SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY
at the Rhode Island Department of Education

SCHOOL COST **ANALYSIS**

October 2026

School Cost

For the RIDE school facilities assessments, project costs per square foot were developed based ona review of a variety of school project cost data from completed Rhode Island projects, similar Massachusetts and Connecticut K-12 schools, and national square foot school cost publications. As the determination of a single square foot cost for each school type is variable, due to its location geographically (suburbs versus city), varying site conditions, un-predictable economic influences, etc., the square foot costs reflect total project costs per square foot for the representative school type.

COST PER SQUARE FOOT

The total project square foot costs assumed 2026 economics and a hard bid (lump sum) environment. Focused on the low bidder's bid, these costs include a 20% allowance for all project soft costs and are in line with RIDE School Construction Regulations (5/24/07) regarding eligible project costs:

- Elementary School: $610/sf
- Middle School: $640/sf
- High School: $680/sf

COST PER STUDENT

Combining furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E), and technology (IT) into one total budget provides the most flexibility to each district. The FF&E and IT allowances assumes an ES of 75,000 sf with 350 students; a MS of 120,000 sf with 675 students; and a HS of 175,000 sf with 890 students. The following per student budgets for FF&E and IT budgets are:

- FF&E: $2,270 /student
- IT: $3,230/student