

Community Conversation Executive Summary

On March 20, the district hosted a community conversation attended by approximately 120 participants, including parents, district residents, students and teachers. Following a presentation by Superintendent Corr, the participants engaged in small group discussions led by Capital Region BOCES communications specialists. District administrators and Board of Education members spent time listening to the conversations that took place in classrooms to gain insight into participants' thoughts and concerns regarding the two capital project options that are currently being considered. One of these two options will be adopted by the Board of Education on March 30, and a capital project referendum will be presented to voters on May 16.

The following questions were discussed by small groups during a 60-minute period:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?
- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

The complete report provides full facilitator notes from each of the 10 break-out groups. Rooms are labeled 1-10 to provide anonymity to individual attendees. Below is a summary of some of the key themes that consistently resulted from the discussions:

- Most participants expressed an understanding of the enrollment crunch the district is facing, but some remain skeptical of projections. Some voiced frustration over the influx of development in areas of Colonie that leaves the "school district caught in the middle." Participants say this forces the district to accommodate growth over which it has no control or say.
- More information on the financial impact of the project is necessary, including breakdown of costs by project components and explanation of how enhanced aid would factor into the overall cost.
- The district must do better at educating/informing/communicating with all members of the community about the project; and specifically, the reasons WHY it is necessary.
- Questions linger about turf field: the cost of maintaining it, the return on investment. Why it is included in both options, when certain other items are not (high school auditorium, fewer STEM learning spaces)?
- Further explanation of the need for STEM spaces, including how and why they are essential components of the project.
- Concerns were raised about the effect of having the capital project vote on the same day (ballot) as the school budget vote. The district must make sure to differentiate between the two, so that voters are not confused.

Option A/Strengths: Provides greatest opportunity for across the board facilities improvements and balances learning opportunities for ALL students (K-12). Addresses all work at one time, rather than "kicking the can down the road."

Option A/Risks: The cost of the project could still be too high, especially for those on fixed incomes. Perception that this option still contains extraneous components (wants vs. needs).

Option B/Strengths: Cost of project seen as the “safer option” and likely to garner more broad support. It addresses most immediate need: enrollment growth at elementary level. Allows time for demographic info/enrollment growth to play out to determine necessity of high school work.

Option B/Risks: Defers improvements at the high school by several years, which could result in even higher costs in the long run. It offers learning opportunities for smaller number of students (K-8, but not 9-12). Reduced focus on STEM spaces.

Community Conversations
 March 20, 2017



Capital Project Option A

Cost: \$147.9 million

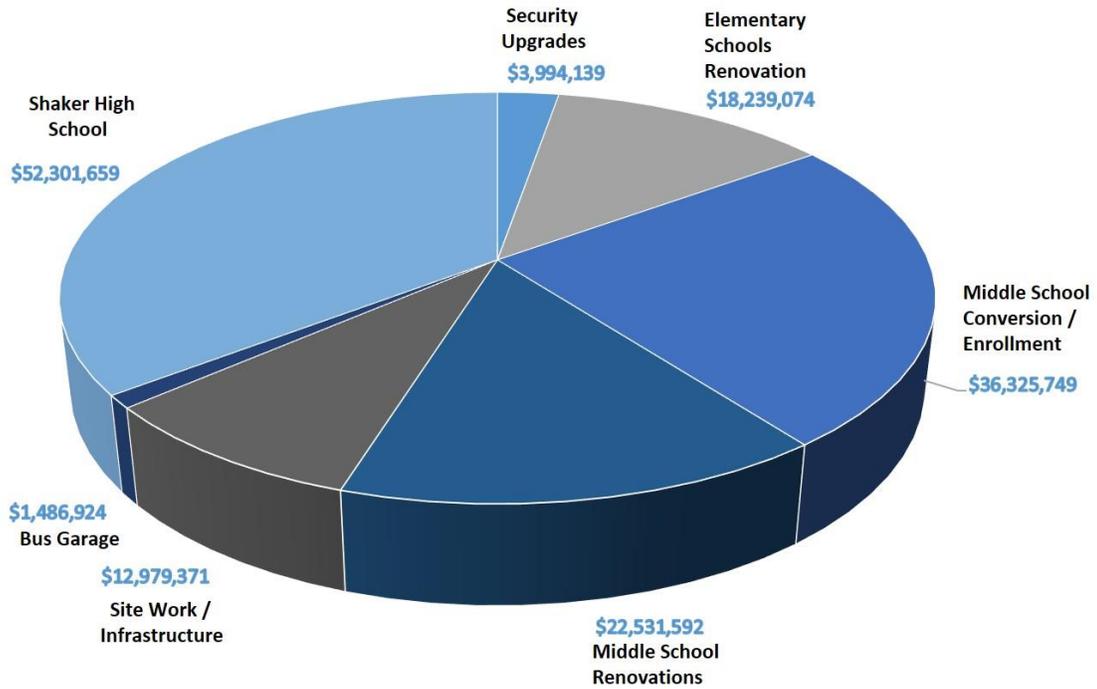
Tax increase on a median assessed home with enhanced aid: \$143.49/year

Tax increase on a median assessed home without enhanced aid: \$186.81/year

(Median assessed value=\$170,000)

Project includes:	Cost:
Security upgrades K-12 (8 buildings)	\$3,994,139
Elementary school renovations	\$18,239,074
Conversion of the junior high school to a 6-8 middle school to address enrollment needs	\$36,325,749
Middle school renovations	\$22,531,592
Site work/infrastructure (including one synthetic turf field)	\$12,979,371
Bus garage improvements	\$1,486,924
Shaker High School work	\$52,301,659
Total	\$147,858,508 million

Option A - \$147, 858,508



Project details:

Option A: \$147.9 million

- **Security upgrades K-12**
 - All 8 buildings will receive security enhancements
- **Elementary school renovations**
 - Additional classroom space at Boght Hills to address enrollment
 - Expanded library/media centers for all buildings
 - Additional music classroom space at Southgate, Blue Creek, & Boght Hills
 - Additional special education classroom space at Southgate & Blue Creek
 - Multi-use labs for science, engineering, robotics, computing and other project-based learning for all buildings
 - Additional physical education space at Boght Hills
 - Expanded cafeteria space at Forts Ferry and Boght Hills
- **Conversion of the junior high school to a 6-8 middle school to address enrollment needs**
 - Construction of a new, fifth hall; all five halls will consist of grades 6-8
 - Renovated and expanded cafeteria
 - Creation of additional technology, music and art classrooms
- **Middle school renovations**
 - Renovation of the existing auditorium
 - Creation of multi-use lab spaces to allow for collaborative project work and learning
 - Creation of a library media center with collaboration areas to allow for technology use and STEM skills (science, technology, engineering and math)
- **Site work/infrastructure improvements**
 - Roadway and parking improvements to alleviate traffic congestion at the middle/high school campus
 - Expanded parking and construction of dedicated bus and parent drop-off loops at the middle/high school
 - Physical Education and athletic field improvements to maintain existing programs at the middle/high School campus
 - Conversion of Walker Field to a synthetic turf field
 - Replacement of old infrastructure including water mains, electrical service, gas lines and storm sewer at the middle/high school campus
- **Bus garage improvements**
 - Expansion of parking to accommodate additional buses and staff at the bus garage
- **Shaker High School work**
 - Renovation and expansion of high school career and technology spaces
 - Renovation of all science labs
 - Renovation of select art rooms
 - Relocation of family and consumer science rooms
 - New 1,200 seat auditorium and music rehearsal rooms
 - Physical education studio and weight room addition

Capital Project Option B

Cost: \$106.3 million

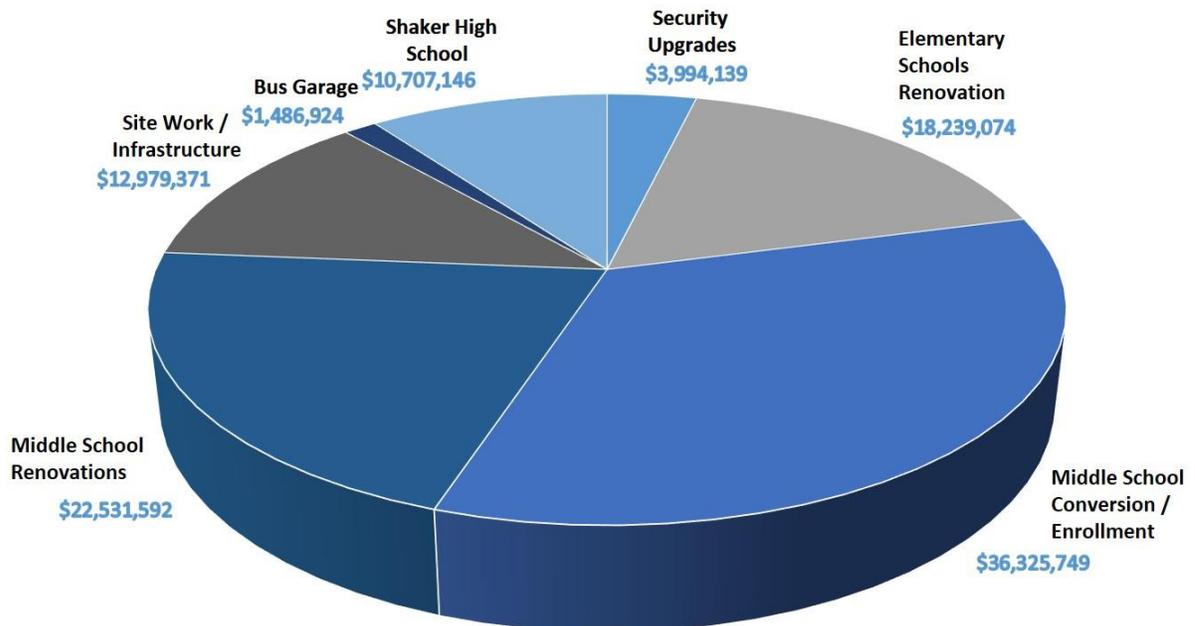
Tax increase on a median assessed home with enhanced aid: \$21.32/year

Tax increase on a median assessed home without enhanced aid: \$64.64/year

(Median assessed value=\$170,000)

Project includes:	Cost:
Security upgrades K-12 (8 buildings)	\$3,994,139
Elementary school renovations	\$18,239,074
Conversion of the junior high school to a 6-8 middle school to address enrollment needs	\$36,325,749
Middle school renovations	\$22,531,592
Site work/infrastructure (including one synthetic turf field)	\$12,979,371
Bus garage improvements	\$1,486,924
Shaker High School work	\$10,707,146
Total	\$106,263,996 million

Option B - \$106, 263,995



Option B: \$106.3 million

What carried over from Option A:

- All security upgrades K-12
- Elementary school renovations
- Conversion of the junior high school to a 6-8 middle school to address enrollment needs
- Middle school renovations
- Site work/infrastructure improvements, (including one synthetic turf field)
- Bus garage improvements

The change in Option B affects proposed work at Shaker High School as shown below:

Shaker High School:

What remains from Option A?	What's eliminated from Option A?	What's added?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relocation of the high school main office to a new secure entry• Relocation of the high school guidance office to be closer to the main entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renovation and expansion of high school career and technology spaces• Renovation of all science labs• Renovation of select art rooms• Relocation of family and consumer science rooms• New 1,200 seat auditorium and music rehearsal rooms• Physical education studio and weight room addition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two additional classrooms in J wing at the back of the building to address increased enrollment and program needs in special education/ENL• Expanded study area and cafeteria to provide greater schedule flexibility

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?
- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

Group Discussion Notes – Room 1

12 participants

Participants were asked which option they were in favor of:

Option A – 8

Option B – 4

Participants were asked which option they thought the community would be in favor of:

Option A – 0

Option B – 12

*** The overall consensus of the group (even the ones who said they were in favor of option B) was that “in their heart” they want option A but they are afraid of not only the capital project being voted down but the budget as well*

*** Participants were also very grateful that the district had listened to them and that the district had made a conscious effort in taking the community’s thoughts and feelings into account throughout this second round*

Risks and Strengths of Option A

- A major strength that was focused on throughout the group for option A was the new auditorium and rehearsal rooms
- One of the students (there were two) mentioned that during events there is a major use of standing room in the back – would be nice to have everyone be able to sit
- One man said that having a better auditorium could increase the participation and support of community members who don’t have students/children in the district
- An elderly woman said that the HS needs attention since it hasn’t changed much since she’s been there – option B loses a lot of the needed renovation
- A high school student mentioned the benefits of focusing on the classroom renovations - there are currently leaking science room faucets and art rooms are too small
- Majority consensus was that if they wait – it could cost more down the road and it isn’t always better to put things off

- The renovations will help keep the district appealing and that in turns keeps houses appealing – return on investment
- Biggest risk discussed was the amount of money it is going to cost tax payers
- An elderly woman still thought that option A was overly aggressive in terms of money
- Group suggested that the money gap between option A and option B could cause more people to choose B just for sticker value
- Group was worried that option A wasn't different enough from the original proposal to be able to pass

Risks and Strengths of Option B

- Group thought the obvious strength was that it was less money and still focused on the urgent need of enrollment
- One woman mentioned she saw the benefits and low cost of turf fields but wants more numbers and facts to be broken down – specifically mentioned the life span
- One of the biggest risk the group saw was the loss of the auditorium at the HS – especially the rehearsal rooms
- The group (mainly two parents) wanted to know why the auditorium and rehearsal rooms weren't included in second option? – especially since turf fields were
- Another big worry for the group was that option B doesn't fit all the needs the school is seeing/needng – especially at the HS
- The group was worried about having to go to portable buildings and those buildings devaluing the school
- They thought this option was the option that was going to pass by majority and was the easiest way to get the immediate needs done now

Other thoughts/specific questions

- What was cut out of the original plan? What's missing? Why is it almost 50% of what it was originally? – thought it raised a red flag

- Specifically, what will be changed in regards to the bus garage?
- One man thought that these two options really showed that the District was being fiscally responsible and respectful to community concerns
- One woman suggested that the district really needs to cut back on the education speak/jargon and focus on the facts of what the changes/renovations will look like
- Some members thought the presentation and information lacked a focus
- The entire group would really like to see a greater focus on the numbers – dates since last bond, dates since last renovations, how old the schools actually are, turf field benefits, breaking down each option costs by month
- Thought the numbers should have been the focus of the presentation/information
- The entire group has a very strong fear/concern that the community will vote down the budget
- Really would want the district to focus on the bottom line with information
- What is the timeline for the project if the district goes with option A? Option B? If the district chooses option B, when will the other things need to be revisited?
- One woman thought that the issue with the difference in price between the options was wants versus needs
- The group would want more information to be presented in tables/charts
- What does the districts 20-year capital plan look like?
- Would like to have more of a student voice involved – have the students explain these needs
- Concerned that the common communication uses are only going to reach the people who care – suggestion was made that maybe the district could get the news channels to do a walk through?

Group Discussion Notes – Room 2

9 participants

Asked which option preferred:

Option A = 5, Option B = 2, undecided = 2

Asked which option would receive most support from community: Most participants believe that the larger community would be more supportive of Option B.

Summary: Parents, student participant, some community members voiced strong support for Option A and disappointment that the original capital project proposal was rejected. They understood and agreed with the need for STEM learning spaces and the urgency for addressing the growth in enrollment.

Other community members questioned the need for the scope of work still being proposed in both options A & B, including the STEM learning spaces, additional classroom space (enrollment questions), the turf field, etc.

One aspect of the project that all participants seemed to agree upon is the need for more security at school buildings. No one took issue with that.

Most in the room thought that more information or at least more clarity surrounding project finances is necessary for voters to make an informed decision. Several participants emphasized that an explanation of the loss of enhanced aid is a critical point for the district to make going forward.

The takeaway being that all participants seemed to agree that more communication and information about any proposal the district puts forth will be the key to its success or failure.

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

· What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?

-Parent: As a voter, looks like all elementary schools but Loudonville are listed in proposals. Are resources being shared across the district? Why not Loudonville?

-Parent: Development [in Colonie] is more toward Forts Ferry, Boght Hills area. That is my understanding of why Loudonville is not being expanded. District may want to communicate that.

-Parent (**Question**): Is Loudonville taking any of the enrollment overflow?

-Community member: Lot of questions about the number of items on the back of first page [*see handout: Project details, Option A*]. STEM in elementary school seems like nonsense. Need a better understanding of why this is necessary.

-Parent: As a parent of elementary school students, I fully support the STEM in the elementary. Need to bring in at least pieces of this to enhance the curriculum and learning for students. Don't want to see my

child become bored. Hands-on learning will enhance and retain his interest; and for my special needs child as well, hands-on is the best way to learn.

-Parent: Exposure to STEM is good. It lights a spark in kids about the STEM field. Can be a life changer for kids.

-Staff member: From discussions we have had, the rooms are supposed to be flexible spaces to encourage problem-solving activities, interactive and hands-on learning.

-Community member: My understanding of this is from a conversation I once had with a NYS education director who said that learning how to read is the purpose of K-5 [education]. Reason for this is so they can read to learn when they get to [grades] 6-12. The other thing I find at K-5 critical communications skills declining. Writing goes out the door. Personal communications skills are weak, and that impacts values. Need a society that shares more values. Unfortunately, while I would lean toward B plan, I have problem with both plans. Related to elementary school, why \$58.8 million? For what? Some of things they are talking about, does K-5 really need this stuff? Need to learn an appreciation of science, given reasons to like science or math more. Still have to learn to read first in order to learn other things. Doesn't like how special interest groups get involved. System broken in many ways, and needs to be improved.

-Parent: \$18 million for elementary schools [corrected the cost from previous statement, above].

-Community member: Synthetic turf? Limited use, not everybody going to be a football player.

-Parent: Turf would be used by other sports, so that makes sense.

-Community member: Another concern is look at numbers of students K-6, now in 7-12, represent 53% of total population in schools.

-Parent: Those are numbers from the state, and are not accurate. There was a bigger enrollment than projected last year.

-Parent: Taxpayers and voters need transparency with middle school/junior high school renovations. To know that the project will add enough room to bring in the 6th grade to accommodate the enrollment.

-Parent: I look at numbers a lot, and wanted to know about the enhanced aid from the state. Important to get the merger aid [Maplewood additional aid], will lose if not approved soon. District needs to make that clear to everyone, the loss of \$25 million in enhanced aid if the project is again voted down.

-Community member: 14,000 people paying school tax in North Colonie. Not everyone can afford it. There are 3,000 renting in the district, they don't pay taxes. Expansion and amount of land available, not much left.

-Community member/district retiree: Everyone is going to pay taxes, school tax, at some point.

-Parent: People are coming here because of the schools. North Colonie is consistently top 3 in the area. It is the best value of the top 3. Lower taxes, great schools.

-Parent (**Question**): Is \$147million option A, based on taxable income today? If we know about the organic growth, does that mean more revenue coming in? How will this affect the cost of the bond throughout?

-Parent (**Question**): How long is the life of the bond?

-Parent: Not just so much new homes being constructed, but also turnover in neighborhoods [existing homes].

-District admin: No growth in taxable numbers figured into cost. Have to remember there also will be increase in operational costs. For example, staff that will be needed to address enrollment growth.

-Parent: Transparency, information needed about that.

-10th grade student: Can't speak to the money. Both plans are expensive. But I have younger sister and either option is going to be beneficial to the students. Music, art must be taken in elementary school, STEM would give another option. I have friends involved in robotics club and other technology, it's great idea for younger kids to have the exposure. We definitely need more space in elementary school and the junior high school. Either A or B would be great, if passed. I know the grade levels below me have increased, also. Grade 3 at Forts Ferry has 30 in a classroom.

-Parent: My 3rd-grader has 24-25 in class and 1st grader has 23 (Blue Creek). Special education program and services offered here are really good. Can't say enough about Special Ed services. It does bring people to North Colonie is one of the best in the northeast. Blue Creek is at capacity for special ed. Take into consideration all facets of students. Allowing kids to find their niche, be more creative. Reading is extremely hard for one of my kids. Hands-on learning benefits him.

-Parent: If a kid can't read/write by 4th grade, not much hope that they will be successful in school. North Colonie has great scores across the board.

-Parent: The district is also responsible for providing Special Ed services for private schools in the district.

-Parent: Graduation rate 90%, people move here for the schools, and what is offered here.

-School admin: It's also Special Education and ENL (English as a New Language) mandates that come down from the Education Department. Leaves no options for the schools. These are unfunded mandates that schools must provide for.

-Parent: Think a lot more students are not falling through the cracks. If needs are addressed early enough, some services can be eliminated.

-Parent: Either one (plan) would benefit students. Happy to see security enhancements. As a mom, that is a big deal.

-Community member/district retiree: Introducing STEM in the younger age will also enhance their abilities with the English language because it teaches critical thinking. Need the exposure to keep thinking. STEM could help them be more confident, to find their interest, and even help them with English.

-Parent: We are huge fans of the school district. Totally believe some things need to get done. The public is out of the loop. (**Question**): Is there a cost savings option A vs. B? Looks like we get 50% more for the money with A, for 7x the taxes.

-Community member asked for explanation of "Transfer to capital"

-BOE member answered a capital fund is strictly for facilities maintenance/renovations/repairs. Money from the capital fund is put into [transferred] the operating budget. The district would plan to use a transfer from capital fund to help defray some of the cost of the bond.

-Parent: One thing we heard a lot about before is population. During the vote, we had a population timetable for next 3-5 years. If this a 20-year bond issuance, do we have same length prediction?

-School admin: District gave 10-year projection. The further out you go with study, the less stable the predictions.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

-Parent (**Question**): Is there a cost savings from going from B to A from doing it (the work) all at once? The bidding process once? Starting a project once, rather than splitting it up and coming back 5-6 years later? What about the costs and competition, if the economy is growing?

-Parent (**Question**): Are we going to save money by doing everything now rather than splitting it up?

-Parent: Don't think there has been enough done to educate the taxpayer.

-Parent: Think the lowest number (project cost) will be supported, but it should be done now, to save money. Need to emphasize the loss of 17% additional aid.

-Parent: Need better explanation of many points brought up tonight.

-Parent: Prefer Option A, but will support whatever others would be willing to vote for.

-Parent: Community supports these types of things. But I had questions.

-Community member/district retiree: Unrealistic for people to know this wasn't coming. I went to meetings, and saw no community people there.

-Parent: How do we educate the community? If they were educated more, the Churchill article would not have mattered.

-Parent: Majority of seniors not on the internet, not on the computer.

-Parent: I have two children in Blue Creek, did not get much information, even coming from the schools. Voted no because I had no information. A lot of people say that.

-Parent: Turf field probably turned off a lot of people. But if you want my vote, educate me.

-Parent: How do seniors benefit? Seniors get home values back, when you go to sell your home.

-Community member/district retiree: Husband looked at it (the proposed project) differently than me, so it needs more explanation.

-Parent: Turnout higher for the vote. Different issue from annual school budget process as well.

-Parent: Bond comes with own set of parameters and rules, timeframes. Must explain that these are two separate things (budget, bond vote).

-Parent: Need to sell it better.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 3

Summary:

There were eleven people in this room:

- One (1) middle school student
- One (1) administrator
- Three (3) people that work in the district (one was not a community member and therefore cannot vote -- she was there to listen, so only two of those three participated)
- Three parents (3)
- Two (2) retired community members with no kids in the school district
- One (1) board member was always in the room

A little more info on these people, if you're interested. One of the parents is a teacher at South Colonie, another parent is a realtor; one of the retired community members is a former RPI chemistry professor and the other community member is a retired teacher from another district.

The fifth community member did not disclose her profession.

Supporters of option A: 8

Supporters of option B: 1 (board member)

Undecided: 1

*All but one say they will vote "yes," regardless of which option is on the ballot. They all say they realize the importance of *something* passing. That one person says she is not sure how she will vote as she is still undecided in general.

Questions/Comments/Concerns:

- "What is the commitment from the board, or Superintendent, to move forward? If we choose either option, especially B, I'd like something in writing stating we will address the needs of the kids and move forward in the future."
- Should the BOE pick option B, is there a commitment to move forward? What would it look like? How do we reach an end goal? What is that end goal? All in agreement that they want the commitment.
- One woman (undecided) says there is still "a lot of fluff" in both options and is disappointed with the choices. She says she thinks B has a much better shot of going through, "not everything in here is truly a need though, and it's all setting it up to be voted down."
- The two people in the room on fixed incomes say they're supportive of option A
- When would the work start and who is going to reap the benefits?
- "The priority here are the kids in the neighborhood -- their future."
- Two parents expressed disappointment in the lack of communication -- they say there is still a big disconnect. They cited the district website... saying it wasn't easy to find some information on there. They say the district could do a better job getting the message out to everyone... not just parents and not just via technology.

- The group says they're afraid that if people want to vote down the bond, they'll vote down the budget because they're not educated on the difference. The group asked for more education on the difference between the two so when voting time comes, both aren't lumped together. They also asked for as much education between now and the vote as possible -- for everyone.

- **What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?**

Strengths:

- "We would be taking care of it now and we would get the aid."
- "Get it done now instead of waiting until later... it's a cup of coffee a week... it can be done."
- There won't need to be a need to go back to the public in a few years.
- The schools are very outdated and need these upgrades to keep up with society
- "Let's just get the ball rolling with all of the needed improvements so we can live up to our reputation of having such a good school district. We need these improvements to make it the best it can be."
- The earlier start with all of this, the better.
- Students need STEM opportunities earlier in education and this option would allow for that -- helping our students get on the right track earlier.

Risks:

- The dollar amount is still very large... "the community" will still have sticker shock.
- "The risk with "A" is the price tag. Yes, It is less than the original amount, but I'm disappointed. I still see a lot of fluff in both options -- things that we don't necessarily need that are included and we can't give any suggestions now?"
- The price will jar some people, especially ones who aren't looking at this project any deeper than the surface numbers.
- "I would hate to see this get defeated again because people don't think they can afford it."
- "Enrollment is up now yes, but what are we going to do after we make all of these renovations and need to start closing buildings and selling things and lose out on that money?"

- **What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?**

Strengths:

- The number isn't as scary as option A
- People with a fixed income may feel "more comfortable" with this option

Risks:

- Are we sacrificing some kids so we can make grades 1,2 & 3 happy later?
- "It's unfortunate that someone will get the short end of the stick so we can spend less for immediate needs."

- Not giving kids the options they need to succeed in the future.

Side note:

- Someone mentioned that “the community was uncomfortable” at the last vote because of the amount of staff/administrators in the building. They felt like they were being watched as they voted and it made them uncomfortable.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 4

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?
- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

15 people in the room

Supporters of Option A = 6

Supporters of Option B = 7

2 undecided

Option B -- likely to get the largest amount of voter support and still address primary goals with a change for the enhanced state aid.

Based on increase in enrollment -- so time to do the high school in a couple of years if demographic predictions are playing out.

Money isn't addressing the quality of education -- pointed to PISA scores. I'd rather have 2 teachers in a classroom.

Old way was to do fundraising on a project by project basis (e.g. kids raised funds for lights on the fields) Why can't we do that for turf fields.

Voted A but could be swung to B. He moved to the district for the quality of the schools. Concerned about increase in class sizes. Works in building trades and understands how expensive it is to build stuff.

- Question about when was the last major renovation project.

Investment in human capital and students is where we should go. Bricks and mortar enable the curriculum changes that are coming. Spaces for more collaboration and STEM and liberal arts students ALL benefit from the changes we're seeing in the workplace and college. Prefers Option A. Get integrated idea off the ground and maximize our best chance at enhanced aid. It would be fool-hearty to leave HS out of the proposal.

I would vote for Option A, but not sure if voters will approve. Also, worried that Option B may look like we asked to much to begin with in December.

- Question about what is a multi-use lab looks like -- What is a STEM lab... needs a visual! Hard to get excited about it.
- Has heard some concerns about adding 6th graders to the Jr. High...

Concern that option A won't be passed by the community. Her initial reaction was option B. My concern is are we trying to bite off too much too quickly under A. Recognize there's more to come.

Impressed with presentation tonight. Biggest concern she's been hearing is it's simply more than people could afford. Regardless of the demographics. It's the economy of upstate NY. I was impressed at how much the district came down -- people felt heard. What about the poorer members of our community? Question was asked by people with means too. We shouldn't price them out. (She was undecided on first vote.) This is the district where the American Dream comes true.

High schooler's perspective -- Option A would create a better opportunity for kids at the high school but she sees the issue of money. Her parents actively sought N. Colonie because of the lower tax rates here. Told story of getting closed out of computer science class.

Strong supporter of option A but would also enthusiastically support option B. Some people will vote no, no matter what. Resents deeply the misinformation campaign in December vote and the anonymous nature of it. My kids will be out of N. Colonie (grads) if we approve this, but still important and long overdue. We have to bring our district into the 21st Century. The cost of construction and interest rates are only going up. It will be more costly to go out with the work in two different capital projects.

- Disappointed we're still using the word STEM and not STEAM. Option B cuts out renovations to the art room and auditorium, which hits the arts hardest.
- Important to capture as much of the incentive aid as possible. Don't overthink it.
- BOE and leadership of this district have never let me down as a parent and taxpayer.

The people that vote for option B generally support option A but take it as 2 bites at the apple.

People she talks to in the community tell her not every kid wants to go the college. They want more CTE-like programs. We tend to push everyone to go to college in N. Colonie. She prefers option B because it's better to take it in stages and see if the demographics continue to play out. Maybe the long term enrollment projections will happen and maybe they won't. It's the teachers and families that inspire the kids -- more important than the school buildings.

Neither proposal says anything about the CTE-like programs for kids that are not going to college and don't want to go to college. Head of N. Colonie CTE/tech department talked about what they do offer.

- Questions about where the enrollment is coming from. (Answered: new construction, apartments and condominiums. Older homes are turning over to younger families with children.

- What is the cost of new infrastructure and operation costs -- maintenance and hiring of new teachers for additional students who keep moving in? Cost of desks and equipment to outfit the rooms we construct. Is this in the capital project costs or annual budget? This is a big question for the ongoing additional costs. Board member helped answer. Enrollment does drive additional state aid too...Also property taxes from new construction, etc. Also new construction is less expensive to maintain.
- Why aren't the developers taxed for the cost of new homes? (Town gets mitigation fees but not the district.)
- What about people on fixed income? Senior citizens are getting screwed.
- What is a physical education "studio"? Words like this sound "fancy" and don't explain what it really is.

It all depends on who comes out to vote.

One student had to leave... Of 13 people left for final vote feedback:

PERSONAL PREFERENCE:

Option A: 6

Option B: 6

Undecided: 1

WHEN ASKED WHAT THEY THOUGHT VOTERS WOULD SUPPORT:

Option A: 4

Option B: 5

Undecided: 4

Group Discussion Notes – Room 5

14 people in group

In favor of Option A: 7

In favor of Option B: 5

Not in favor of any: 1

Her reason was based on the district spending/wasting \$ for “fixes” when she feels a community approach is better. She will be homeschooling, feels we can pull our resources better to have a community/village approach/co-op community to teaching, use the resources available, weekend school, community schools, etc.

Summary: Most people in the group wanted Option A, and the only reason Option B was favored at all was purely for financial reasons. Everyone in the group understood the immediate need for the project, but feel that in order for the rest of the community to get behind either Option A or Option B, then many more details about the various projects included in the Capital Project as a whole need to be communicated. For example, barely anyone in our group had a clear understanding of the time constraints tied to the enhanced aid (i.e., if we don't take advantage of it, it won't be available in the future) or really how it would work. But, once it was explained they all felt it was better to go with Option A because of the enhanced aid. Also, non-educators have a hard time understanding what STEM labs at the elementary school would look like and what kids would do in these labs. Based on conversations in the community, some thought kids would be glued to computers and tablets at an early age. They were concerned about that and didn't support it. Once someone explained how a STEM lab works (hands on, exploratory projects that foster collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving skills with technology being one of many tools) people seems relieved. There needs to be more emphasis on explaining the educational/academic components of the project. The why!

They don't think the project went down completely because of sticker shock, but perhaps also because they couldn't wrap their heads around the scope of the project--too vague. Another woman said she feels there's “hidden” money tucked away in the project not being explained. Lastly, there's resentment toward the Town that trickled over to the schools. For example, many people feel North Colonie is growing too quickly and that the Town approved too many apartments and condos. They feel their quality of life is diminished (increased traffic, too many transients who are not invested in the community, etc.). Sadly, the phenomena is not new for schools. Often schools are the brunt of misplaced aggression. That being said, they all feel strongly that the district needs to push back on the town regarding the continued approval of residential living (apartment complexes, condos, townhouses, residential developments.) There needs to be a moratorium until the district can get a handle on the enrollment growth.

The people in my group want Option A, but would support Option B if that's all that was offered. However, if more clarification and communication surrounds the components of the project isn't

publicized, they don't think either option will pass. This is the take away: "Show us the benefits--why do I need to support this, what's in it for me?" If we can answer those questions and help residents--including people who do not have kids in the school--see the big picture, maybe it will pass.

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

· What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?

Properly planning for the future, do it now. We need to make room at the HS. It's investment, address the issue now (should have been done long ago), don't wait. I don't think a \$200 invest per year is a poor investment--good choice/use of money. STEM & arts HAS to be done. Waiting will only cost more, go for it.

2 kids, bought house here for the schools, feels STEM is an investment for kids and future (supported 1st referendum). I question priorities selected for Option B --safety, infrastructure, STEM. I've made the investment in this district, I want to see the district improved. \$200 could be used elsewhere, sure but I believe in education. Don't know why the district wouldn't support Option A.

Not sure everyone knows that enhanced aid will NOT be around, use the aid now on the larger project to get more for our money. Bursting at the seams at Boght Hills--enrollment increases are real. Need to explain the aid portion better--use it or lose it.

People need to know about enhanced aid--don't understand it.

Why haven't we budgeted for this over the years, there should have been a portion of the budget put away each year for renovation/upgrade needs earlier. Disappointed that it's been so long since improvements made. This is long overdue, can't see why we wouldn't invest. He's a supporter, would really like to see district brought up to speed with the rest of the schools in the capital region. No reason why people can't see that our 50+ year old buildings can't support our population and educational needs--need to explain that better.

I know what's coming down the pike, we need to increase our high school space. We can't wait. Also, enhanced aid, what's it really mean--free money? We need to use it NOW. Don't come back to improve the high school later when \$ is not available and costs increase. If we are going to invest in education, then let's do it right. Been to all but one school, they are bursting at the seams. We need to make more space.

STEM at elementary school is huge and important. Computer science education is so important to future jobs. We need to bring our students up to par on CS, we are doing a disservice to our students by not exposing them to stem-related subjects early on. The earlier the exposure, the more likely kids will seek

a career in the drastically growing field of computer technology/science, etc. Option B cuts BACK too far on STEM options, can't support that because of the harm it would do to our students--we'd be setting them back. Early STEM education doesn't mean kids behind a computer--teaches problem solving, collaboration, and hands on exposure. Less about kids being on a computer at young grades, more about visual and hands-on exposure. Teaches kids how to THINK that will then be applied to computing in the later years.

Question priorities of what was taken out of Option A to get to Option B--why keep the turf field but remove STEM education? STEM impacts all students. Why support Option B?--I'd rather support option A, hands down. Shaker HS has a great reputation for science--don't dilute it. Doesn't like Option B--will not vote YES. Will vote it down. Terrible to propose an option without STEM. (By the end of the night, she begrudgingly agreed that IF Option B was presented she would, in fact, vote yes. She'd prefer Option A, but doesn't want to harm the district.)

Participant who wants the community and the school to be one by pulling resources and live and teach as a co-op community): What is included in the STEM labs at the elementary school? Heard we don't need lots of technology, so what do we need them for? Can we explain how they will be used? What will they be filled with? (Another resident explained that Maker Spaces are areas where kids can use non-tech tools to collaborate, and problem-solve using hands-on items.) She felt that kid working with natural tools (pinecones, twigs) was just as beneficial as a "fancy" STEM lab.

Student, 3 years of HS, witness to crowding, wants Option A. It's just too tight. Thinks if kids have a better understanding of what the project means for kids in the future and they support it, parents will follow.

District admin: Option A is a great option, but if it gets defeated the idea of waiting another year to present another project is too scary--we need to at least pass Option B so we can move forward with alleviating the stress increased enrollment is having on our elementary schools.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

Question: Why is turf field more now than in the original proposal? For me, option B is purely financial. I'd rather a slower cost now. I think money should be set aside each year and saved for future projects. (Facilitator comment: Should make people aware that schools can't really "save" money. Limits to it, but worth addressing why.)

One woman is undecided. Hesitant because other state she lived in went through something like this and had a bad experience with mismanagement of money and poor choices. They built a new school only to tear it down 4 years later to build a bigger schools. Do support science--especially for girls--at an early age. But, concerned about the financial transparency--number is not accurate for her. (Her house is worth much more than the median \$.) Concerned town and school not linked. Too many townhouses and apartments allowed in the area. Why did town allow this--it now forces schools to have to ask for more \$ from residents to deal with this massive growth. Disappointed the school isn't involved in town decisions. This capital project simply seems like a quick fix, not a long-term solution. There's no tie-back to town. Seeing quality of life diminish, traffic increases, too many layers of frustration. I also don't know

the behind the scenes cost--staffing, equipment, what is PNL on these changes. I'm for it, want kids to have best, but not sure about hidden/long-term/undisclosed costs.

Lots of frustration among residents toward town--not listened to. Hurting schools. Could be taken out on schools. Town is getting irresponsible. Small, close-knot community changed.

It was a "say no to everything" approach to last capital project. People frustrated with town so said no where they could.

District didn't do a decent enough job explaining the project last time around. People felt fed up with growth and extra taxes without fully understanding the scope of this project. They felt the "vote no" postcard from the anonymous group was the first wave of communication and therefore stuck with residents. When the district didn't share communications it was as though it was to play catch up and debunk the "vote no" post card. Sadly, the damage was done.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 6

Overview: All support Option A. Group was SURPRISED and hopes there is an opportunity that Dr. Corr would change his mind and recommend Option A to BOE.

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

· What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?

Strength: Bold.

Strength: Better to take on debt when variables are known rather than leaving to unknowns.

Risk: Not enough detail. Will require a lot of marketing.

Strength: This renovation makes a connection in science between classroom and lab.

Strength: Incredible opportunities for students.

Strength: Helpful in integrating arts with science - STEM to STEAM.

Strength: Option A includes all students.

Strength: Difference is worth the price - better for society.

Risk: Shadow campaign against this plan.

Notes: Important to get grassroots support.

Improvements are worth it.

Spend the money now so we don't need to spend more later.

· What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

Strength: Lower price tag more appealing to the masses.

Risk: Don't know the cost of HS renovations in future.

Risk: Option B ignores 50% of students and parents.

Risk: Not enough STEM negative impact on students. Missed opportunity.

Risk: Reduction to 100 million makes people skeptical. Psychological. Not based in reality.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 7

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?
- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

SUMMARY:

As a whole, the group felt the safer bet was to put Option B to vote, given the lower price tag and the immediate need, Option A has a considerably higher risk. They were worried it wouldn't pass and the district would end up with nothing. Also, the voters that do come out will vote YES, YES or NO, NO to both the annual budget and the capital project. And if the NO, NO beats the YES, YES, not only is the district without renovations but they would also be cutting programs.

Interestingly, at the close of the conversation, two members of the group handed me note cards (I explained they were for questions, comments they might not feel comfortable asking/making publicly) and both of those note cards said they wanted the district to put forth Option A, for both the enhanced aid and the risk of a failed capital project vote in the future when, clearly, the projects in Option A were imminent.

NOTES FROM DISCUSSION:

They asked questions about the enrollment to make sure Option B would be sufficient. Things could change in the next 5 years with regard to needs, but the reality is that the enrollment is going to continue to increase.

Option A: Age and condition of the facilities would be something anyone in their home would be updating at this point. All of the areas listed in Option A should be updated, so it really is a need.

Concern with Option B is that STEM is eliminated.

The added classrooms in Option B is a question that should be explained when put before the public. The group did not understand the relationships and shift in classrooms if the added classrooms in B were not a part of Option A. I would suggest clarifying the move if Option B is selected. Why are they not in option A? A lot of time was spent on this and it NEEDS to be clearly explained in the report.

A discussion of security and moving the guidance office.

Student: middle school renovation of the auditorium is fully supported. It will be used a lot for assemblies.

I'm concerned that community members who are less informed about the specifics and don't take the opportunity to inform themselves won't care about either plan. I think the lesser amount of the two options will be more favorable to those residents who voted no.

Concern that even Option B will not pass. It's detrimental that B be passed because the need is dire. Hopefully most community members will recognize it as a dire need.

1200 seat auditorium and rehearsal space lost is not addressing the need. Option B gives me pause. In terms of infrastructure, Option B has some deficits. From the band teacher here.

Being a resident of this district for 20 years, having seen the growth and progression, I'm not naive, I know that Option B is selected, making it more palatable now is okay.

59 million dollars to the Jr High School is a lot of money. \$77 million for elementary is a lot. That is a tremendous amount of money. I don't think 1.5 at the bus garage is a big deal. That's negligible.

The assumption was that it was going to pass, so I didn't think about it much and feel it was necessary to vote. I would weigh fixed income, and then think about the future and future generations.

I'd rather go for option A, if we missed out on enhanced aid, we only have ourselves to blame. It's just going to cost us more further down the road by missing out on the enhanced aid.

Option A is not that bad. It's giving up 3 or 4 dinners a year. There will be a lot of seniors there again, they came before. Federal budget cuts have struck greater fear.

Part of the problem is that we don't know if we're going to get enhanced aid.

I believe the stakes are high. We need to consider what the voters are going to vote. It's going to be Yes, Yes or No, No. And if it's no, no then we're not only cutting buildings and renovations, but we're cutting programs. The bigger options is a risk.

People need to know more in-depth how it will benefit students. When do we start to look at the buildings as infrastructure issues.

The challenge is making up for 50 years of a lack of capital projects. The district has been modest and conservative with building upgrades to be able to hold on to district staff.

146 million dollars is A LOT of money, and marrying it to the school district is a risk.

I can see both going down.

I'm scared that nothing is going to happen and we aren't going to be able to pass anything.

There's a lot of interest in A but the reality of it is B is a bigger risk.

The Veteran's exemption was just passed last month so that will also shift the tax burden. What do we really want for our kids to we want to be good or great? We need to provide them options. Why be good when you can be great?

There was a discussion about turf. A senior citizen in the group was concerned about the weight room and athletics as a focus of taxpayers dollars.

Counterpoint to the turf was that the current football field costs us so much time and manpower right now, it is not cost effective. Just to maintain it is so much work. The turf field is an ROI, even if it needs to be replaced every 10 years. The initial cost might sound like a lot, but over time it will pay off.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 8

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

· **What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?**

Option A represents the greatest opportunity for improving facilities and broadening student learning opportunities. It also addresses all district needs today, rather than deferring the inevitable conversation about what to do with Shaker High. As a group this is personally desired (11 for A; 2 for B; 1 for neither). The group also acknowledges the risk of defeat that comes with the higher price tag—however, feel that risk is not as great as some may fear. The bigger challenge is convincing people that any work is necessary and worthwhile.

The group was not representative of the community—all but two supported the original project. As a whole, they still want as much as they can get for kids and for education. Their rationale:

- Important to educate kids; we'll never survive as a nation without education. Significant capital improvements are long overdue.
- Taxes are less here than Albany, great bang for the buck. Good school is a big draw. Good for housing market.
- If people accept the work in Option B critical, they may suspect a second vote is simply greed. (*If it was so important, why didn't we include it the first time.*) Worry there will be greater resistance & voter fatigue for a second vote.
- Important to use as much enhanced aid as possible.
- Even for Option A, shocked the district cut so deeply.
- I, my kids, my grandchildren, me (as a school employee), etc. will directly benefit.

Dissenters:

- Lesser of two evils, then revisit
- See the growth and the needs tackle it now rather than a second vote.
- Voted for the project before - kids won't benefit, but it's important (ditto)
- Going to high school in three years - directly benefits me.
- HS is in dire need of upgrades - and it's all educational.

- STEM is important. Why vote a second time - self serving.
- Go with the lesser could get us started. Odds of passing is better.
-
- (None) - Have several questions that haven't been answered. Teachers aren't ready to address STEM, but district wants to increase taxes based on projected enrollment. No one can project enrollment (accuracy and reliability of the individuals). Impact on our budget, new staff salaries and benefits, professional development. Rooms without staff capable of using the bells and whistles. What preparation is being made to ensure it gets used?
- Won't impact my kids (graduated) to thank the people who voted for my kids. Only more expensive in two years when we will need it.
- If you want the enhanced aid - it's a lot to leave on the table. If you're going to tear it up.
- Surprised they cut it so far.

Community perspective

- Retired lesser
- Smaller number
- Skewed because of my kids - everyone I know wants the better
- Lower the number the more likely. Live in my bubble. They'll need to come back again.
- Voter apathy the first time
- Cheaper option more likely to pass.
- Option A need to push.
- Go with the lower, we'd attract more. Think you could win over many. Competitive - want to make certain it is appealing.
- Strong ties to education - we feel we have a stake in this.
- If you present A, A will pass. Passive positive voters didn't come out. Good faith effort we cut.
- A if presented clearly and in the right way.
- Senior citizens voted. Families didn't necessarily vote. 85% of seniors voted no. Too much educational jargon that people couldn't relate to. Needs to be written in the vernacular. Richard Gervais. Looks like bells and whistles. Even B could be a problem if not presented clearly. (Voted no - is all of this essential).
- Change in voting sites was a factor.
- A people will be more informed. Wake-up call.
- First vote looked shady 10 days before Christmas. Lost the project nights. A
- But has to be sold. Need to better explain what we cut.
- Timing is important. The message is critical.

9-5 A

What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

No one in the group truly liked Option B. It barely addresses needs at the elementary and middle schools, and defers a high school decision until some nebulous date in the future. "No voters" might support it as the less costly option, but people are unsure whether cost is the determining factor. The

- Perception of Community 9 A vs. 6 B

Asides

Dangerous roads to walk to school.

Group Discussion Notes — Room 9

Discussion Question:

1) The major difference between options A and B is the amount of work that is proposed for Shaker High School. The district's goal is to get your feedback as to which of the two options you think the community would be more willing to support during the capital project re-vote in May.

- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?
- What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

Option A: What are the potential strengths and risks of Option A?

-Concern about short time to get the enhanced aid, if it doesn't pass -- that we'll lose the extra aid if we go out with the higher Option A and it fails. Concern that it won't pass due to the amount of \$\$ needed.

-Option A takes into account educational program, including bringing it into the 21st century, updated technology, etc.

-Concern that turf fields, etc. won't last for 20 years; also concern about new teachers and other operating costs that would be required as part of the new space.

-Smaller bond may appeal, but we need the programs of the larger project. Some would say \$10 million, \$20 million is too much -- they'll object to any bond.

-Want to know what we're losing from the previous proposed project. What has already been narrowed out? People need to know what was taken out and the hard work that went into narrowing that original request down to these options.

-Question about the enrollment projections. The New York State Education Department breaks out enrollment on its website, and North Colonie has less students than 10 years ago. Could we be at a peak right now, and starting a downward trend? Do we really need the extra capacity?

-Public interest in North Colonie schools (because of their high caliber) has cause increased enrollment because people move here who are looking for good schools; also senior citizens are the ones selling their homes, and often to families with young kids.

-Question about enrollment; some in the group noted an outside consultant had been used to confirm the enrollment info used by the district.

-Comment that mandates for buildings have changed -- rules for how much space you need today vs. years ago creates more need for space as well.

-Also impacting enrollment is the birthrate, which has started going upward (as economy has improved).

- Always hear the schools are why folks want to move here.
- How many years would the project be bonded? What is the term of the bond? (20 years someone said)
- Would it be completely paid off in 20 years? (Or is that just the interest?)
- Includes the programmatic upgrades.

Option B: What are the potential strengths and risks of Option B?

- Gives time to see if enrollment projections/trends hold true.
- It is putting off needed program improvements.
- Increased insurance costs (for both options) -- what are they?
- Addresses immediate need to address enrollment at elementary level.
- Security issues are big -- we are missing basic security here vs. other districts in the area; is an absolute necessity to address.
- Is an urgency because schools all need updating.
- Option B addresses the most imperative needs.
- What is the maintenance on the turf fields -- what are annual costs? (One attendee thought there is a major maintenance cost when they are about 10 years old.)
- It provides what the kids need right now -- including security (which is critical today).
- Risky to put all the STEM classrooms, etc. at elementary and middle school level, but not at the high school level -- especially when kids will need STEM to get into college.
- Option A gives the opportunity to improve overall curriculum -- to be ready for modern education, not just to address enrollment.
- We pay more per student than any other state, yet upstate NY economy has stagnated; so difficult to argue that spending on education = economic growth. Investing more in STEM, does it have a direct benefit?
- One person in the room serves on the admission committee for Cornell, and said they look closely at STEM education. We need to remain competitive, we need to keep our programs high. His family moved here because of its reputation, and we need to continue that -- to have the best educational program in the area.
- A student in the room reported that what programming is available at the high school really impacts where he wants to go to college.
- Niskayuna has made commitment to invest in schools; has resulted in high taxes, but it really matters, and makes such a difference for the community. It's a huge investment but important.

Which option do you personally prefer?

4 said A

3 said B (2 more said they were undecided/in the middle)

Which option do you think the public would support?

2 said A; one person voted for A because she said she knows a lot of folks who thought the first vote would pass, so they didn't bother to vote (and who would vote this time), and others who are angry the first vote didn't pass, who would come out to vote this time.

4+ said B

Other

-District needs to advertise more how to use absentee ballots.

-Can we pick up absentee ballots at each elementary school? That would make it easier for residents to pick them up, even if they still have to be returned to the same location.

-What qualifies someone to use an absentee ballot?

Group Discussion Notes – Room 10

Summary:

This group consisted of 10 adults and two Shaker High School students. The overall consensus in the room (11-1) by the end of the discussion, was that they would personally support the district putting forth Option A (\$147.9 million) to voters in May, but believe the greater community would better support Option B (\$106.3 million) based on cost alone. Group members called it the “safer option.” However, they often referred to Option B (\$106.3 million) as “kicking the can down the road” in regards to the proposed work at the high school. They expressed concern that since the high school needs will still have to be addressed a few years down the road, the work would be at a higher cost to taxpayers.

Highlights of the discussion:

- No matter what option is put forth to voters, better and further explanation of components of the project need to be given.
- Further breakdowns of costs are needed
 - (Example: breakdown the \$22.5 million in renovations at the middle school; what is the cost of renovating the auditorium? etc.)
- Turf field: Group members liked how Supt. Corr presented the impact of the turf field on the tax levy. More education on pieces of the project like this would be beneficial in communication.
- Turf field concerns: Group members expressed concern over the turf field and if it is needed. Some questioned the potential usage and wanted more education on how that number was reached.

Facilitation notes:

Options A & B: Potential strengths and risks

- I have no objection to enhanced security, especially in today’s world
- I do like the renovation of the STEM labs, these are important issues that all districts need to address
- I voted yes for the first proposal in December. I graduated in 1997 and I’m looking at the same schools and buildings now. The district has been very frugal, and not much has been done over the years. As a lacrosse coach, I support the turf field. We cancelled two scrimmages this week because of the weather.
- Something needs to be done at the mass level to take care of needs in the district
- I think the strength of option A is that we’re taking care of the high school
- With option B, are we kicking the can down the road? These are extensive projects. I would prefer option A, to get it done now
- I don’t understand why the relocation of the guidance office is so expensive

- I think with option B you're kicking the can down the road
- I graduated many years before 1999, and they're still the same classrooms. There's no question this project is needed.
- I voted against the original plan, but would be willing to support option B. It would be irresponsible to tackle the enrollment projections at the high school right now. Also, technology needs could change, things could become obsolete.
- I think there is a lot of value in having a school district with taxes that are so low. We need to focus on the cost per student. We have a lot of senior citizens, and to ask them to sacrifice is a real thing. We need to figure out what's urgent. We don't want to get too far ahead of ourselves.
- I don't know if I could support option A. STEM sounds good on paper. What does renovation mean? Is it more of a want to renovate or a need? I feel like sticking with option B is safer.
- Where did we save the \$50 million from the original proposal?
- For the auditorium, what are we doing there?
- I need more explanation about the turf field. The cost seems high
- Do all of the suburban council schools have a turf field?
- Right now, our sports students are practicing in church parking lots. The kids I played against in college, who had turf fields in high school, were that much more advanced. Turf fields tend to pay for themselves.
- A lot of people might say the \$1.5 million could be used in better ways.
- Student: I wouldn't have the turf field as one of my main needs; it doesn't have to happen right away.
- I see putting off the work at the high school as detrimental. Let's do it ahead of time. What happens when the students who get used to STEM at the elementary level get to the high school? I'm a senior citizen at 78 years old, but am willing to pay the price for our students.
- The option for cross-curricular work is important, having the most up to date areas would allow our students to be current with others.
- Student: I like the science labs options. Also, a bigger weight room is needed, it's packed in there every day.
- I feel putting off the high school renovations would not benefit anything at all.
- I feel what the district needs to use the word modernization instead of renovation. And explain what is there now versus what should be there.
- I think having the synthetic field would be beneficial; you can play more games back to back to back. If we had a turf field, every kid would have been practicing on it for the past couple of weeks. I also see value in more art rooms, everything is about STEM instead of STEAM.
- If you want to go with the higher option (option A), explain the return on investment of the various project components
- From Option A to B, it seems we're trying to alleviate the sticker shock. But we not are getting enough information about the cost of these specific items.
- I think the biggest strength of Option B is the lower cost. I look at the impact on the taxpayer. North Colonie is typically ranked third or fourth in the area. More money spent is not always better. My parents moved away because of the higher taxes. Higher taxes drive property values

down. I want to make sure we keep that balance. It's extremely frustrating for me. There's only a certain amount people can bear.

- With some explanation of the various elements, it becomes clear to me that option A would be better in the long run. We're just kicking the can down the road; it might cost more down the road.
- Student: with all of the STEM jobs that are open, that's what's needed today. If you push it off, it's not going to help anybody. I want our younger siblings to have more a positive experience.
- I would like North Colonie to take a look at what they do in the career and technical education area and take a look at what Capital Region BOCES does
- I like the smaller tax impact of Option B, don't get me wrong, but they really need to modernize the facilities at the high school
- I both of these proposals; if the 6th grade remained in the school, maybe funds could be shifted to more critical areas
- I see the school district being crippled without a massive project being done.
- If the project doesn't get done now, nothing will be cheaper in 5 years from now. Kick the bucket down the road. Do it now, or you're going to be revisiting another project that may not pass.
- My son will be in a class with 23 kids as a first grader. I think they need to do a 6-7-8 school, with renovations at the middle school.
- The strength of Option B is the sticker price. But I feel like if we take B, how many years do we have until the high school work needs to be done? The chances of another project getting through is minimal.
- I don't see any of the enrollment projections being wrong; if anything, they are likely low.

Would the greater community support Option A or B?

- I feel Option A is better, there are so many more positive benefits
- Personally, I would like A, but I don't know what the community would support
- I like option A because all students benefit. I would hate to be a parent of an 8th grader and know that my child wouldn't benefit from the improvements
- I think option A would need to have more cost breakdowns for people to support it
- The better value is option A in the long run, but it needs to be marketed with more explanations
- I think you can sell the \$147.9 million option, but explain the why, and the individual costs
- The turf field slide was good; when you're proposing such an extensive project, we need more details.
- The community would need better explanation of the enhanced aid
- I was insulted as a voter in December that if I didn't vote yes, capturing the enhanced aid done.
- I feel there could be overages in these cost estimates, maybe they've been conservative with numbers. Grades 6-8 will free up some space. I think if you don't go with option B, those that were outraged at the polls in December will show up again.
- I think what the board has to be very careful with is, if second proposal is turned down, they will be hard pressed for a third shot.

- It would be a disaster if the next project proposal doesn't pass.
- I think whatever one they decide to go with, the marketing of what is included is key.
- Indicate when the last time the buildings were renovated.
- Something has to pass.
- We have a very diverse town, transparency and getting the word out is key.
- Voter apathy; now that it has been defeated, those people may come again. Option B would much more palatable to the voters, but at the same time, the BOE and superintendent may want to consider breaking it out into propositions.
- Better communication is vital, not a lot of people attended the meetings.
- I think option B will pass