated by BCIU and other providers
  - For these students, MSD owns and operates three 8-passenger vans that do not have specialized equipment such as wheelchair lifts
  - MSD partners with the Bucks County IU to provide additional transportation capacity



# Potential impacts

- Assumptions regarding grade configurations and building operations significantly impact the transportation needs in both the merger and tuition scenarios
- Given the emphasis on the walkable community in Morrisville that our study team observed and has heard from multiple stakeholders, the report will focus on potential options at the middle and high school grades
- Based on the information that our team has reviewed so far, this would require additional vehicles to transport students from Morrisville to school buildings in Pennsbury
- In the table below, we show some initial high-level assumptions for vehicles needed for daily transportation to school buildings in Pennsbury that will be refined by our subject matter expert in collaboration with the Pennsbury transportation department and finance office to include considerations described on the next slide

	Middle School	High School
MSD Students (2021-22)	192	216
Vehicles (50 to 60 Students Assigned)	3 to 4 buses	4 to 5 buses
Additional Costs Before State Reimbursement	\$300,000 to \$400,000	\$400,000 to \$500,000

Note: In 2020-21, the Pennsbury School District received \$1.2 million in pupil transportation subsidy payments for \$3.2 million in approved operating costs, which is a reimbursement rate of 37.3 percent before including payments for non-public and charter school students.



## Other study considerations

- ◆ In addition to the daily transportation to school buildings, the merger or tuition scenario may require additional vehicles to accommodate Morrisville students
- ◆ These may include, but are not limited to:
  - Late buses for sports, clubs, and activities
  - Buses for weekend sports or other activities
  - Requiring transportation for students enrolled non-public schools
  - Increasing the 10-mile transportation radius for Morrisville students in charter and non-public schools
- ◆ Finally, Pennsbury SD would need enough time to plan in advance of a merger to purchase vehicles, recruit and train drivers, and route the vehicles to Morrisville
- ◆ Estimates for additional transportation and related costs are being refined by our subject matter expert in collaboration with the Pennsbury transportation department and finance office



# Morrisville SD Facilities



# Morrisville school buildings



- ◆ Morrisville SD has two buildings with four different grade bands:

		Grade Configuration	2021-22 Enrollment
<b>Morrisville School District</b>			
Grandview Elementary School		K - 2	216
Morrisville Middle/High School	Intermediate School	3 - 5	206
	Middle School	6 - 8	192
	High School	9 - 12	216
<b>Total MSD</b>			<b>830</b>



## Other facilities

- ◆ In addition to the two school buildings, Morrisville has three other facilities and sites:

Building	Status	Notes
Manor Park ES	Closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously rented to an organization running a federally-funded Head Start program to operate as an early childhood center</li> <li>• Recent sale was not completed; building is currently being marketed, and a possible buyer is in the process of purchasing</li> </ul>
Capital View ES	Closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously rented to another organization to operate as an early childhood center (similar to Manor Park)</li> <li>• MSD is not currently marketing the building</li> <li>• Building sits on property held in trust by an estate (see below for the Football Stadium)</li> </ul>
Football Stadium	Operating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent projects: replaced wood decking in home stands; visitor section has newer aluminum stands</li> <li>• Capital needs: track replacement; possible upgrades at snack stands and garage</li> <li>• MSD owns approximately 25 percent of the field, which includes the full width from Lafayette Street to Harper Avenue</li> <li>• The remaining parts of both fields, including the lot where Capital View ES sits, are held in trust</li> <li>• The property reverts to the trust if it is no longer used by the district as an athletic field</li> </ul>



## Capital needs

- ◆ In 2019-20, Morrisville completed a Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESAs) project to provide upgrades at the District's two buildings
  - Most of the projects took place at the Middle/High School, and they included HVAC upgrades, lighting improvement, and other upgrades
  - The District made some HVAC and electrical upgrades to Grandview Elementary School
- ◆ During the study team's site visit, our subject matter expert (licensed engineer and former school district facilities director) received a tour of the Morrisville buildings
- ◆ Generally, the study team found the school buildings to be in good condition despite their facilities
- ◆ In the near future, the District will need to replace the roofs at both buildings, which were reported to be original to the buildings
- ◆ Further into the future, the District may need to plumbing fixtures or other infrastructure at Grandview Elementary School
- ◆ An estimate of these capital costs and their timing will be included in the report



## Study considerations

- Since many of the issues that are being reviewed by the study cut across all areas in the report, the potential options for facilities in Morrisville are presented as questions for discussion
- These will be addressed in the final report in the context of how they fit with the other areas of the study
- What grade configurations are feasible for the districts to consider under a merger or tuition scenario given the related impacts to transportation and capacities in the buildings?
  - Continuation of walking district for K-5 and possibly 6-8
  - Ability to accommodate MSD MS students at current PSD middle school campus; need to transport for middle school sports and other activities if MSD MS remains at current location
- How might the districts use the two school buildings in Morrisville if all or a portion of students go to Pennsbury school buildings for their education? Related cost, and any changes in capital needs related to changes in building use
- What options are available for the closed school buildings in Morrisville and what are the current carrying costs for those facilities?
- How do the long-term capital needs impact the operating costs of the school districts under the merger or tuition scenarios?



# Pennsbury SD Facilities



## Pennsbury school buildings

	Grade Configuration	2021-22 Enrollment
<b>Pennsbury School District</b>		
Afton Elementary School	K - 5	542
Edgewood Elementary School	K - 5	516
Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary School	K - 5	555
Fallsington Elementary School	K - 5	268
Makefield Elementary School	K - 5	373
Manor Elementary School	K - 5	445
Oxford Valley Elementary School	K - 5	382
Penn Valley Elementary School	K - 5	411
Quarry Hill Elementary School	K - 5	472
Walt Disney Elementary School	K - 5	384
<b>Elementary School Subtotal</b>		<b>4,348</b>
Charles H Boehm Middle School	6 - 8	715
Pennwood Middle School	6 - 8	757
William Penn Middle School	6 - 8	928
<b>Middle School Subtotal</b>		<b>2,400</b>
Village Park Academy	4 - 8	10
Pennsbury High School (West and East)	9 - 12	2,910
<b>Total PSD</b>		<b>9,668</b>

◆ Pennsbury SD has three building types:

- Elementary schools: K to 5
- Middle schools: 6 to 8
- High school: 9 to 12

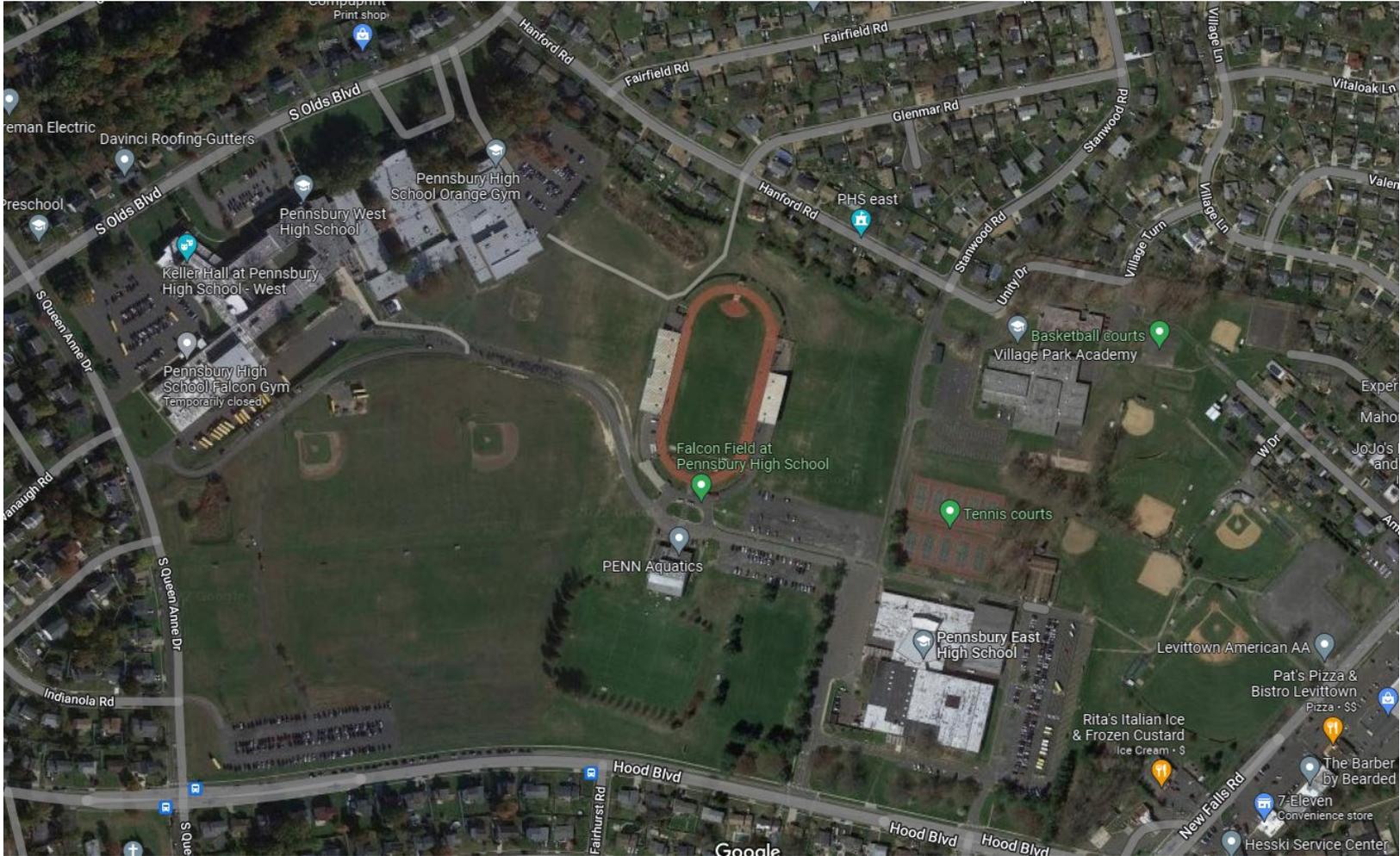


## Middle school campus





# High school campus





## Study considerations

- Since many of the issues that are being reviewed by the study cut across all areas in the report, the potential options for facilities in Morrisville are presented as questions for discussion
- These will be addressed in the final report in the context of how they fit with the other areas of the study
- Does Pennsbury currently have or will it have sufficient capacity in its middle or high school buildings to accommodate some or all middle or high school students from Morrisville?
- What related impacts on bell times, lunch periods, or other aspects of the schedule would need to be considered?
- How would the merger or tuition scenario impact Pennsbury's approach for its existing 20-year capital plan investments in its school buildings?
- How would building maintenance operations be affected under a merger or tuition arrangement?
  - Pennsbury currently provides many maintenance services with in-house staff
  - Morrisville currently contracts for most building maintenance work



# Discussion



## Discussion

- ◆ What questions do you have about the information presented today?
- ◆ What did you find significant about the information that was presented today?
- ◆ What additional information about general operations, transportation, and the two districts' buildings should the study team be aware of or focused on?
- ◆ How should the information presented today be taken into account in considering the feasibility of a merger of the two districts or tuitioning Morrisville students to Pennsbury?
- ◆ Is there any specific information you would like presented in our subsequent sessions covering academic programs and curriculum, and workforce and finances?



# Public comment



## Appendix

- ◆ Pennsbury SD has uploaded information for the merger Feasibility Committee to its website
- ◆ The Feasibility Committee webpage can be accessed here:
  - Go to the Community button at the top of the page at [www.pennsburysd.org](http://www.pennsburysd.org)
  - In the Directory under the letter P, click the link for the Pennsbury-Morrisville Merger Feasibility Committee
  - You can use the links on the lefthand side of the screen to navigate to the membership list, slides, and the feedback form