

# **Saving Manchester's Schools**

## **Innovating through Choice**

Richard H. Girard, Candidate for Mayor, May 13, 2021

# Introduction

## What this is all about

- Schools are important to the city and they need to be saved
  - Parents have lost confidence
  - Taxpayers have lost patience
  - Manchester has lost families
  - More of the same “with more money” isn’t going to work
  - Leadership is lacking
  - The status quo has got to go

# **Before a Problem can be Solved**

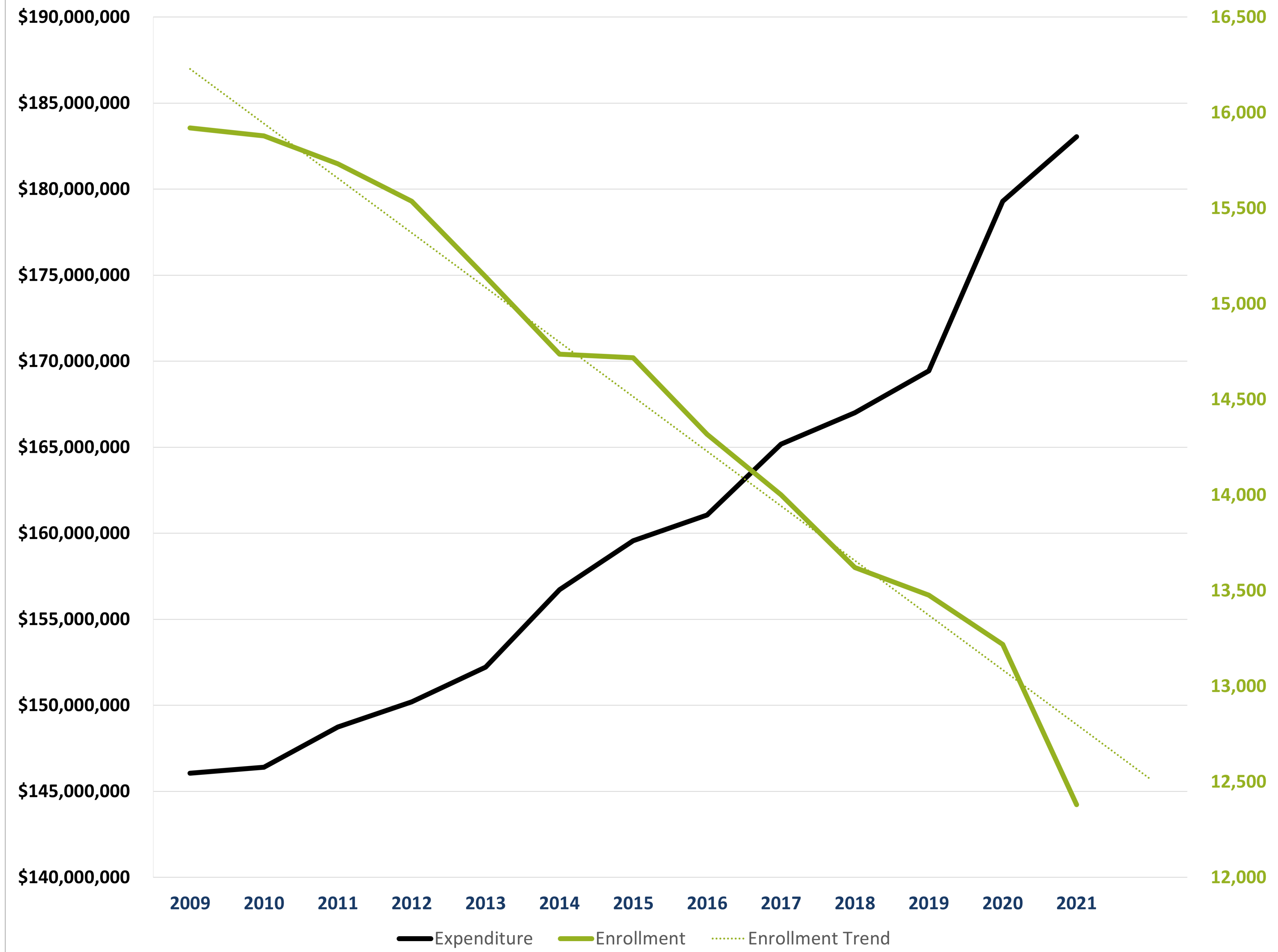
**It has to be identified and understood**

- Enrollment is down 28% since the 2006-2007 school year (~4,500 students)
- Tuition towns have left (responsible for about 42% of enrollment decline)
- Almost 3,000 Manchester children are learning in non-Manchester schools
- More alternative schooling options are in the works
- Educational Mobility “is a thing”
- These are all symptoms that Manchester’s schools are failing families

**A Nightmare that Needs Leadership from Elm Street**

**As enrollment has dropped,  
total school spending  
has soared**

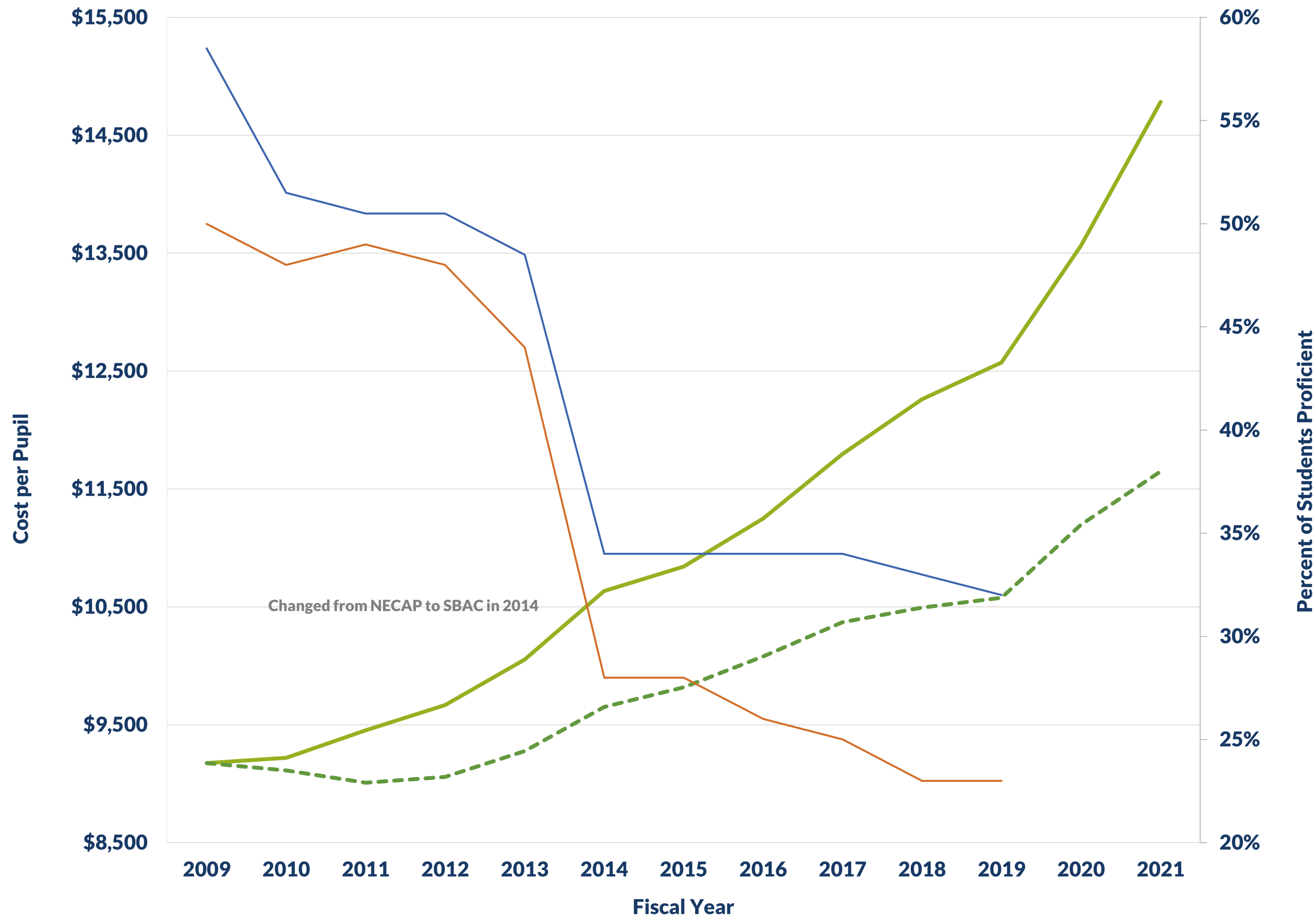
MSD Expenditure vs. Enrollment 2009-2021



**A Nightmare that Needs Leadership from Elm Street**

**As test scores have cratered,  
per pupil spending has  
skyrocketed**

# MSD Expenditure vs. Proficiency 2009-2021



— Cost per Pupil    - - - Cost per Pupil (inflation-adjusted)    — Pct Math Proficient    — Pct ELA Proficient

Cost-per-pupil increased 61% over the period, 29% above the rate of inflation. Expenditures represent city portion only, which excludes federal subsidies. Years are fiscal budget years for expenditure and school years for proficiency. Assessment data not available for 2020 (COVID) or 2021. Attendance figures are Average Daily Membership (ADM) from state DOE. Sharp drop in proficiency in 2014 reflects change from New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) to Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

**Taxpayers are taking a big hit**

**They actually pay MORE of  
their income for schools than  
those in other communities  
and get worse results**



Household Median Income  
(taken from the NH Employment Security website – [nhes.nh.gov](https://nhes.nh.gov) – Community Profiles)  
Facts pulled from the website 2/25/21

City/Town	Median Household Income	Per Pupil Expenditure	% of Median Household Inc spent Per Pupil	% of All Students Achieving Proficiency in Math/Reading in 2019
Manchester	\$60,711.00	\$12,434.00	20.00%	24/44
Dover	\$71,631.00	\$12,994.00	18.00%	44/56
Nashua	\$74,995.00	\$13,831.00	18.00%	39/46
<u>Derry</u> **	\$76,536.00	\$16,121.00	21.00%	48/51
<u>Hooksett</u> **	\$84,568.00	\$15,744.00	19.00%	55/57
<u>Candia</u> *	\$100,904.00	\$18,304.00	18.00%	55/60
<u>Pelham</u>	\$106,686.00	\$14,685.00	14.00%	45/53
Merrimack	\$107,232.00	\$16,948.00	16.00%	55/57
<u>Londonderry</u>	\$107,868.00	\$17,567.00	16.00%	50/63
Auburn*	\$115,089.00	\$11,910.00	10.00%	64/64
<u>Bedford</u>	\$135,021.00	\$14,265.00	11.00%	78/79
<u>Windham</u>	\$148,459.00	\$15,363.00	10.00%	75/76

\* denotes a town with only an elementary school \*\*denotes a town with only an elementary and a middle school

Per Pupil Expenditure

NH Department of Education

<https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sorh/costperpupil2019-20web.pdf>

\*Note- these Per Pupil figures do NOT include costs of tuition paid to other schools, revenues of sales of lunches, or transportation. If all expenditures were to be included, it would raise the average cost per pupil at the state level from \$16,824 to \$19,874. That's a difference of \$3,050. You can add that amount to each of the towns above to get closer to the amount the taxpayers are actually spending per pupil.

# **The Solution:**

## **Innovation brought about by choice**

- Choice exists in education
  - Manchester families are choosing to move to other communities or
  - Choosing among the many and growing number of alternative schooling options
- Choice (Very Limited) already exists within the Manchester School District
  - No Child Left Behind
  - Manchester School of Technology High School
  - West STEAM Ahead, NJROTC

# **The Solution:**

## **The Manchester Educational Marketplace**

- Eliminate attendance districts
- Enable individual schools to create options for families
  - Personalized Learning
- Families choose options for their child(ren)
  - Across the street or across the city
- Money follows the child(ren)
- Flexibility and Incentives
- District “strive for sameness,” top down dictates

# **The Solution:**

## **Why it will work**

- Engages educators at the building level to create options
- Removes district/board from choosing schools as program sites
- Engages parents who have important choices and can leave if unsatisfied
  - This is how it works in public charter, Catholic and private schools—important
- Reduces transiency
- Enables direct partnership between schools, businesses, colleges, other...
- HB 609—Innovation schools and zones
- Individual schools can compete where district cannot, unlimited options to create!

# **The Solution:**

## **An Interesting Option already in NH Law**

- Local school boards can create public charter schools
- Existing schools may be converted or new charter schools may be formed by
  - A nonprofit organization including, but not limited to, a college, university, museum, service club, or similar entity;
  - A group of 2 or more teachers certified by NH; or
  - A group of 10 or more parents
- Locally chartered schools are funded by the district and subject to the school board
- More than \$40 million in federal grants that can be used to open new public charter schools

# **Getting Started**

## **Elect Rich Girard Mayor! :D**

- Many variables to address, i.e., transportation and special ed.
- Assemble team no later than Inauguration Day, 2022 to develop MEM specifics
  - Parents, experts, community, stakeholders
- Provide flexibility needed to innovate and create better educational opportunities
- Direct participation in creation of alternatives better aligns resources to outcomes and provides accountability for results
- More families and businesses will choose Manchester and its schools, bringing more enrollment, direct investment, state and federal funding to ease burden on taxpayers

# **Saving our Schools and City**

**That's what this is about!**

This is about creating new and better options for families that provide them with the personalized learning options they need and want and that our children deserve. If we do this, I believe families will choose Manchester because of the quality options its schools provide and we will revive and rescue our public school system and the city will thrive because of it!