

# Duluth Public Schools Needs Assessment Summary

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Innovation Services



# Needs Assessment Objectives

1. Review the results from previous facilities planning efforts and document the lessons learned.
2. Gather input from key stakeholder groups on their long-term vision for the district, desired outcomes and measures of success, the state of current facilities and ideas for improvement.
3. Define key stakeholder objectives, critical needs and evaluation criteria to be used in guiding the detailed facility assessment and planning process.
4. Prepare summary information useful in communicating the status and direction of the facilities planning process to the community.

# Facility Needs Assessment – Process Overview

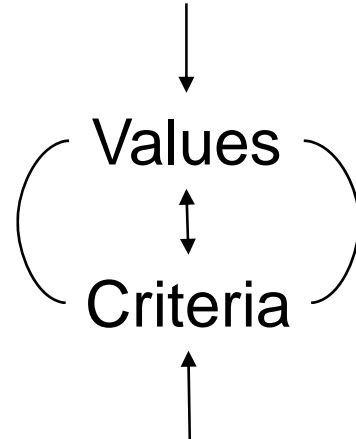
Changes in Education

Changes in the Community



Vision for the Future

*Doing the **Right Things...**  
for the **Right Reasons...**  
the **Right Way...***



Values

Criteria

Facility Options

Opportunities

Challenges/Gaps



# Stakeholder Input Sessions

- Ed. Assts, Maintenance & Food Service
- Desegregation/Integration Group
- Principals & Administrators
- Early Childhood
- Special Education
- Teachers (DFT)
- Citizen's Group
- School Board
- Students
- PTSA



# Challenges – Key Themes

*What current challenges or barriers get in the way of achieving the vision?*

- Multi-generational, neighborhood school nostalgia (my grandfather went to that school and it was fine...)
- Low appetite for risk across the community
- Addressing socio-economic and cultural diversity
- Attracting and retaining young professionals
- Aging schools that are not able to accommodate students with special needs
- Collaboration with the city of Duluth

# Vision 2007 – Lessons Learned

*What have we learned from the Vision 2007 planning effort?*

- What went well...
  - Principals worked hard and developed a number of creative, practical options
  - Identified key community groups for both input and support
- What didn't go well...
  - Focused on the number of (closed) high schools
  - Perception of a small group making the decisions
  - Protectionism among principals
  - No financial planning
  - Didn't have school board support up-front
- What would you do different...
  - Use outside facilitators/consultants
  - Involve the entire community in the planning process

# Must Do's – Key Themes

*What are the things we must do in order for the project to be successful?*

- Communicate, communicate, communicate...
- Obtain input from under-represented segments of the community
- Use research data to support recommendations
- Make fair and equitable decisions
- Talk to teachers in the schools (not just a check list)
- Demonstrate steady progress towards the goal
- Obtain commitment from the school board to make the (tough) decisions

# Must Not's – Key Themes

*What are the things we must avoid in order for the project to be successful?*

- Focus the planning on “east” and “west” issues or the number of high schools
- Fail to approve a plan (no “do-overs”)
- Come in with pre-conceived ideas
- Have “winners” and “losers”
- Say one thing in meetings and another in the community
- Be extravagant

# **Facility Needs Assessment**

**Evaluation of a standardized set of facility needs based on relative importance and current satisfaction**

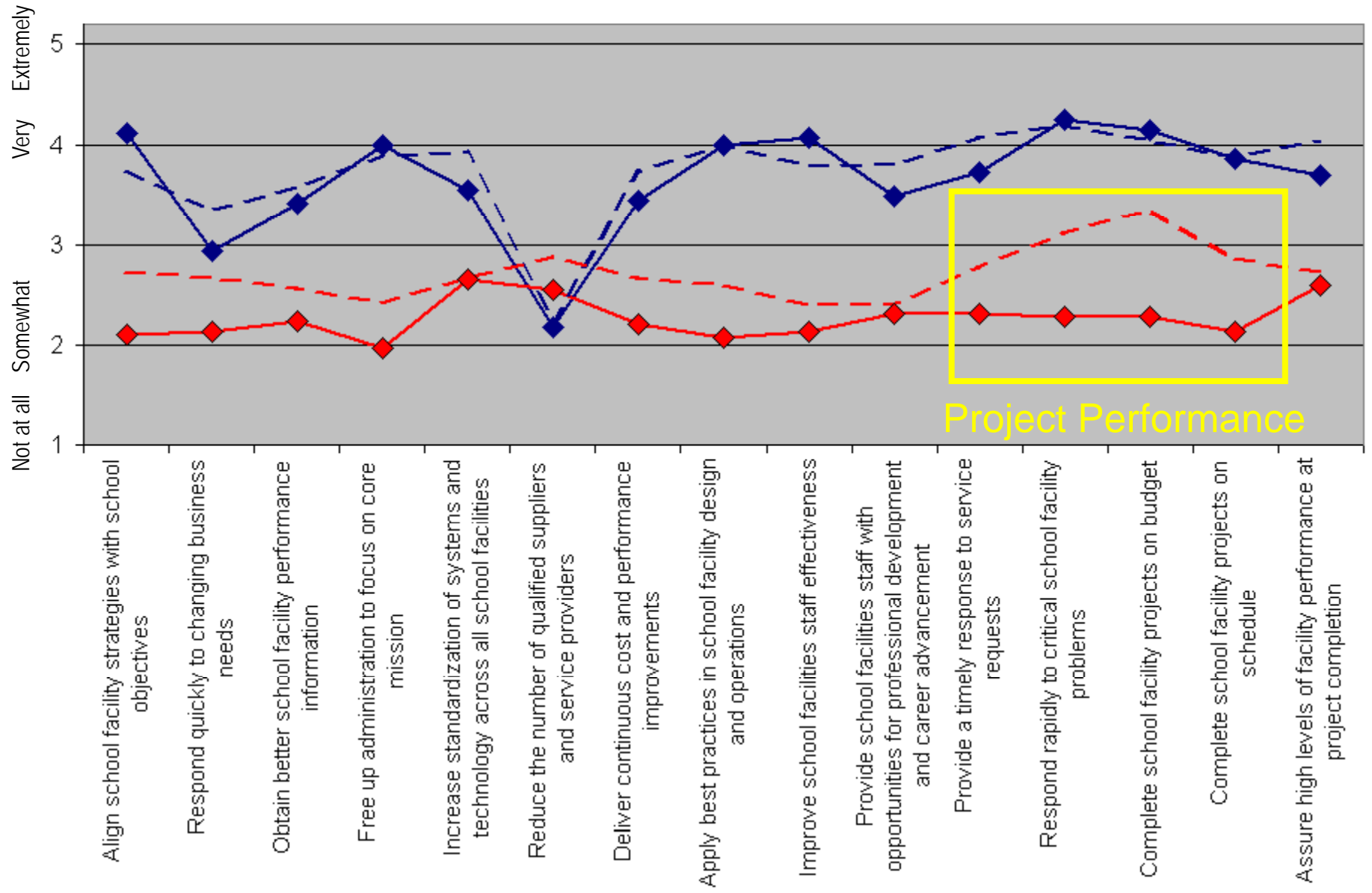
Duluth Public Schools Principals & Administrators (n = 29 participants)  
K-12 School District Benchmark (n = 41 organizations)

# Principals/Admin Session - "Top Ten" Facility Needs

- Attract and retain key faculty and staff
- Easily update school facilities with new technology
- Assure healthy indoor environments
- Improve faculty and staff productivity
- Protect school facilities from unauthorized physical access
- Free up administration to focus on core mission
- Align school facility strategies with school objectives
- Obtain sufficient funding for facility capital investments
- Respond rapidly to critical school facility problems
- Protect occupants during emergency situations

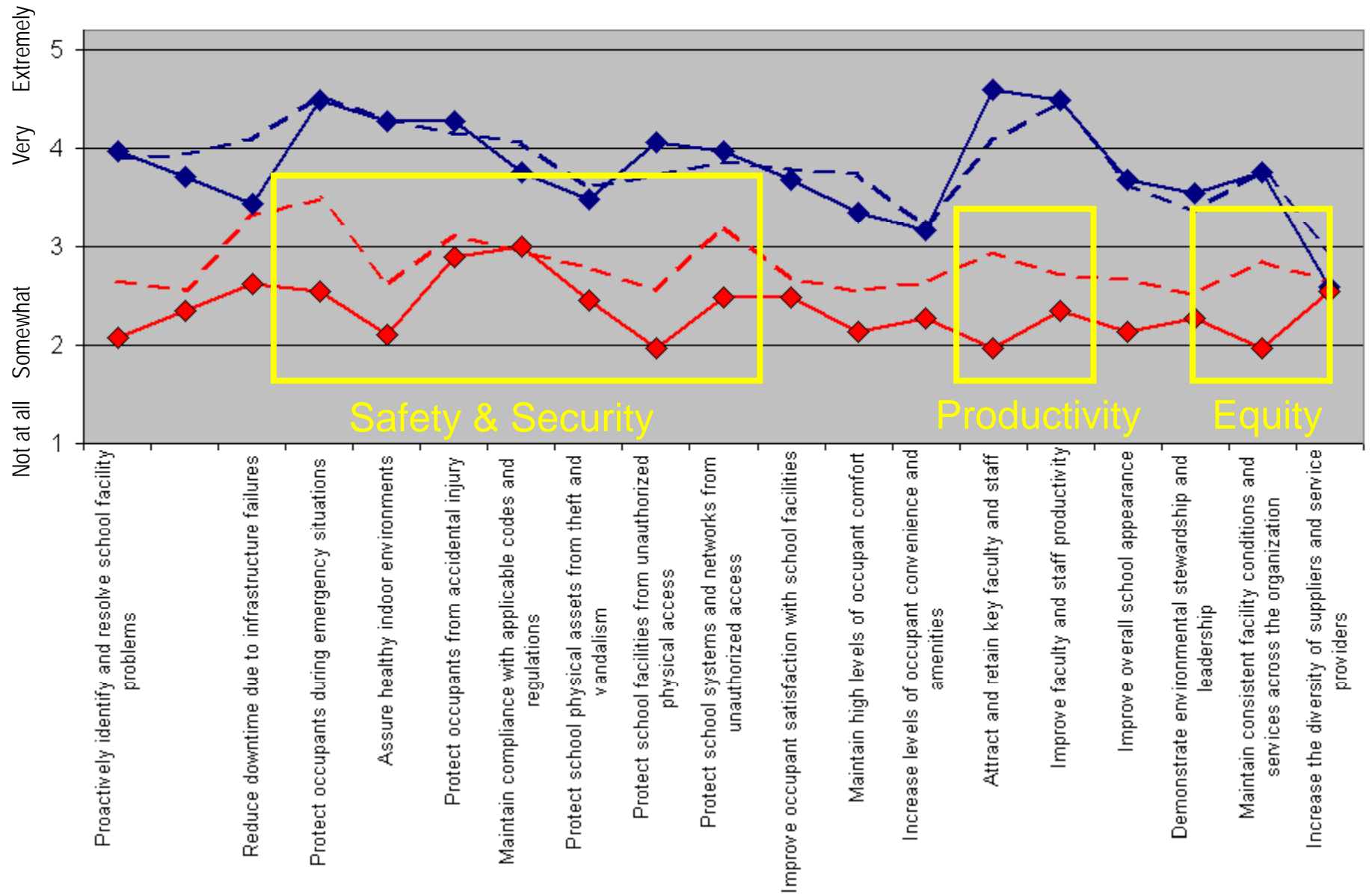
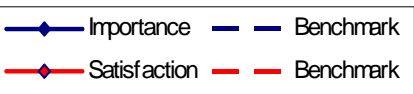
# Facility Needs (Operational Performance)

◆ Importance - - Benchmark  
◆ Satisfaction - - Benchmark



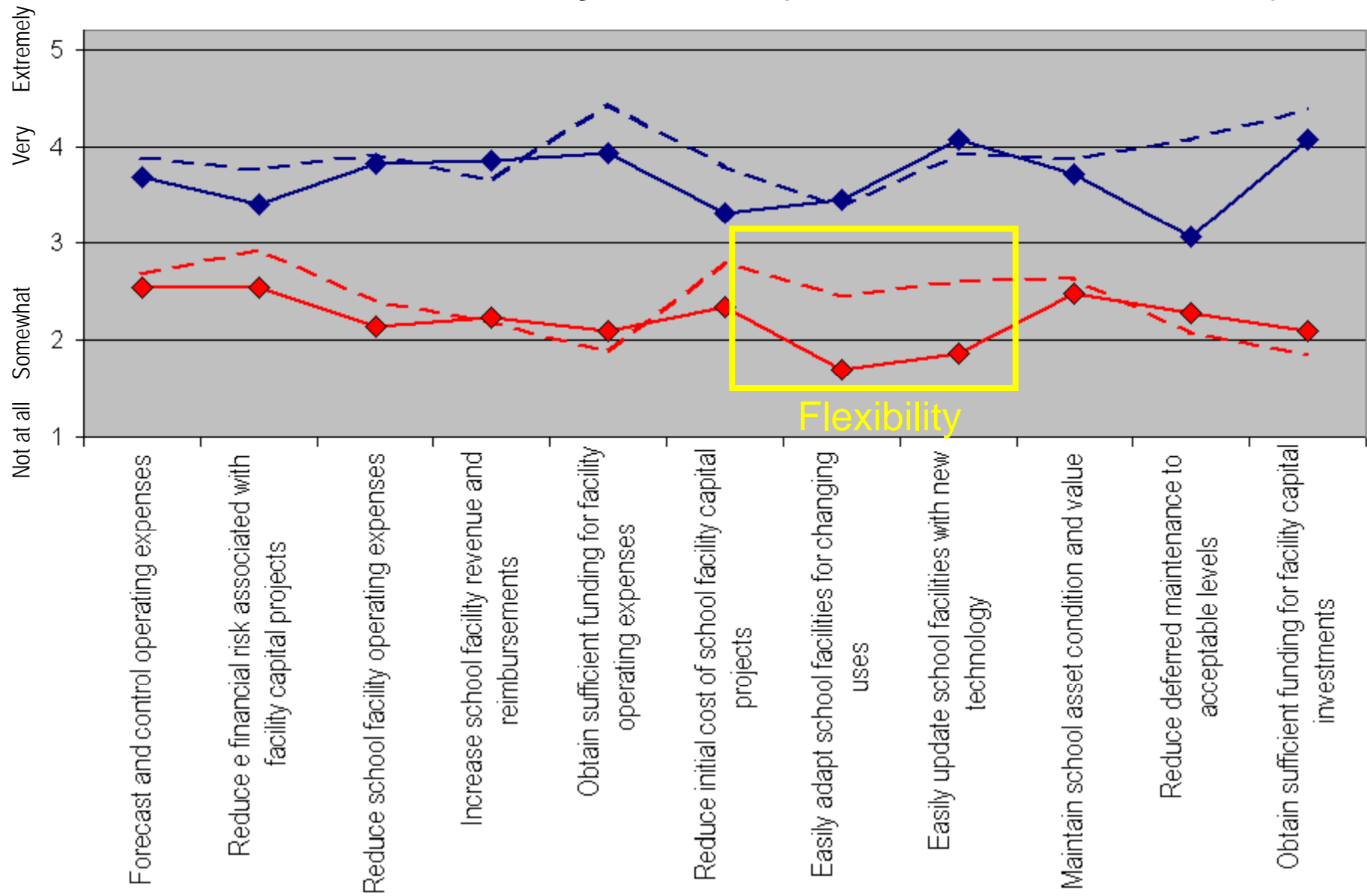
Project Performance

# Facility Needs (Risk/Relationship Management)



# Facility Needs (Financial Performance)

◆ Importance - - Benchmark  
◆ Satisfaction - - Benchmark



Flexibility

# Student Session – “Ideal High School”

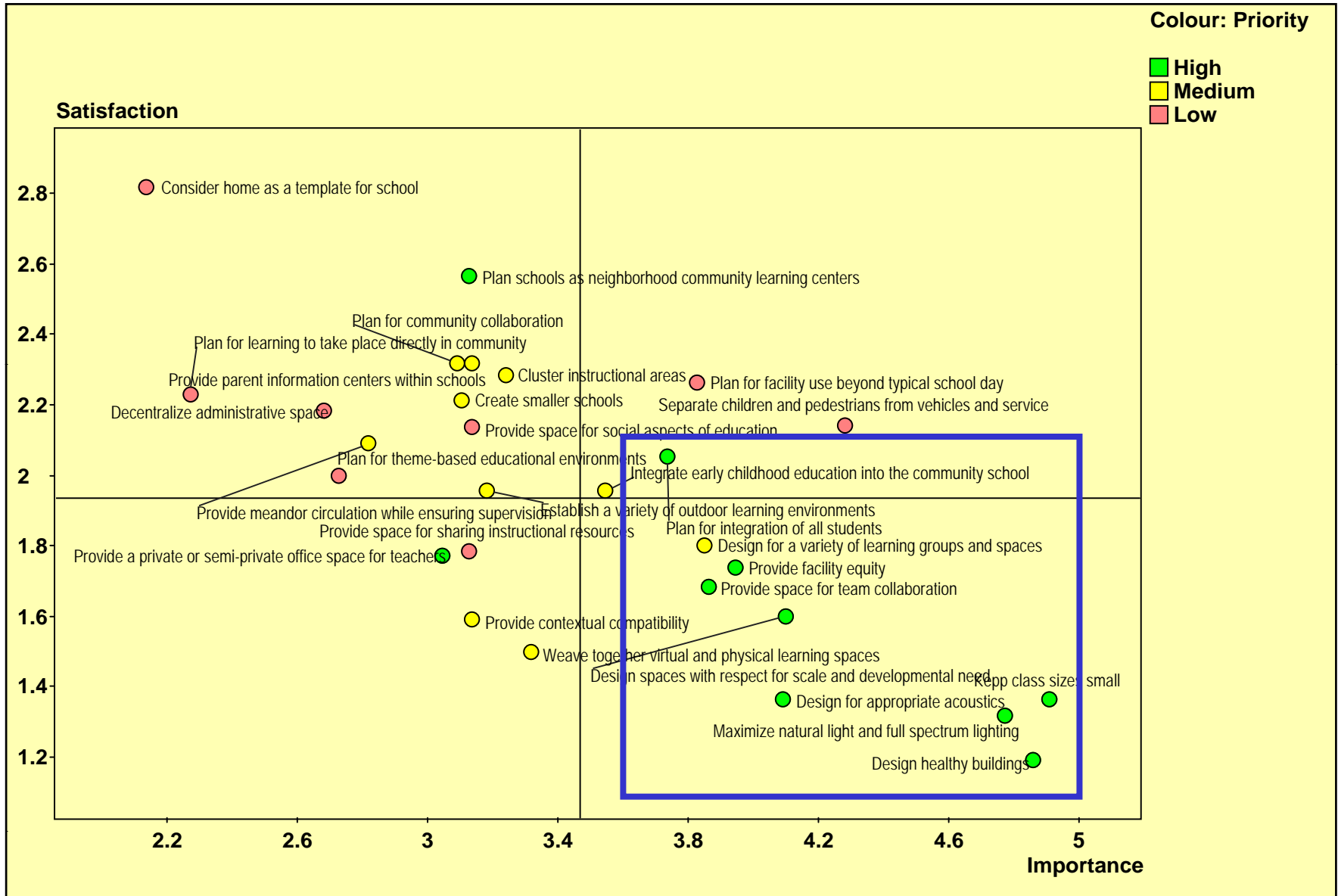
*What would you change about your school if starting from scratch?*

- Better transportation and parking
- More variety of cafeteria food
- Correct poor lighting
- Want same, equitable school offerings and services - now different offerings at different schools
- Smart (website) filter technology not flexible or accessible; sites blocked
- Poor ventilation in classrooms
- Windows
- Student lounge area
- Longer lunch time
- Better lab facilities in science classrooms

# **Educational Needs Analysis**

**Evaluation of education-oriented facility needs  
based on importance and current satisfaction**

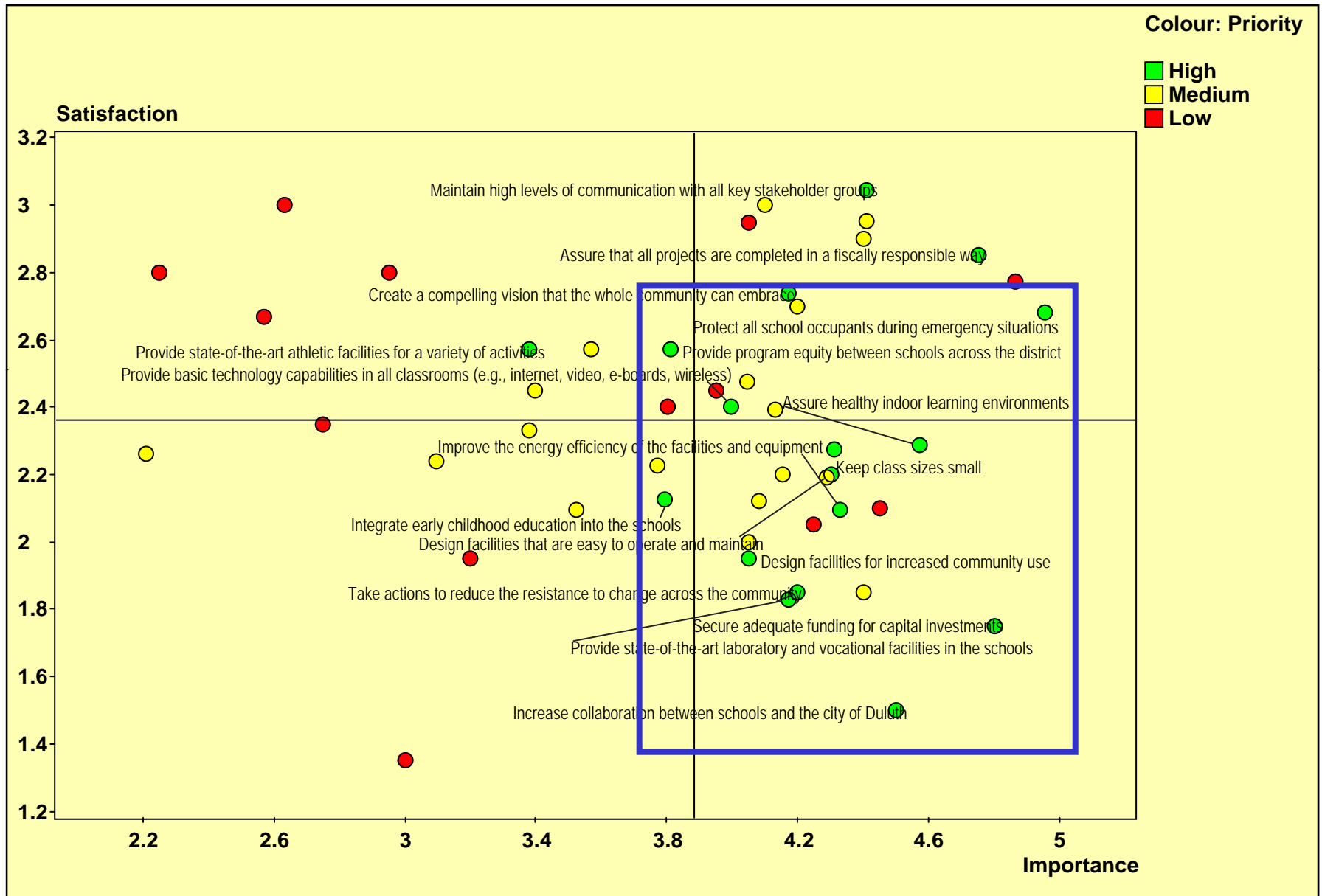
# Teacher's Session - Educational Needs Analysis



# **Community Needs Analysis**

**Evaluation of facility-related community needs  
based on importance and current satisfaction**

# Citizen's Group – Community Needs



# Critical Needs – The Right Things...

- Protect the health and safety of students and staff
  - Protect all school occupants during emergency situations
  - Assure healthy indoor learning environments
  - Comply with all applicable codes and regulations
- Provide high performance learning environments
  - Keep class sizes small
  - Provide state-of-the-art laboratory and vocational facilities in the schools
  - Provide basic technology capabilities in all classrooms (e.g., internet, video, e-boards, wireless)
  - Provide state-of-the-art athletic facilities for a variety of activities
- Improve facility infrastructure
  - Design facilities that are easy to operate and maintain
  - Improve the energy efficiency of the facilities and equipment
  - Provide flexibility to easily update technology in the future
  - Improve the reliability of technology systems and infrastructure
  - Design facilities that can be easily modified and/or expanded in the future

# Critical Needs – The Right Reasons...

- Increase community usage and collaboration
  - Increase collaboration between schools and the city of Duluth
  - Design facilities for increased community use
  - Integrate early childhood education into the schools
  - Increase collaboration between schools and community organizations/businesses
  - Include community services in each school (e.g., fitness center, clinic, library)
- Provide facilities that address the needs of all students
  - Provide adequate building access to students with special needs
  - Design all learning spaces for integration of students with special needs
  - Design facilities to respond to a variety of learning styles/approaches
  - Support the increased use of assistive technology in the classroom
- Provide facility and educational equity across the district
  - Provide program equity between schools across the district
  - Locate schools in a manner that encourages diversity and integration
  - Assure adequate input from under represented community groups
  - Assure that all facility decisions are made in a fair/equitable manner

# Critical Needs – The Right Way...

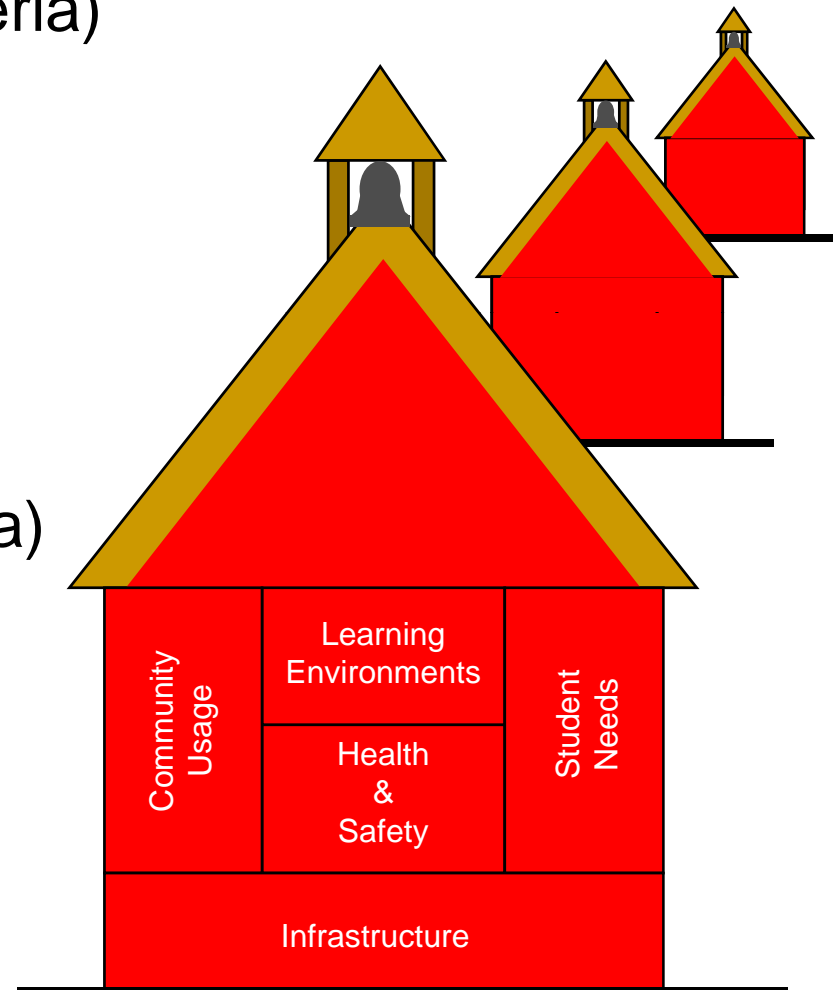
- Maintain effective financial stewardship
  - Assure that all projects are completed in a fiscally responsible way
  - Secure adequate funding for capital investments
  - Assure high levels of facility performance after construction/renovation
  - Complete facility projects on budget/schedule
- Secure high levels of community support
  - Create a compelling vision that the whole community can embrace
  - Maintain high levels of communication with all key stakeholder groups
  - Increase community acceptance of change across the district

# **Strategic Planning Criteria**

**Development of preliminary facility-level and district-level planning criteria based on key objectives and critical needs**

# Preliminary Strategic Planning Criteria

- Facility-Level (Evaluation Criteria)
  - Learning Environments
  - Health and Safety
  - Facility Infrastructure
  - Community Usage
  - Student Needs
- District-Level (Decision Criteria)
  - Facility and Educational Equity
  - Financial Stewardship
  - Community Support



# Preliminary Facility-Level Evaluation Criteria

## ***Learning Environments***

### Classroom

- Size, environmental control, storage, lockers

### Learning Aids & Technology

- PCs, TVs, projectors, whiteboards, e-boards, electrical outlets, distance learning

### Spatial Relationships

- Core centralization, circulation, way-finding, signage

### Program Support

- General ed. classrooms, labs, vocational, athletics, music, art, FACS, media, team collaboration areas, work prep areas
- Special Ed., Title One, Gifted & Talented, ECFE, All Day Kindergarten

### Building Capacity

- Programs, administration, support, restrooms, dining, food prep

## ***Student Needs***

- Special Education
- Gifted & Talented Program
- Early Childhood
- Community Education

## ***Health & Safety***

### Site Level

- Visibility from street, neighboring homes & businesses, lighting
- Fenced playgrounds with visual observation & safe equipment
- Safe vehicle operation: drop-offs, bus loading, student crossings

### Building Level

- Designated visitor entrance with controlled locking for all doors
- Electronic access control & CCTV monitoring systems
- Student circulation space with adequate supervision
- Code compliance
- Life safety systems
- Indoor air quality

### Room Level

- Lockable doors with view panels
- Communication system
- Natural day-lighting
- Acoustics

## ***Facility Infrastructure***

### Grounds

- Lots/walks/fields, parking & playground capacity

### Envelope

- Walls, roofing, windows, doors

### Interiors

- Walls, flooring, ceilings, doors, casework

### Mechanical

- Ventilation, heating, cooling, plumbing, comfort, energy efficiency

### Electrical

- Lighting, power, energy efficiency

### Technology

- LAN/WAN, communications

## ***Community Use***

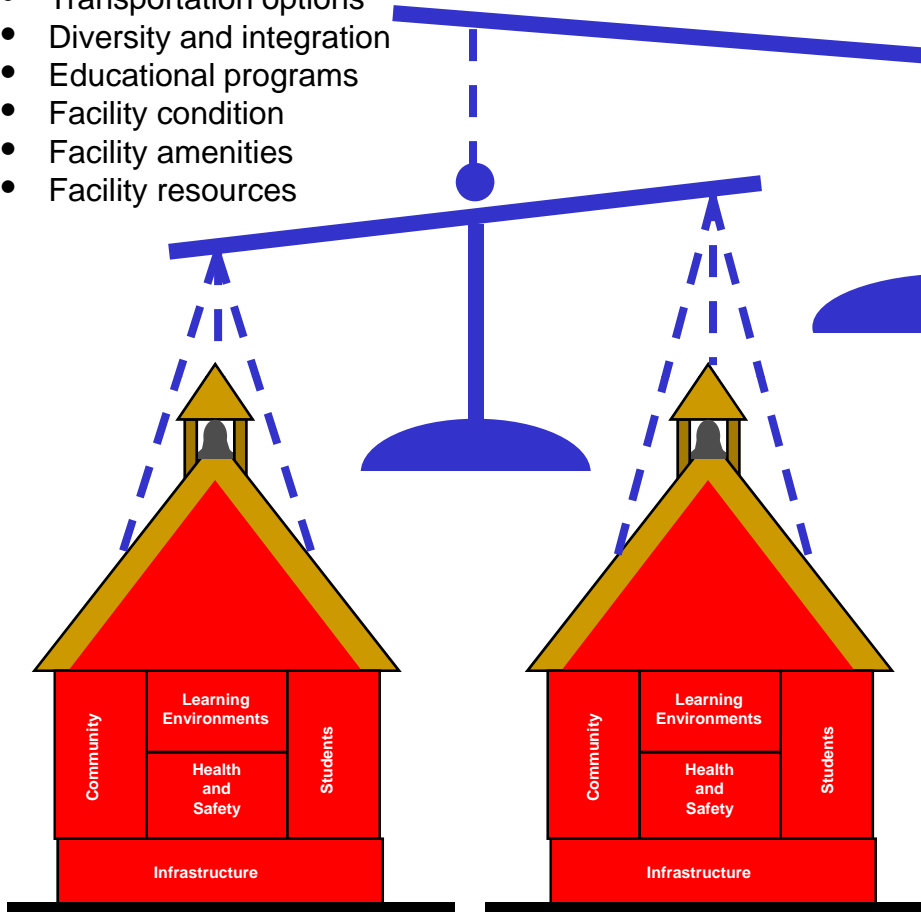
- Pre-school and latchkey children
- Daycare and counseling
- Health services
- Community sports and recreation
- Cultural art and exhibitions
- Civic and private organization meetings
- Adult education
- Wellness centers
- Library and media center
- Vocational & technical education

# Preliminary District-Level Decision Criteria

## Facility & Educational Equity

- Neighborhood proximity
- Transportation options
- Diversity and integration
- Educational programs
- Facility condition
- Facility amenities
- Facility resources

## Community Support



## Financial Stewardship

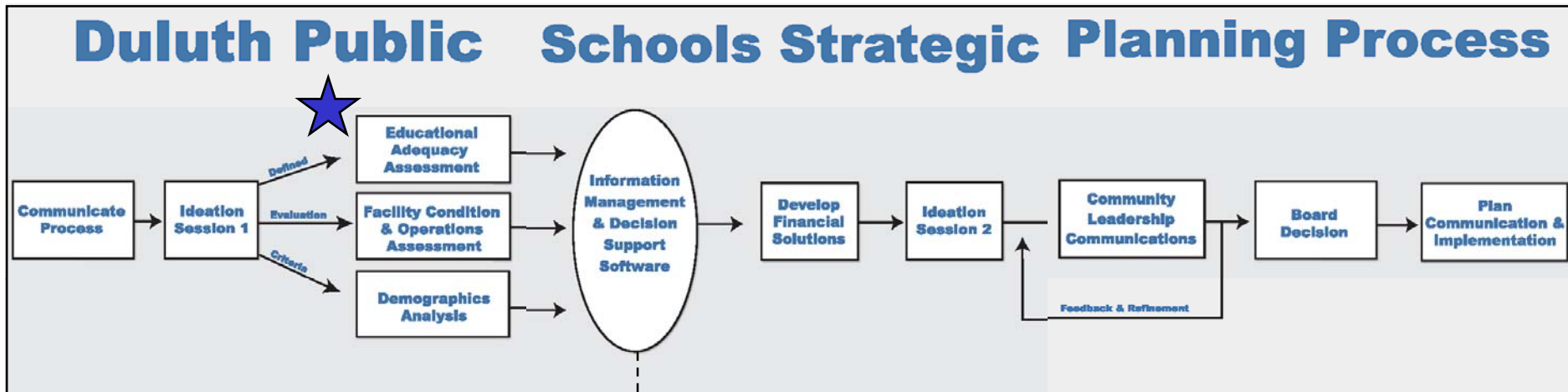
- Operating costs
- Transportation costs
- Staffing & administration costs
- Capital improvement costs
- Future expansion costs
- Acquisition & disposition
- Life cycle cost analysis
- Funding sources



**Facility & Educational Equity**

**Financial Stewardship**

# Strategic Facilities Planning Process – Next Steps



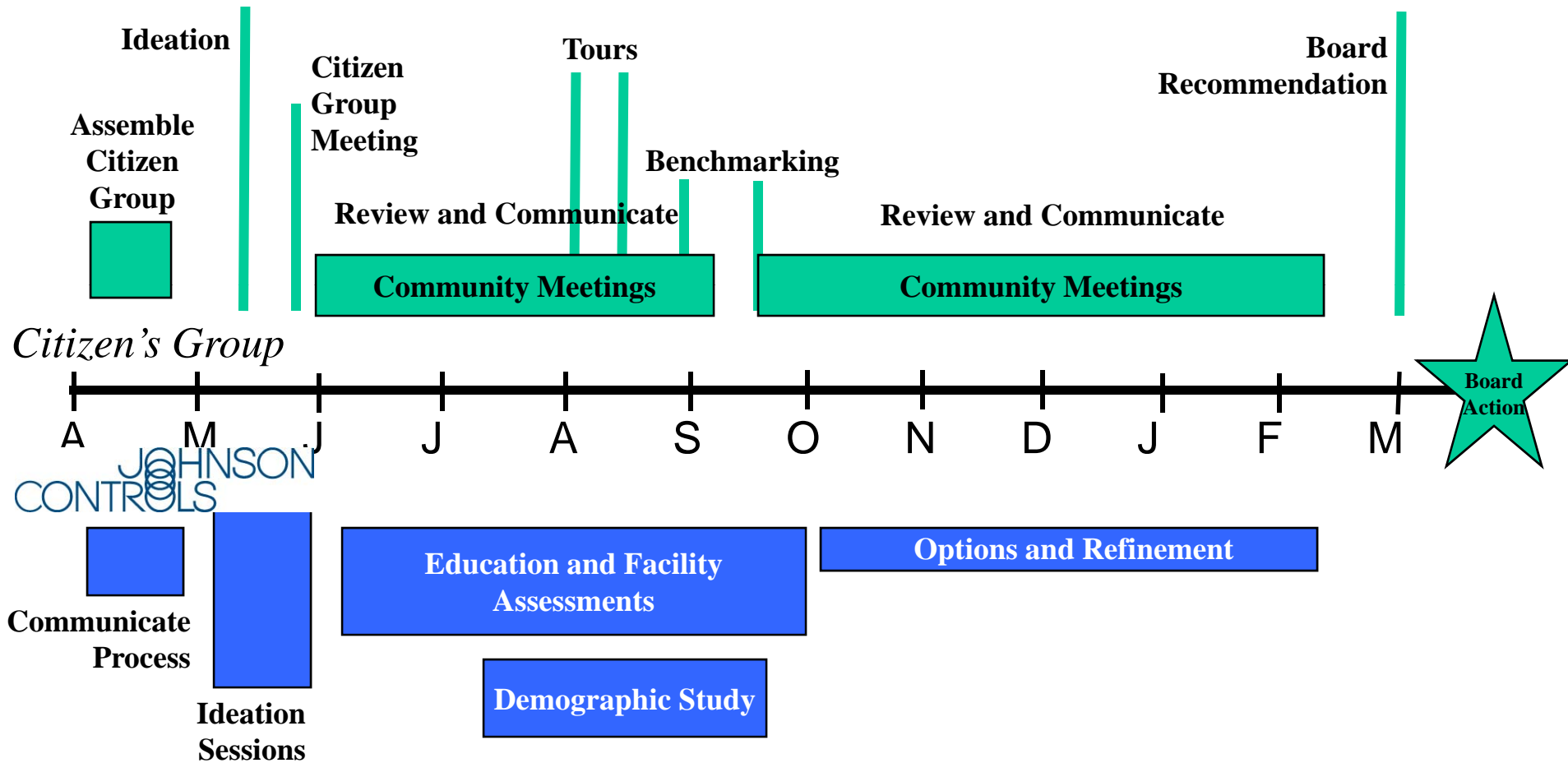
## Evaluation Criteria

- Learning Environments
- Health and Safety
- Facility Infrastructure
- Community Usage
- Student Needs

## Decision Criteria

- Facility and Educational Equity
- Financial Stewardship
- Community Support

# Strategic Facilities Planning Timeline



**Questions?**

**Thank You!**