

Verbatim Responses

Recorded on worksheets as a result of the small group work activity
Community Engagement Session #4 • March 24, 2022

On March 24, 2022 Building Our Future Together held a small-group work session to discuss *Community Recommendations*. After a presentation on the topic, participants divided themselves among seven tables and prepared responses to the following activity and tasks:

Activity:

Task #1: Questions

First, we would like to know what questions you have about the material we've presented. On your table, you will find two cards. Your table should come up with two questions — one for each card, and reach consensus at your table regarding your two questions. Once the work time is complete, a panel of presenters will respond to your questions.

Task #2: Task #2: Clear - Clarify - Takeaways

There are three components to the second activity: Clear, Clarify, and Takeaways:

- First, we would like to know which three to five key points from the presentation are clear to you.
 - Second, we would like to know up to five points that are somewhat unclear and must be better explained to improve understanding for others.
 - Third, what are three key "takeaways" you think everybody in Batavia should know.
-

Task#1: Questions

What questions do you have about the material we've presented?

- What's the approach to convince voters that don't have children in BPS?
- If the referendum fails for B or C, do we default to option A? Then what??
- Is there the opportunity to offer a plan that falls between the 3?
-
- Would you please elaborate about the Open House? When? Will school be in session? Are all of the buildings going to be open for the community to view?
-
- Expand on cost of closing school vs additional bus routes.
- Do we really think we can go to \$250 million in bond financing and really only increase property taxes by \$370 per property?
- If you went with Option B for \$180 million why couldn't you rebuild the four elementary schools and spend less for the middle school and high school renovations?

- If option B is chosen, how long will the deferral last to update AGS & JBN? How does this deferral meet the needs of all students?
- Is the bond rating tied to the decline in enrollment? If enrollment goes up, does the rating go down?
- Where do we see the input from the teachers who use the spaces on a daily basis?
- Is there a breakdown of the renovations being proposed for the Middle and High Schools?
- How confident are you that you can follow the posted timeline? 4 years to complete all construction seems optimistic.
- Is the proposed timeline for building renovations realistic? 2 years for building a school (let alone 4, ;potentially) seems very aggressive.
- We are still struggling to understand how renovation costs more than new construction. The estimation formula is admittedly somewhat unclear, but we are wondering what it is about renovation that makes it so expensive.

Task #2: Clear-Clarify-Takeaways

Clear - We would like to know which three to five key points from the presentation are clear to you.

Table #1

Eliminating an elementary school is not a popular choice within the community
BPS's past and current financial health/position.
Property tax impact

Table #2

There is a declining birth rate, even though families with kids are moving here.
Something needs to be done to address school conditions. _____ is not an option.
There are three options (A/B/C) to consider

Table #4

All buildings need updating and/or repairs
Postponing these updates will increase costs due to state of schools
Explanation of bond expiration and tax impact from the second meeting was clear.
Tax rate comparison and other related charts contained good, clear information.

Table #5

Make it clear - 1 middle school, 1 high school.

Table #6

Based on the presentation, it is very clear that option A is not a viable option.
The information regarding enrollment declining is clear.
The data presented in the slides gives a clearer picture of the needs of the district.

Table #8

Every school needs updates.
Running a school district is expensive.
Declining enrollment
Option B defers decision on what to do with 2 of the elementary schools.

Table #11

The three options (A, B, C) are clear.

Clarify - We would like to know up to 5 points that are somewhat unclear and must be better explained to improve understanding for others.

Table #1

More details regarding the increased future cost to rebuild the two schools that are deferred in Plan B.
Birth rate and enrollment projection info was confusing and difficult to follow.
The level and description of the most serious issues at each of the schools.
Plans to limit student disruption if new schools are built.

Table #2

Need a complete breakdown of all three options.
Is the cost estimate realistic and representative of the quality that we hope the new schools will have?
Have you secured multiple bids for construction?
Provide more robust details about anticipated changes to student experience during construction.

Table #4

What does "snapshot" mean? Birth and elementary projection graphs were confusing
We would like to be provided a higher level of detail regarding the cost estimates/comparisons. "We've done the math".
Open house or other community members may have questions about closing a school versus spending the money to renovate/rebuild.
Community members are going to want to know what specifically is wrong with the schools and how they got into such bad shape.

Table #5

As the work and students progress, how do we make sure that certain students won't have construction through grade school, middle school and high school.
How do we make it equitable across the elementary schools.
During the construction, if materials and construction costs rise, who is on the hook for the increase.
Would like more information on details of what each plan is.

Table #6

What are the specific core components that need to be addressed at the middle and high school.
It is not clear why we are not prioritizing the buildings (elementary) with the highest needs.
In option b over renovating the middle and high school.
It is not necessarily clear to the public that the bond is going to expire - thus the district needs to move quickly.

Table #8

Make sure to address where students will be during construction.
Make sure to include which schools will be replaced vs. updates for each option: A, B, C
More clarity about tax impact on Option B (add percentages)
Need to make clear that the tax impacts are based on a \$350,000 home.

Table #11

What is the marginal tax rate change if Option C is chosen. (vs. average tax rate change of \$370).
How will the referendum item actually be selected. At times, it appears that this process seems funneled to Option C.
How could Option C occur with all 6 projects running concurrently. Wouldn't it be wiser to prioritize projects in a queue - i.e. start at RMSD or BHS.

Could we see some details about enhancements vs. new construction.
It may be financially feasible to build all 6 projects at once, but is it actually realistic to assume all projects could be supplied and staffed simultaneously.