

# High School Options

After reviewing 12 conceptual options for serving the district's high schools, the Collaborative System of Schools Study Group recommended three options and one non-option. The Visioning Committee members reviewed and revised the options. In prioritizing the three options, the committee members overwhelmingly recommend Option 1 as the best plan for the Path to 2025.

## **Option 1 – Three Professional Pathway Academy High Schools**

## **Option 2 - Two Small Learning Community High Schools and One Professional Pathway Academy High School**

## **Option 3 - Three Different High Schools**

A set of annotated drawings describe the models that appear in each of the options. Each option is described by a map of the district with the models describing the instructional concepts for each school. The models in each option are keyed by bold black letters (A-D) on the maps. Each option includes a brief description, a list of attributes of the option, pros and cons, and references to the Findings and Directions.

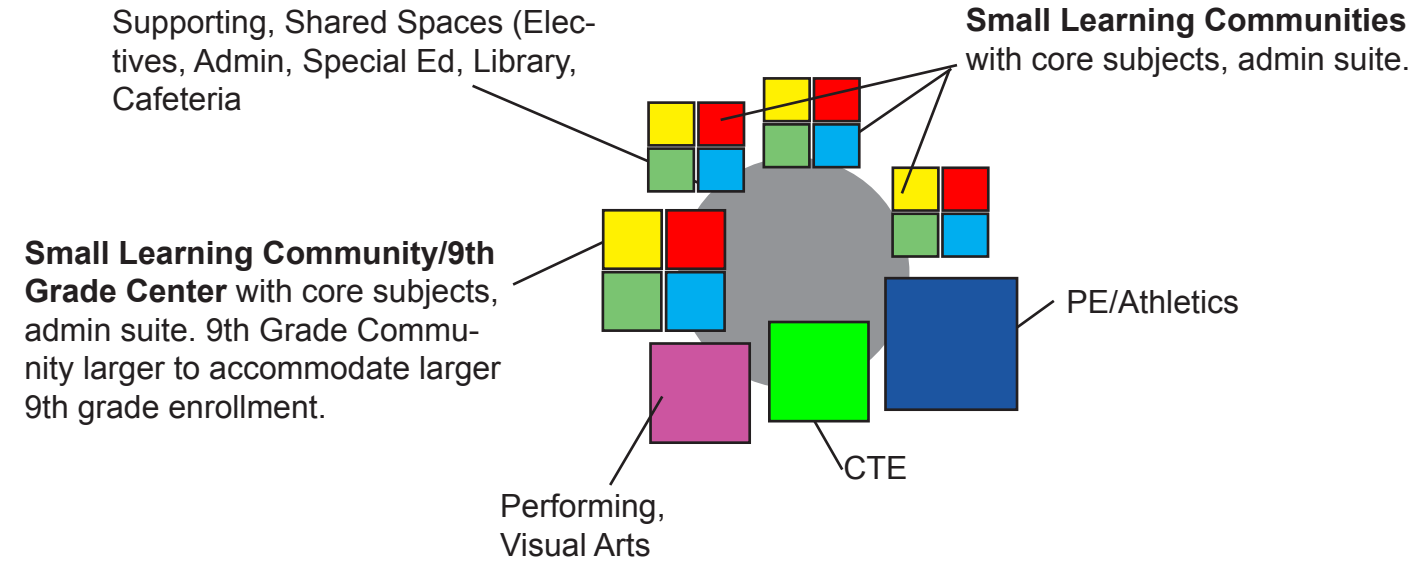
The Visioning Committee believes that having only two high schools in the district is not a plan that should be considered. Included, following the description of the recommendations, are the thoughts of the committee about “Why Not 2 Schools?”



# A Small Learning Communities

## Core subjects only, 9th Grade House, 3-10-12 Houses

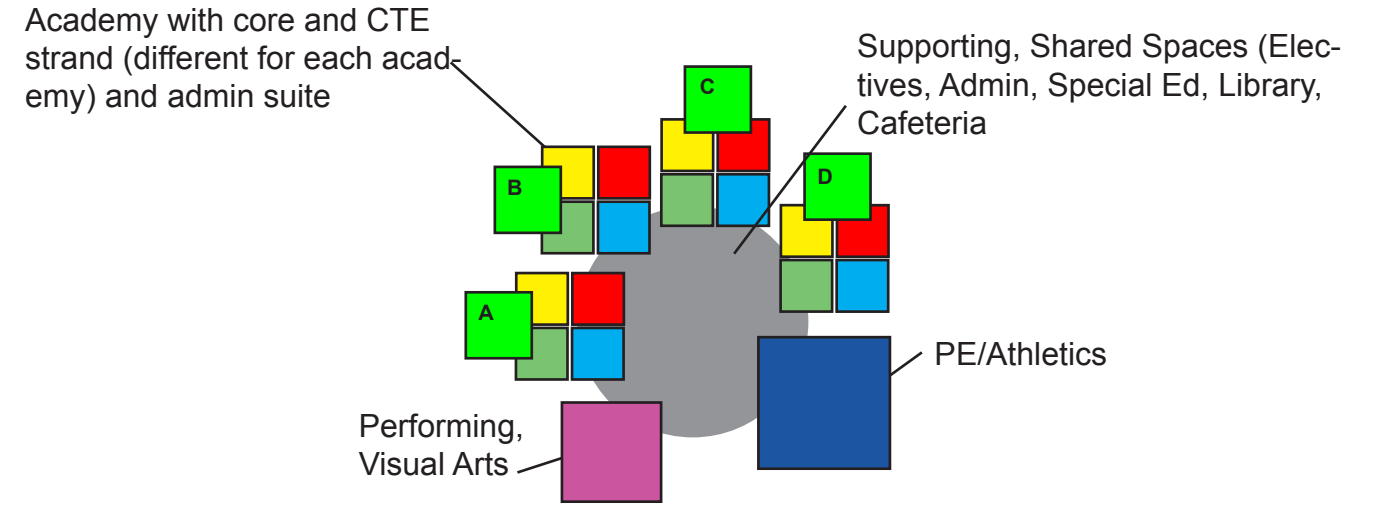
1200 Students



**Option 2**

# B Academies (Integrated core + Professional pathways subjects) with performing & visual arts separate

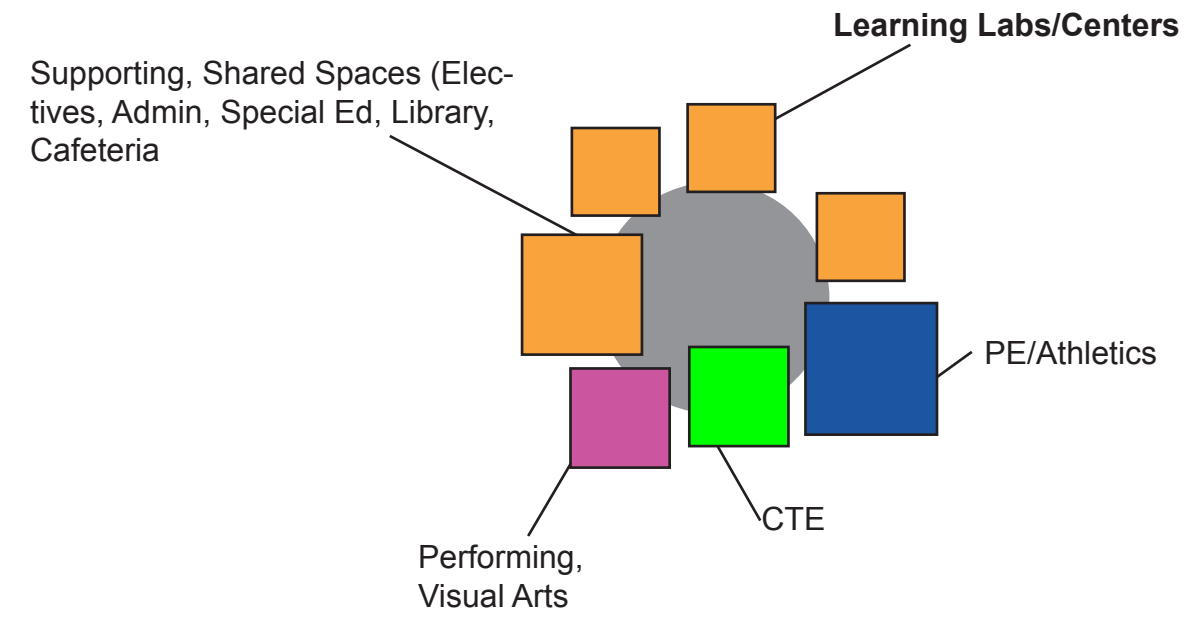
1200 Students



**Options 1 and 3**

# C Learning Labs/Centers

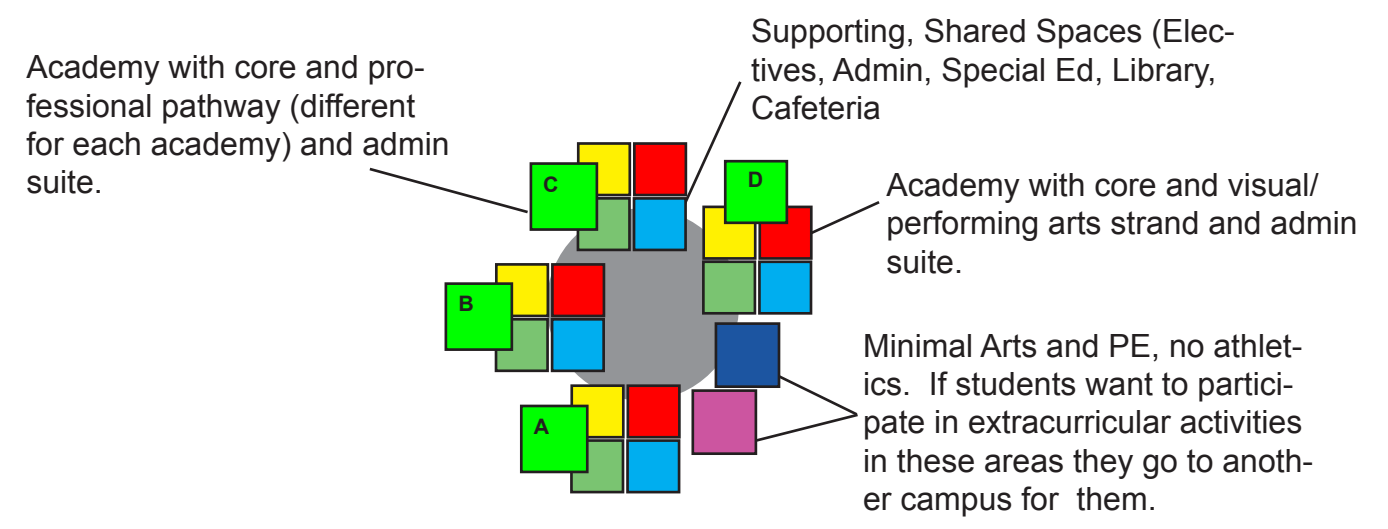
1200 Students



**Option 3**

# D Academies (Integrated core + Professional pathways subjects)

1200 Students



**Option 2**

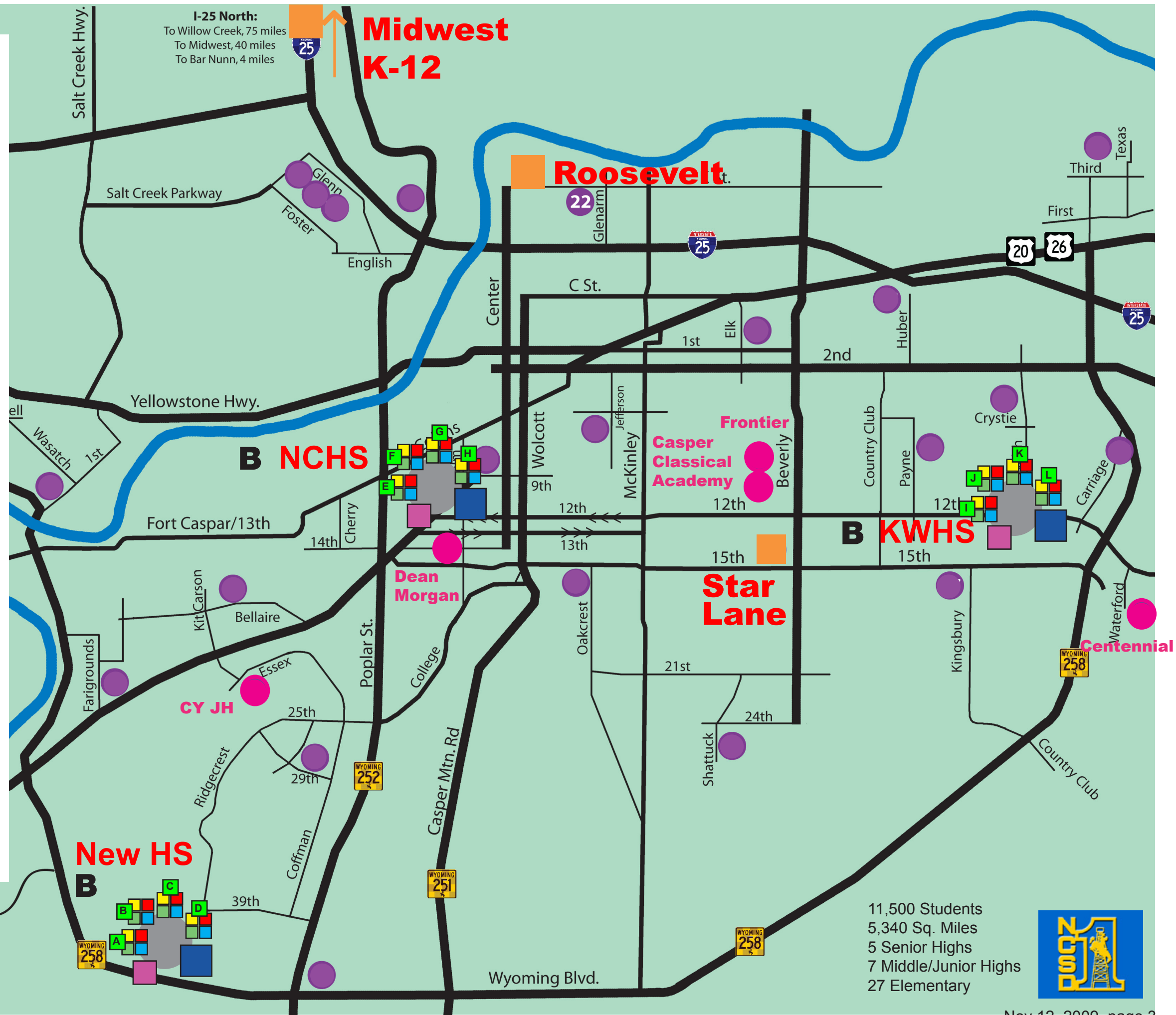
# 1

## Three Professional Pathway Academy High Schools

The district will consist of three high schools, each of which would serve approximately 1200 9th – 12th grade students. Each school could be organized around professional pathway academies. Each school would offer three to four pathways, and each pathway academy would serve up to 300-400 students. Core academic instruction would be integrated with the professional pathway instruction. The option is available for one of the pathways to be a general studies pathway. The types and location of the professional pathways will be considered at the district level to assure that collectively, the high schools function as a “collaborative system of schools.”

Additionally,

- Each school would have full athletic programs, but the new high school could consider non-traditional athletics or wellness opportunities.
- AP and dual enrollment offerings at all schools.
- All schools will have 9th grade houses.
- There would be no attendance zones. Students would choose the school based on academic interests.
- Students would have opportunities to move between academies.
- Each professional pathway academy would be a different strand of study.
- Professional pathway academies could be repeated at more than one school if student interest exceeded the maximum allowed in an academy.
- The new high school will be designed, and NCHS and KWHS would be reorganized and renovated, to create professional pathway academies.
- All three high schools will be degree granting schools.



11,500 Students  
5,340 Sq. Miles  
5 Senior Highs  
7 Middle/Junior Highs  
27 Elementary



# 1 Pros/Cons

## Pros

1. Provides multiple unique professional pathways
2. Multidisciplinary
3. Right size all schools to 1200
4. More chances for kids to participate in extracurricular activities.
5. Choice continues, (based on area of interest).
6. Strong link between school and community/businesses.
7. More opportunities to engage diverse students, reduce dropout rate.
8. Could have some general studies academies in the District without direct professional pathway links.
9. No duplication of programs.
10. Real world experiences for all students.
11. Relevance for all students.

## Cons

1. Less choice for traditional instruction
2. Diluting athletic talent pool and expense
3. Will require strong support from businesses
4. Could disrupt traditional student

# Findings/Direction

## Does Option 1 realize/adhere to Findings/Directions?

- 2.3.2** Learning will be engaging, relevant to diverse students.
- 2.5.1** Students will have wide range of choices in their learning paths.
- 2.5.2** Students will have wide range of opportunities to select topics and work on long-term interdisciplinary projects.
- 2.6.4** Teachers within academies will work collaboratively to support students.
- 2.6.5** Academies will afford teachers and students a broad range of opportunities to work collaboratively and to increase relevance.

- 3.1.1** Small academy communities will foster development of human relationships (adults/students).
- 7.1.1** Each campus would be organized about professional pathways academies. Provides more professional pathway choices than any other option.
- 13.2.1** All students on all 3 campuses would be organized in academies/small learning communities to foster relationships that support academic success.
- 13.2.2** Professional pathway/academy communities require, thrive upon relationships require/thrive upon relationships with the business community.
- 15.1.1** All three schools would comply with the IBAP recommendations regarding school size and grade configuration as well as Findings/Directions that high schools should serve grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment of 1,000-1,200 students.
- 15.3** The types and location of professional pathway/academy communities will be considered at the district level to assure that collectively, the high schools function as a “collaborative system of schools.”
- 16.1** By offering different professional pathway academies at each school and allowing school choice, there should be no duplication of resources and an increase in opportunities for students.
- 16.2** Each school would have different professional pathway academies, but all would seek comparable outcomes for students, and have the same extracurricular programs.

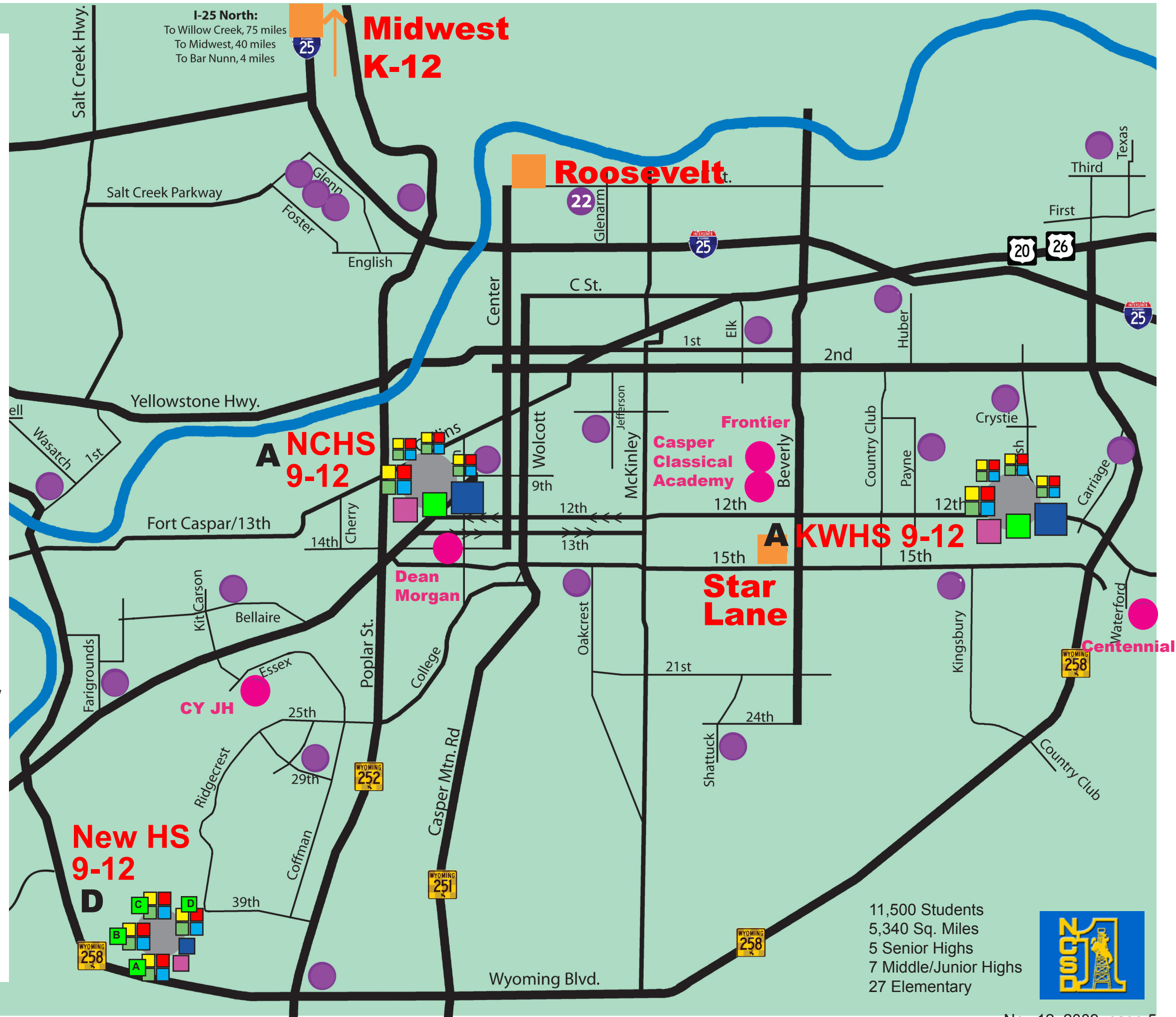
# 2

## Two Small Learning Community High Schools and One Professional Pathway Academy High School

The district will consist of three high schools, each of which would serve approximately 1200 9th-12th grade students. NCHS and KWHS would be organized around multidisciplinary, core academic small learning communities of up to 300-400 students each. The new high school would be organized around professional pathway academies of up to 300-400 students each. Core academic instruction would be integrated with the professional pathway instruction.

Additionally,

- NCHS and KWHS would have full athletic and extracurricular activity programs. Students at the new high school may participate in these programs at one of the other schools.
- AP and dual enrollment offerings at all schools.
- All schools will have 9th grade houses.
- There would be no attendance zones. Students would choose the school based on interest in professional pathways or interest in core academic small learning communities.
- Students would have opportunities to move between schools.
- Each professional pathway academy at the new high school would be a different strand of study.
- The new high school will be designed to create professional pathway academies.
- NCHS and KWHS would be reorganized and renovated, to create small learning communities.
- NCHS and KWHS will have general CTE and fine and performing arts programs. Specialized CTE and fine and performing arts programs will be offered as part of the professional pathways academies at the new high school.
- All three high schools will be degree granting schools.



# 2 Pros/Cons

## Pros

1. 9th Grade houses- aligned, structured environment
2. Continued to be linked to KWHS, NCHS
3. Still have the option of going to a core academic high school
4. Continued sports programs at KWHS, NCHS
5. KWHS, NCHS organized around small learning communities.
6. Real world experiences through the core integrated professional pathways.
7. Efficient and effective systems by not duplicating expensive programs.
8. Right size all schools to 1200 students

## Cons

1. Filling the new high school to 1200 students
2. Transportation between new and existing high schools
3. Scheduling of classes not offered @ new high school and having to go to KWHS or NCHS.

# Findings/Direction

## Does Option 2 realize/adhere to Findings/Directions?

- 2.3.2** With its professional pathway academies, studies in the new high school will be “student interest based”, but programs in the two existing high schools will not realize this Direction.
- 2.3.3** The professional pathway academies at the new high school will be engaging and relevant for students, but small learning community programs in the two existing high schools may not be as effective in realizing this Direction.
- 2.3.5** Learning communities of varied types at each of the existing and new schools will be created.

- 2.4.4** With their small learning communities or professional pathways academies, all three of the schools would encourage collaboration.
- 2.5.1** Students will have choices in their learning pathways at the new high school, but not at the other two which are to be organized around small learning communities.
- 2.5.2** Students will have opportunities to select topics and work on long-term interdisciplinary projects at all schools.
- 2.6.4** Teachers at all schools will work collaboratively to support students.
- 2.6.5** All schools will afford teachers and students a broad range of opportunities to work collaboratively and to increase relevance.
- 3.1.1** All schools will foster development of human relationships.
- 7.1** Only the new high school with its professional pathway academies will reflect the Finding to use “a professional pathways model for students to explore and focus on particular pathway options”.
- 13.2.1** Classes in all high schools will be organized in small learning communities which will foster relationships that support academic success.
- 13.2.2** With its professional pathway academies, the new high school will need to develop relationships “with the business community”, but this will not be essential to either of the other small learning community schools.
- 15.1.1** All schools will achieve the IBAP recommendation of 1200 students.
- 15.3** The diversity of choice between the three campuses related to their different approaches to instruction will require that they be planned and function as a “collaborative system of schools.”
- 16.1** The new high school will offer highly specialized and costly professional pathway courses, while the existing schools will retain more generalized

courses that may serve larger numbers of students. Considering the district as a whole, this should minimize the “duplication of resources and increase opportunities for students”.

- 16.2** The two existing schools would have similar/identical offerings and instructional methods. The new high school would offer different instructional methods.

# 3

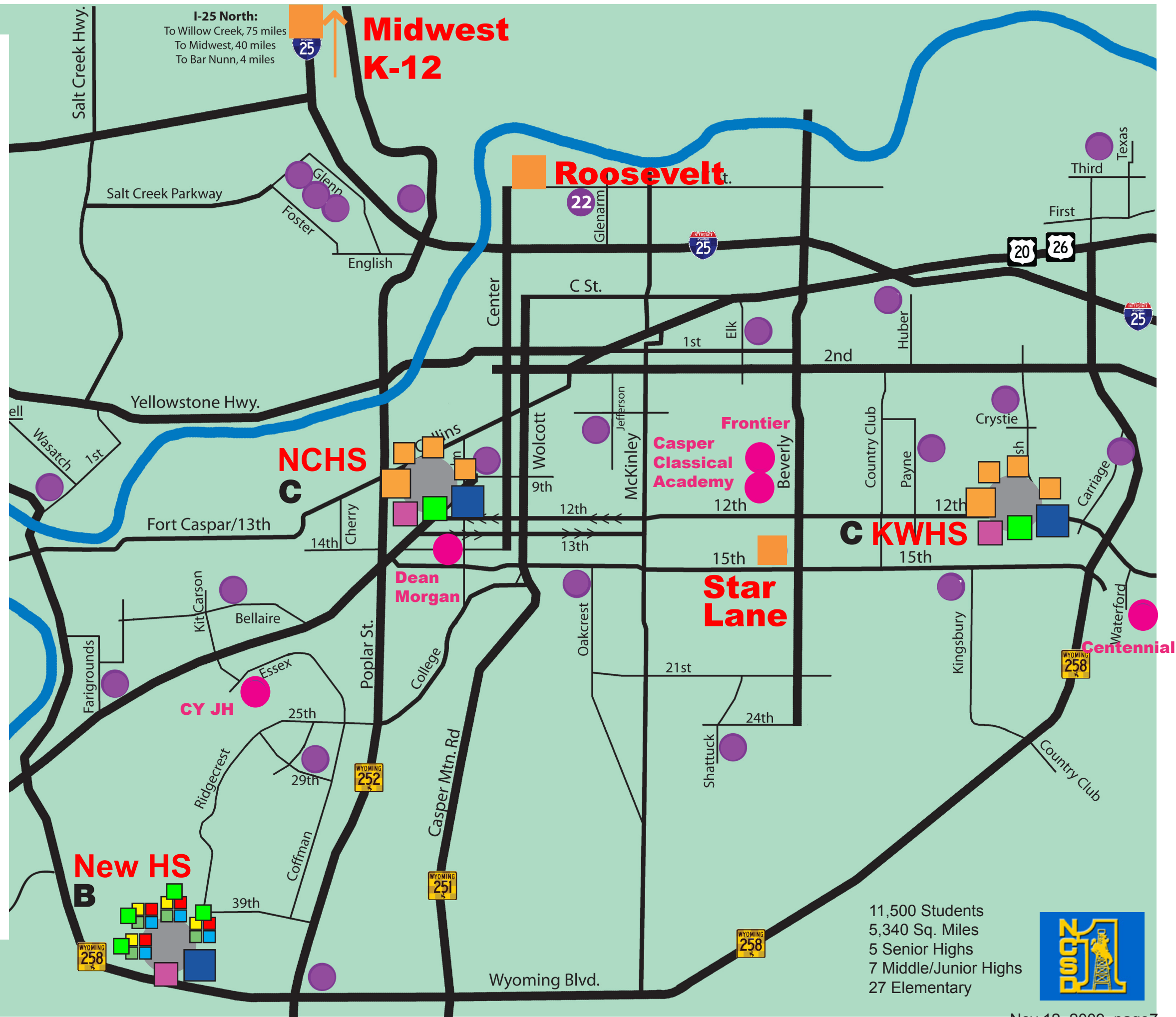
## Three Different High Schools

The district will consist of three high schools, each of which would serve approximately 1200 9th-12th grade students. Each school will be organized differently. The new high school would be organized around professional pathway academies of up to 300-400 students each. Core academic instruction would be integrated with the professional pathway instruction.

The two existing schools would be organized to provide different approaches to instruction and different programs. For example, one of the existing high schools might be organized around multidisciplinary, core academic small learning communities of up to 300-400 students each. The other school might be organized around learning labs for project based learning or learning centers that focus on multiple modes of instruction and flexible scheduling. None of the schools would be organized around departments.

Additionally,

- All three high schools would have athletic and extra-curricular activity programs but may offer different programs.
- AP and dual enrollment offerings at all schools.
- All schools will have 9th grade houses.
- There would be no attendance zones. Students would choose the school based on interest in the approach to instruction and different programs offered at each campus.
- Students would have opportunities to move between schools.
- Each professional pathway academy at the new high school would be a different strand of study.
- The new high school will be designed to create professional pathway academies.
- NCHS and KWHS would be reorganized and renovated, to accommodate the different approach and programs offered.
- NCHS and KWHS will have general CTE and fine and performing arts programs. Specialized CTE and fine and performing arts programs will be offered as part of the professional pathways academies at the new high school.
- All three high schools will be degree granting schools.



# 3 Pros/Cons

## Pros

1. 9th grade houses - aligned, structure & environment
2. True Choice--each school has discrete programs and approaches to instruction.
3. Right size all schools to 1200 students.
4. No duplication of programs.
5. More athletic opportunities for individual students
6. Most choices of instructional methods
7. Real world experiences through professional pathway high school

## Cons

1. Transportation between schools
2. Diluting athletic talent pool and expense.
3. Determining third model
4. Deciding where programs are offered

# Findings/Direction

## Does Option 3 realize/adhere to Findings/Directions?

- 2.5.1** Students will have choices in their learning pathways at the new high school. Students in other schools would not have choices in learning pathways.
- 2.5.2** Students will have opportunities to select topics and work on long-term interdisciplinary projects at the professional pathway/academy campus. Students may not have the same opportunity at other schools.
- 2.6.4** Teachers within the professional pathway/academies school and the small learning community school will work collaboratively to support students, but such collaboration could be significantly constrained depending on the third model.
- 2.6.5** Academies and small learning communities will afford teachers and students a broad range of opportunities to work collaboratively and to increase relevance.

**3.1.1** Professional pathway/academies and small learning communities will foster development of human relationships.

**7.1.1** Only one of the three high schools would reflect the Direction to “implement Professional Pathways and career academies at the high school level” if other schools are departmentalized and/or small learning communities.

**13.2.1** Two of the schools could comply with the direction that “classes will be organized in small learning communities”.

**13.2.2** Professional pathway/academy communities require, thrive upon relationships with the business community. The other two schools would not comply with this Direction.

**15.1.1** All three schools would comply with the Finding/Directions that high schools should serve grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment of 1,000-1,200 students.

**15.3** The diversity of choice between the three campuses related to their different approaches to instruction will require that they be planned and function as a “collaborative system of schools.”

**16.1** This option assumes that students will choose between schools based primarily on instructional methods vs. course offerings or extracurricular programs. There may be some duplication of resources and decrease in opportunities in these areas for students.

**16.2** Each school would employ different instructional methods, but all would seek comparable outcomes for students.

# Why Not Two High Schools?

Although the option of continuing to have two larger high schools was discussed at length by the Collaborative System of Schools Study Group and the Visioning Committee, they believe it is not an option that should be considered.

The committee believes that two larger high schools would result in too many students on each campus and that many of the Findings and Directions could not be realized. Existing sites make it difficult to renovate buildings to house programs and seats for that many students. Concern was raised that it would be difficult to develop relationships and provide relevance for all students which would make it difficult to see any improvement in the dropout rate and student success. Maintaining a two-high school district will make it difficult to implement any meaningful changes that will enhance any outcomes for students.

The concept of two larger high schools does not align with the previous IBAP space grade recommendations previously approved with determined high schools as grades 9-12 with 1000-1200 students maximum. A two high school system does not accomplish the Findings and Directions. Neither does such a system support high school best practices research around school size or align with the agreement with the School Facilities Commission.

Continuing to maintain a two-high school district is comfortable for those who like the “status quo,” however the phone survey conducted in the district indicated that 67% of the community members surveyed somewhat or strongly believe the district should build an additional high school.

While the Visioning Committee does not recommend a two high school model, the committee understands that political and financial influences may operate counter to their recommendation. Should the Board decide to continue a two-high school system (rather than add a third high school) the committee feels strongly that the learning platform within each school must change to meet the 21st century as outlined in the Findings and Directions.