



**MIDDLETOWN**  
Rhode Island

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### **NEW SCHOOL PROJECT OFFICIALLY UNDERWAY**

MIDDLETOWN, RI (JUNE 9, 2025) – Monday morning was a day to remember for the Middletown school system — and the entire community.

Students, educators and everyday folks came together with dignitaries from across Middletown — and all of Rhode Island — to celebrate the official groundbreaking for the new Middletown Middle High School.

The ceremony was on open field located within a stone's throw from the Gaudet Middle School under cloudy skies, drawing more than 100 people, most with obvious smiles and excitement.

It wasn't lost on anyone in attendance the day was a celebration of a new chapter for the schools in Middletown's continued push to increase the standards, rigor and accessibility of its educational system.

"I don't think there's any question this is a very special day," Superintendent Billy Niemeyer said. "None of us would be here without all of us pulling together for a common goal. That's how we move the ball forward, by working as one to make our community the best it can be."



Once the new school is finished at 1225 Aquidneck Ave., it will be state of the art and the first middle high school of its kind for Rhode Island, minus a joint middle high school in Scituate.

When the new 211,000-square-foot building is done, grades 6-8 will go to classes in one wing of the school, with grades 9-12 in another completely separate section. The middle and high school students will share certain amenities, but not ever be in the same spaces at the same time.

Designed for close to 1,100 students, the new school features 38 classrooms as well as seven teacher planning rooms. There will also be 12 science labs, two Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) labs and nine Career & Technical Education (CTE) spaces along with three dedicated art rooms and four music rooms.

That doesn't include the 15,700 square feet of physical education space, a state-of-the-art fully adjustable auditorium and other amenities designed to provide a safe, modern and welcoming learning environment special and unique to Middletown.

"Some people doubted that this day would ever come," School Committee Chair Greg Huet said. "We knew we needed to do something different and we're taking our initial steps to get there. Nothing good happens overnight, but people are already seeing the untapped potential."

"The schools we visited in Saugus and Weymouth, Massachusetts a couple years ago were the model," Town Council President Paul M. Rodrigues said. "They truly opened my eyes to what we need to be offering our students and educators now and into the future. They were welcoming, dynamic learning spaces and it really struck home that we had to do better when you look at our facilities. Anyone who thinks environment doesn't matter should see those schools."

School Building Committee Chair Ed Brady thanked each member of the volunteer group leading the project by name, saying their foresight, commitment and drive were unmatched.

The Building Committee has held more than 140 public meetings to go through every aspect of the project since the effort started to make sure everything was done once and done right.

He also applauded the work of Colliers Project Leaders of Providence, which serves as the project manager as well as construction manager Gilbane of Providence. HMFH of Cambridge, Massachusetts





teamed with DBVW Architects of Providence as the project architects.

“Over the years, I’ve worked on a number of projects like this,” Brady said. “I can say without fail this is the most vetted school building I’ve ever been involved with and maybe anywhere in the state of Rhode Island. This is a huge project for the town, maybe our biggest ever and that’s a commitment we don’t take lightly.”

Town Administrator Shawn J. Brown said it was rewarding to see the groundbreaking come together, a symbol of all the hours and energy poured into the project to date. Repeating a theme touched on by others, Brown said the new school was an important component of a concerted effort to remake the district.

As part of that plan, the Middletown High School building at 130 Valley Road will be transformed into a grade 2-5 learning center along with new offices for school administration and maintenance staff.

At the Forest Avenue School around the corner, that building will become a prekindergarten through first grade early childhood academy. There is also talk of making the Aquidneck School on Reservoir Road into a community center, a first for the town.

Teachers and educators worked with project leaders throughout the planning and design process in hands-on workgroups to provide feedback on what types of learning spaces would best work in Middletown now and into the future.

Brown said having Shared Facilities Director Ed Collins on board was an important move, allowing all town and school buildings to be managed, maintained and improved under one office.

“There’s a lot happening in Middletown right now,” Brown said. “People have said it to me and it’s true. It’s great to see the new school project come together knowing all the work locally and on the state level that’s gone into this. We can’t thank everyone enough for their support and it goes without saying that we would never be here today if it wasn’t for RIDE (the Rhode Island Department of Education) and the Governor’s office. Their assistance has been invaluable to Middletown.”



Middletown High Principal Donna Sweet and Gaudet Middle School Principal Jerry Haas said Monday’s ceremony and all the momentum that comes with it were important to recognize for the district.

“I am looking forward to the potential collaboration between the middle school and high school students,” Sweet said. “We can share spaces and resources more effectively and bring our resources together in the arts and STEM, for example, we then have robust learning and performance events. I have enjoyed how resourceful our high schools students are and when our middle school students can visit our learning spaces more easily and we can have upper class students model successful learning, all students benefit.”

“This is such an exciting day for Middletown,” Haas said. “Our students will have a world-class educational environment at the completion of this project. It is truly special to see the community coming together to make this happen.”

Site work began on June 2. The project is designed so there will be no interruptions for normal operations for students and staff at Gaudet and the Gaudet Learning Academy.

Building work is generally slated for weekdays from 7 am-4 pm and Saturdays on an as needed basis.

All construction vehicles will use the former Starlight Drive-In driveway across from Park Drive so school traffic wasn’t impacted. Visit <https://mdl.town/NYCU-Plan> for more details.



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Governor Dan McKee, RIDE Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green, State Senator Lou DiPalma and others on hand said they couldn't help but be impressed.

"My administration's RI 2030 plan has a vision for our state, and that includes modern, engaging learning environments for our kids," McKee said. "If we are going to compete academically with Massachusetts, we need buildings like this one in Middletown — a school with state-of-the art technology and classroom spaces that support 21st century educational needs."

**Document Link: <https://mdl.town/NYCU-Celebration>**

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**About Middletown**

The Town of Middletown is a vibrant municipality located on Aquidneck Island, known for its scenic beauty, historic landmarks, diverse economy and strong sense of community. For more information about all we have to offer, visit [MiddletownRI.gov](http://MiddletownRI.gov) online.

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