

Let's Plan for the Future Together!



Visit onteora.k12.ny.us/PlanTogether10:

- Take the Survey by March 10
- Get the Zoom link to join the March 30 Community Forum

Read the School Building Utilization and Grade Configuration Study, as well as the Restructuring Plan (open document, which detail the K-6 options that can be considered with our new Grades 5-8 Middle School configuration.

Survey responses needed by March 10!

Enter comments by slide number at agenda.
An asterisk represents an item that is not on the agenda.



Community voice and feedback is critical in helping the Board make important decisions about restructuring our district and building a long-term plan. As we embark on this work, the Board's Ad Hoc Long-Term Planning Committee is asking residents to take a brief survey to share their opinions about restructuring, community needs, and communication preferences.

In the January 24 meeting, the Board of Education voted to move Grade 5 from Oteora Middle School. This decision may lead to addressing scheduling challenges and allow our middle school students more opportunities to access required courses. In addition to reaching decisions and needed resources and supports, it will also help students form stronger relationships at a critical time in their development, and provide staff with the time necessary to identify, assess, and implement repairs and interventions to ensure students move onto the High School with the greatest chances for success.

This change will not take place until September 2024, allowing 18 months to ensure thoughtful planning and collaboration. Moving Grade 5 to the Middle School means that important decisions are also needed regarding our K-5 elementary program. The Board wants community input as it considers the next steps, so spreading this survey as another tool to engage stakeholders in the process.

The results of the feedback gathered will be shared during an Online Community Forum on Thursday March 30 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.



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The Board of Education's Ad Hoc Long-Term Planning Committee is seeking community volunteers to participate in a series of collaborative, structured discussions designed to gather input into the development of the Oteora Central School District's long-term, district-wide plan. Participants will attend a series of three evening World Café style discussion forums for 6:30-8:00 PM on:

- January 25, 2023 at the Middle/High School Cafeteria (know date 2-2)
- February 28, 2023 (to be held remotely; a Zoom link will be provided)
- March 27, 2023 at the Middle/High School Cafeteria (know date 3-29)

Those interested should complete a brief online volunteer questionnaire by January 10. The questionnaire can be accessed at onteora.k12.ny.us/survey23 or by QR code provided.

The goal is to have balanced representation from students, parents, faculty, staff, and various groups within the community (senior citizens/retirees, business owners, elected officials, makers, non-profits, community groups, etc.). If there are more respondents for a particular group than are necessary, participants will be chosen by lottery.



RESPONSES NEEDED
BY JANUARY 19!
VISIT onteora.k12.ny.us/survey23

Rate cuestionario ha sido traducido al español.
Responda antes del 19 de enero de 2023.



Onteora Board of Education Meeting 4/11/2023



Board Goal

The Board of Education adopted the following goal for the 2022-2023 school year:

Support the development of the District's long-term, district-wide plan that addresses current challenges and opportunities that have already been identified, **including declining enrollment, staff shortages, facilities needs, budget, student achievement, community impact, and the expansion of the middle school to add sixth graders.** The Board acknowledges that additional challenges and opportunities will likely be discovered throughout the exploration process. The Board aims to accomplish this through input from the Superintendent, a Board ad hoc committee, the Shared Decision-Making committee, PTA's as well as clear and consistent community outreach. In the next year, the Board plans to accomplish: Forming a Board ad hoc committee, holding at least one public meeting to discuss the District's long-term plan, reviewing the Building Utilization and Grade Configuration Study by Dr. Kevin S. Baughman, and requesting at least one progress report from the Superintendent.

Board Goal Components

The goal contains multiple components:

- 1. Creation of a long-term plan**
- 2. Expansion of the middle school to include 6th grade**
- 3. Forming a Board Ad Hoc Committee**
- 4. Holding at least one public meeting to discuss the long-term plan**
- 5. Review of the Building Utilization and Grade Configuration Study by Kevin Baughman**

Historical Timeline

(presentation on Historical Information on Long-Term Planning webpage)

June 2004 - West Hurley campus is closed

2004-2005 - Enrollment = 2,111. (Elementary = 972, MS/HS = 1,139) Middle School Steering Committee reviewed the Middle School configuration and recommended a grade 5-8 Middle School in a completely separate building.

2007-2008 - KSQ Architects are engaged to review all possible district configurations. Enrollment = 1,949, with projections of 1,500 (documents available on the Long-Term Planning webpage)

2010-2011: Board created a Middle School Task Force to advise the Board on the future of the Middle School and whether the existence of a Middle School is the ideal model or if some other configuration would be more educationally and fiscally sound. Enrollment = 1,544

Middle School Task Force recommended a grade 6-8 Middle School

Historical Timeline

(presentation on Historical Information on Long-Term Planning webpage)

2012-2013: Enrollment = 1,406. Three K-6 elementary buildings are reconfigured to current structure: two grade K-3 buildings and one grade 4-6 building.

2018 -2019: Enrollment = 1,209.

Board Goal adopted:

Support the development of a long-term district-wide plan that strategically addresses educational goals, declining enrollment, facilities, community impact, budget and cost-saving measures. Accomplish this through input from Superintendent recommendations, Board Ad Hoc Committee, Shared Decision Making Committee and community outreach.

Historical Timeline

(study and presentation available on Long-Term Planning webpage)

2019-2020 - Building Utilization and Grade Configuration Study is performed and presented by Dr. Kevin Baughman.

A projected declining enrollment over next ten years challenges the use of the current grade level configuration and use of all five schools *due to a need for*: a) equity of class sizes between schools; b) providing a continuum of services for children with special needs; c) improved communication and consistency of practice; d) use of content and common vocabulary among staff; and e) long term availability of resources. (See pp. 38, 46-47, 50, 55, 59, 63)

Long term, the current grade configuration requires the most bus runs, provides the least educational advantages, and *generates greatest recurring costs* of all scenarios studied. (See pp. 46, 63)

Board Ad-Hoc Events:

World Cafe 1/31/23 (in person) 2/28/23 (virtual) and 3/28/23 (in person)

Community Survey 2/10/23 - 3/10/23 (in joint collaboration with BOE Communication Committee)

Community Forum (in joint collaboration with BOE Communication Committee) March 30, 2023

In addition, the following presentations were made:

1. [Televised showing of Baughman Report](#)
2. [Presentation](#) at BOE meeting regarding movement of 6th grade
3. [Presentation](#) at BOE meeting of Historical overview of reconfiguration decisions
4. [Long Term Planning links](#) in District website
5. [Community Forum](#) in District website

World Cafe Process



What is a Cafe?

A collaborative setting that:

- **Encourages and promotes a focused conversation.**
- **Values and honors the perspective that each participant brings to the conversation.**
- **Allows for an exchange of thoughts and ideas through conversation.**
- **Promotes thought and reflection as a result of the conversation.**

Process: World Cafe

Board Ad-Hoc Committee decided on the creation of three World Cafes which would include individuals from different stakeholder groups:

Community members, faculty, and staff all received access to an interest in participating survey.

62 Participants expressed interest - Groups of five or six members were created(total of 35 participants included)

Groups were created to incorporate and balance members from the following stakeholder groups:

Parents (all schools including sped) Teachers/staff all buildings Administration (District wide) PTA Booster	Town Government Community Members Emergency Services Business Owners Community Resources
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Data Sources

Baughman Report

Comparison Scenarios

Enrollment History

Enrollment Projections

**Home School/Parentally Placed
Numbers**

**Class Size Regulations and
Average class sizes**

**Why Students May be Outside
District Lines**

**Transportation Projections and
Comparisons of Bus Rides**

**School Building Survey and
Potential Building Renovations**

Allowable Building Uses

Staffing Shortages

World Cafe Feedback

Community Survey Feedback

Questions Discussed: 1/31, 2/28, and 3/28 Cafe

1. What do you notice and wonder about the enrollment charts?
2. What community supports/resources are needed in our individual town communities?
3. How might we utilize facilities to the optimal benefit of all students in the district in an equitable way?
4. What are the pros and cons of the following options proposed by Dr. Baughman's report? (see handout of possible scenarios)
5. What does the additional handout information make you wonder about the pros and cons of each scenario in the Baughman Report?(please use comparison chart handout)
6. What elements make up an ideal K-5 school? Or - What are the important components of a K-5 school?
7. What are the best ways to continue to communicate with District stakeholders as we move forward with the long term planning process?

Feedback can be found [here](#):



Community Survey



Community Survey

The Community Survey was created in collaboration with BOE Ad-Hoc and BOE Communication Committee. It was sent out via post card to every resident in the community, posted on our website, and promoted via social media by the District as well as our Towns.

Questions:

1. What is your role?
2. What is your preference for long term planning restructuring?
3. Why is this scenario your preference?
4. If one or more of the elementary buildings are closed, for what purpose would you like to see them used?
5. Do you have any other ideas for community building use?
6. Going forward, how would you like to be informed about ongoing action and planning around long term planning?

Community Survey

470 Responses

Responses received from 2/10/23-3/10/23

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**Survey responses
needed by March 10!**

Este cuestionario ha sido
traducido al español.
¡Se necesitan respuestas antes
del 10 de marzo!



Community voice and feedback is critical in helping the Board make important decisions about restructuring our district and building a long-term plan. As we embark on this work, the Board's Ad Hoc Long-Term Planning Committee is asking residents to take a brief survey to share their opinions about restructuring, community needs, and communication preferences.

At its January 24 meeting, the Board of Education voted to move Grade 6 into Onteora Middle School. This decision was made to address scheduling challenges and allow our middle school students more opportunities to access required curriculum, in addition to enriching electives and needed resources and supports. It will also help students form stronger relationships at a critical time in their development, and provide staff with the time necessary to identify, assess, and implement supports and interventions to ensure students move onto the High School with the greatest chance for success.

This change will not take place until September 2024, allowing 18 months to ensure thoughtful planning and collaboration. Moving Grade 6 to the Middle School means that important decisions are also needed regarding our K-5 elementary program. The Board wants community input as it considers the next steps, so is providing this survey as another tool to engage stakeholders in the process.

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Community Survey Responses

Majority of Responses came from Parents of Woodstock Students and Community Members

Majority of those surveyed recommended closure of Bennett, with Phoenicia and Woodstock becoming K-5

Majority of those surveyed would like to see more UPK/daycare availability

Majority of those surveyed would like to be kept informed through newsletters and emails

Additional feedback can be found [here](#)

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- Read the School Building Utilization and Grade Configuration Study, as well as the Restructuring Plan (open document, which detail the 85 options that can be considered with our new Grades 5-8 Middle School configuration)

Survey responses needed by March 10!

Final comments to be made individually at agenda. An additional representative enters all 10 to be input!



Community voice and feedback is critical in helping the Board make important decisions about reorganizing our district and building a long-term plan. As we embark on this work, the Board's Ad Hoc Long-term Planning Committee is asking residents to take a brief survey to share their opinions about restructuring, community needs, and communication preferences.

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Community Forum



Purpose of a Community Forum

- Provide transparency to the community on the feedback received through World Cafes and Community Survey
- Presentation of data and data sources not tied to any decision
- Opportunity for additional community input to share with BOE

Video of Community Forum can be found [here](#)

Community Forum

Lasted from 6:30 to just over 8:30pm

Trustee Bishop and Trustee Reimondo were co-hosts

Over 120 participants were noted

Over 100 comments and questions

A complete list can be found [here](#)

Enrollment Questions

How did you make information visible to future school members (my daughter is currently in Nursery school)? How do you project data #s pre-pandemic (which changed the community drastically) ?
How are you accounting for the new families who have moved here since the pandemic wish preschool children?
Has the recent influx of younger residents/first time parents in our district been considered in the enrollment forecast?
Have you considered how school closures in Woodstock and Phoenicia may impact present & future families wanting to move to the area (people like schools in their community when they buy property - I did), further strengthening a vacation location/Airbnb mentality and less of a full time community mentality
If I read correctly; the survey of student population was done in 2019. Has there been any conversation about the huge influx of families from the city within the last few years?
I am in Shokan. Just on my block three families, including my own, have moved in with 4 children in the district total and within the next five years will be three more. That is 7 children on one block.
What will happen if the reconfiguration doesn't support incoming future student population? If the incoming students are mis-projected and there's not enough room to house them?
Can projections be made about the district's future population? At a recent town meeting, some short term rental owners stated they would not be able to afford their homes without being able to rent them. If this were strictly enforced and second home owners leave, how would this affect our population and tax base in light of the housing market and recession.
Shouldn't the Baughman report be refreshed? These plans are based on stale, obsolete and unrepresentative data. Shouldn't a reassessment of the current future student base be done?
Dr. Baughman got 8 months to do his report yet this seems to want to be an expedited decision making process?
Will there be an opportunity to consider other options to keep the village schools open and increase enrollment - such as universal Pre K or opening to local kids outside the district?
You keep referring to children who have moved here since the pandemic. How can you account for children born here since the pandemic before you make the decision to close one or more schools?
Certain other districts in the area permit out-of-district students to attend their schools for a tuition fee. Has the Board considered this? Has it reached out to those districts for an analysis of whether those programs are successful in boosting enrollment?
Re: soliciting enrollment for Kindergarten — can the board help facilitate prospective enrollment/identification for future generations (i.e. 2026-2027, 2027-2028, 2028-2029) to allow parents to identify newborns/young children who we intend to enroll currently have no place to 'show' exist as future students?
How do you account for the children who were born out of district before their families moved here and/or those who may have been born out of district/in another county/state/country, while living here?
Has the Board identified any impediments to counting pre-K students in its enrollment numbers?
What is the best way to count prospective students who are too young for those daycare and Pre-K sites?
What is the date of the most recent birth data used? What efforts are being done to measure future enrollment for students not yet in the school system (<5) AND who have moved to the area?
Hello! The live birth data does not capture my 3.5 year old son (who is zoned for woodstock elementary) because we lived in Greene County when he was born. I imagine others will be in a similar situation. How can these future students be captured in the data?
What about parts of Woodstock zoned as Kingston? Are we working with the Kingston district to understand enrollment trends with West Hurley & Woodstock?

Additional Enrollment Information

	September	June	Difference (from prior June)
19-20	1211	1190	-21
20-21	1196	1175	-15
21-22	1122	1114	-61
22-23	1100	1098*	-16

* As of March 31, 2023, total enrollment decline from September 2019 to March 2023 is 113 students

Sept 1, 2022 1100

Exits -61

NYS Public Schools – 29

NYC - 8

Home School - 0

Private School - 6

Other/State/Country - 17

Enrollments 59

NYS Public Schools – 28

NYC - 3

Home School - 12

Private School - 7

Other/State/Country - 9

March 31, 2023 1098

Enrollment Questions

The District is surveying day care providers and pre-schools (not just those in our districts) for additional Birth through age 5 children. There has not been an increase in school age children since the beginning of the pandemic. Under age 5 children with older school age siblings are accounted for through the registration process as household members.

If the future configuration is a central campus, the design phase would take several years, thereby ensuring that any additional influx of families during the pandemic would be captured. If the future configuration includes two K-5 buildings, there is currently more than sufficient capacity due to loss of enrollment.

The District previously offered a tuition option to out of districts residents. Over the course of four years, one student enrolled. OCSD tuition rate is the highest in the county as calculated by NYSED.

Birth rates are accounted for annually. Survival rates include a historical look at changes in enrollment (other than births). Our enrollment projections have historically been higher than our actual enrollment. As is shown on the previous slide, there is a fluid movement of families between districts every year.

School District boundaries are set by NYS. In order to change a boundary, the other district (ie Kingston) would have to be willing to give up its taxable property. Historically, no district has been willing to do that.

We are currently tracking 72 potential kindergarten students for the 2023-2024 school year, with several of those individuals expected to attend private schools with their siblings.

Staffing Questions

What will happen to the principals and other support staff if you close Woodstock and Phoenicia?

Will you be looking at the potential impact of increased commute time for teachers and staff and how it might impact retention.

You spoke about teacher retention, but what happens to the principals if all three schools move to Bennett?

What reasons have been identified for the decline in new teacher applications, both in the Onteora district and statewide? And what might be done to entice more teachers?

How many staff will be excessed with each option?

Staffing Questions

Any staff reductions are dependent on many factors, most important of which is student need. The District may also offer retirement incentives in order to minimize the need for faculty, staff, and administrative reductions. The District attempts on an on-going basis to reduce by attrition where possible. Those individuals whose positions are eliminated will remain on a Preferred Eligibility List (PEL) that would allow them to return to their position once an opening occurs.

Depending on building assignments, commute times may increase or decrease. Many faculty and staff are assigned in different buildings regularly based on student needs.

The decline in teacher applications is tied to the reduction in enrollment in teacher preparation programs. This is often attributed to both the pandemic and the changes in the Teacher Retirement System that affects new entrants to the profession.

BOE Process Questions for Discussion

I see the public response to the community survey was quite overwhelming in favor of one plan. I'd like to understand what information the BOE would value heavily enough to make a decision overruling such categorical feedback from the community.

How does this all relate to the upcoming election?

Understanding that there is not a projected date for a vote on which plan to choose, does the BOE have a timeline/process in place for how they will proceed with exploring the options and making the final decision?

Now that the world cafes are over, what is the projected time line for the board to vote. There has been discussion that 4/18 was a suggested date for the vote. Has that changed?

Has or will the BOE worked with a design team on this whole process and longterm planning, or are they unilaterally making these decisions on their own without any expert support?

What would occur if the BOE decided on a central campus and then voters did not vote yes on that budget?

Understanding the purpose of the committee is to make a recommendation to the full board about a go-forward plan, what is the board relying on for that recommendation and how are they weighing the various factors? How will that recommendation be formalized and made public, and when can we expect that?

The slides that summarize Dr. Baughman's report on pages 13-15 seem to focus on highlighting the beneficial aspects of Scenario D, without mentioning the drawbacks of that scenario or any benefits of other options. It omits, for example, Dr. Baughman's finding that the only scenario with net positive sentiment from those surveyed in 2019 was Scenario A. This creates a perception among some community members that the Board has already made up its mind. Given that the survey respondents primarily supported Scenario A (both in 2019 and 2023), how is this community input being weighed against the Board's preferences? Is the Board concerned that the public will not support any construction bond associated with Scenario D?

Planning/Timeline Questions

How does this 4 million number for Woodstock match the need to have/nice to have list which seemed minimal for Woodstock ?
What will the process be for determining any future use for a building if the BOE decides to close any of the elementary schools? Thinking along the lines of preventing a West Hurley Elementary situation, will you be working with towns to find a path forward before students are no longer in those buildings? This seems like it is also a big part of the process that requires a lot of planning to get it right.
How easy is it to make decisions that will be rolled out and have impacts long after the current board's attrition?
Will there be a capital expense estimate attached to each scenario before a scenario decision is made?
For a decision that is being driven by financial considerations, wouldn't it make sense for the board to be able to review and consider the full financial consequences (e.g., construction costs, cost savings) associated with each of the plans before they make such an important decision? I understand that there will be preliminary estimates, but it seems there should be something more firm for a decision of this import.
Monica mentioned that with the cost savings of closures you'd love to lower tax levy but what is the probability of that happening?
Was the tax levy lowered with West Hurley closure? What was done with that annual cost savings?
Why don't we know a hard date on when these proposals will be voted on?
I'm confused about why each scenario wouldn't have a projected time and cost associated with it.
when are you making a decision on this and when will it start to be rolled out? and will be be given an opportunity to vote on it?
What is the timing of the reconfiguration plan roll out? When is the board looking to make a decision?
Are there tax implications to community residents, including those that might occur from a capital construction project? Would any of the hypothetical savings in these plans be returned to taxpayers?
What are the development costs for all of the scenarios?
What now? What does the majority vote mean for future next steps ?

Planning/Timeline Questions

can you talk about timing for each of these scenarios? it seems like no matter what happens, work needs to get done on the buildings for this to work out.

Dr. Baughman noted that “To move forward in this process and garner community support and maintain trust, district officials would need to consider the school-community general concerns shared in the survey. District officials would need to ensure a clear and transparent process for decision making, and how and who would be involved.” He then lists actions that should be done, like an architectural review. This raises a few questions: What efforts has the BOE made to address concerns raised in the 2019 survey? Will it review architectural options for each scenario, or just one? Will municipalities with schools on the chopping have a voice in this process?

When will we know which scenario will be chosen and focus on the end result

What is the timeline for implementation for each of the three scenarios?

When will the decision be made?

Dr. Baughman notes in his report that this District does not have a Strategic Plan – that is, a “detailed list of needs and aspirations with accompanying strategies and a timeline.” Report at 67. Shouldn’t this be accomplished first so that the District’s goals are clear, before adopting a particular course of action that would shut down at least one school?

Baughman stressed the importance of costing out options with architects both when he was hired and when he presented his survey results. What are the construction costs for each option?

Capital Project Timeline Example for Discussion



Board Outline & Expectations

Review Building Condition Surveys, Facility needs, Instructional wants

Project Budget

Cost out with escalation and contingencies

Project Schedule

Supply chain, summer work, school year work

Recruitment for Staff and Student Questions

Are there any student/family recruitment endeavors planned or taking place?

Are there plans to conduct an economic impact study to more fully understand the long term impact of closing schools? As far the impacts on local businesses, home values, population growth, etc?

What is the tuition rate?

Some other districts allow enrollment for non-residents for a fee - so not sure if what Victoria answered for the other question about Kingston families applies? If they are paying an incremental fee to attend a school not in their district but still paying taxes in their current district why can't that work?

To piggyback on the previous question about families who live in Woodstock but are zoned for Kingston and Saugerties school, what would the process be to reverse that placement- so that these families who pay Woodstock property taxes are able to actually send their children to Onteora?

Is the district considering and/or developing virtual educational program options that may serve to stabilize/increase student enrollment?

Would Onteora ever consider an out of district program, allowing students from other districts for a tuition, similar to Rhinebeck?

have you considered offering exceptions to the families in woodstock who were zoned for kingston when the zena school closed?

Thank you for the thorough and transparent information that was provided at last nights meeting. I was only able to attend till 7:45, so please excuse me if you have already covered this topic. I was wondering if the district has thought about letting students from surrounding areas pay tuition to attend Onteora. I know that Windham is now doing something like this and I know several families who would love to attend our school, but live just outside the district. I know that in many cases where this idea has been implemented parents are responsible for transportation, so that wouldn't be an issue

Recruitment for Staff and Student Questions

The District has unsuccessfully attempted advertisement in the past to promote the educational benefits of Onteora in order to attract additional families. The housing shortage remains an impediment.

The 2023-2024 Regular Tuition is \$26,517 for students in grades K-6, and \$22,325 for students in grade 7-12. Special Education Tuition is \$88,462 for students in grade K-6, and \$84,270 for students in grade 7-12, however, **the District can only charge for regular tuition for all students but must provide special education services for those that have services through an IEP. The District can only charge the special education rate for those students placed in another district by their home school district, not by parents paying tuition.**

As mentioned previously, the District offered a tuition option to out of districts residents in prior years. It was in place for four years. One student was enrolled.

There is a regional recruitment effort being spearheaded by Ulster BOCES as well as efforts to address the housing shortage.

All school district boundaries are set by NYS. In order to alter boundaries, all affected districts must agree and NYSED must also approve. The district giving up a property must agree to lose the tax revenue associated with property in question. This historically has been pursued multiple times, but no other district has agreed.

The District is not considering virtual education programs. We do not have the capacity to staff virtual education in addition to our in person education. Virtual education is available as an option in homeschooling.

Building Use Questions

Have you received input from Woodstock or Phonecia Town governments as to how they would like to see thei school buildings used?

After seeing how west hurley just rotted in the small town of west hurley, how do you explain how two empty schools in two small towns isn't so depressing?? The idea of having an empty school with no children in it makes both town so less appealing. A thriving town has schools.

Why is the West Hurley School still empty? Are there plans for the building? Is there a risk of another empty building with these options?

The presentation mentioned that it was previously recommended that middle school have their own building. Why was that not implemented and is it still being considered at all in this restructuring?

Please address Baughman's suggested use for Bennett as administrative offices.

Could you please explain how the survey themes were determined quantitatively? Some of the themes for the Bennet only option felt like they were more of a "pitch" from the district than community feedback.

Building Use Questions

The District has had and will continue to have quarterly meetings scheduled with all Town Supervisors. These meetings have included discussions about the long-term planning process and potential use of buildings. As we move through the planning process, these discussions will continue.

We are still under contract for the sale of the West Hurley School and continue to work toward the closing. This process was initiated under the direction of previous Boards of Education and has been an ongoing process.

The suggestion of utilizing Bennett for Administrative Offices was one of the few viable options to address the safety concerns related to a vacant building on the Boiceville campus. This is a viable use. It is not recommended that the building be utilized for outside organizations due to the location.

The recommendation regarding the MS being its own building occurred when student population in those buildings was much higher. NYSED would not support the addition of a new building with the amount of capacity within the District.

UPK Questions

Where does universal pre-k fit? Why not put them in underutilized schools?

Could Bennet be used for UPK or special Ed services?

Where are the current upk programs located?

Isn't the UPK Program based on a lottery?

Will there be an opportunity to consider other options to keep the village schools open and increase enrollment - such as universal Pre K or opening to local kids outside the district?

UPK Questions

We currently partner with two UPK providers for our District. There is a lottery system, but we have no wait list at this time, and there has not been for several years. Adding UPK to our buildings would remove this funding source from our community partners. Additionally, one of the requirements of the UPK funding is partnering with local providers and a percentage of the grant must be allocated to community partners in order to receive the funding.

Incorporating UPK into our buildings would reduce the number of students that can be served due to our higher expense basis. The UPK funding is only available to students who reside in our District boundaries. Each district has an individual allocation.

Communication

Will the recording of this meeting be made public?

Will all of the questions asked tonight be made public?

How do you expect to reach or query people who don't regularly check emails, maybe even aren't on socials or online altogether, or aren't caught up on their mail?

Would you consider assembling a community committee to help support any data / information gathering needed?

Would you be open to community support, including professionals in this area with a lot of experience, to design a comprehensive data collection surveying all residents, a mini-census, to get an accurate and CURRENT baseline of incoming students?

We're on a long delay from question ask to question visibility. I'm not sure how repetitive some questions I have are. Is there a way to make them visible in real time?

Have we asked the children what they think and want?

Is this meeting the entire extent of a 'community forum'? Will there be ANY opportunity for a dialogue session?

can we have an open town hall or something so we can ask follow up questions and actually have an exchange about this.

**Correction/typo to my last Q: how does the Board decide who to send communications: mailers and emails. Not every resident in the District has received these communications.

How did the board decide who to send communication? his week's emails to? At the 3/21 board meeting it was shared that there is no email list to share emailed communications. There are many families who did not receive the emails this week.

Why were 2 distinct options (closing just Woodstock or closing just Phoenicia) combined into one option in the community survey?

curious how many people are logged into this webinar

How many postcards were sent out and how many people responded to the questionnaire?

Why are we unable to see how many ppl are in attendance to this meeting and what questions have been asked already?

Why have you made this such a controlled event instead of an actual forum? Blocking people from seeing each other's questions just begs the question "what are you hiding?" This is a sham and you are not fooling anyone.

Why were more specific options not presented in the survey? For example, why wasn't there an option to close Phoenicia and keep Woodstock and Bennett open for K-5 students? I understand not wanting to pin communities against each other, but having more specific data would be helpful IMO.

Communication

The recording of the forum is posted on the Long-Term planning webpage: [Community Forum - Zoom](#)

We sent postcard mailings to every address in addition to the social media postings. There were 12,633 postcards mailed. We also asked the Towns to share our social media posts.

The options presented in the survey were modeled after the options provided in the report from Dr. Baughman.

Enrollment projections are useful, but must be understood as fluid. Families move into and out of the District consistently due to a myriad of factors.

Community members are welcome to share their thoughts with the Board during Public Be Heard. Many community members have also written to the Board of Education if they cannot attend a meeting or do not feel comfortable speaking in public.

World Cafe

How were the World Cafe groups designed and how was the number of participants decided?

The groups were designed to provide representation from various constituents and provide multiple perspectives to encourage conversation. The number of participants was determined based on the structure of the world cafe and the ability to facilitate conversations and information sharing at each meeting. The World Cafe model is an established structure for guided conversations.

Class Size Questions

Will the public receive any data on increases in class sizes under each scenario?

The existing class sizes on page 24 of the slides seem pretty close to the desirable range (within one student per class) for all except third grade. The small class sizes in this District seem like a huge advantage for attracting families and keeping kids in the public school system. With that in mind, what would new classroom sizes be for each of the three proposals under consideration? Are you concerned this district will be less attractive to new families and teachers — which it sounds like we will be competing for — if class sizes increase?

Class Size Regulation as per BOE policy

Regulation number 8480R - 8/14/14

Subject: Class Size K-3 (Section) Size – Operational Range

	Low Range	Desirable Range	High Range
Grades K & 1	← 13 14 →	← 15 16 17 18 →	← 19 20 →
Grade 2	← 14 15 →	← 16 17 18 19 →	← 20 21 →
Grade 3	← 16 17 →	← 18 19 20 →	← 21 22 →

Classes should be planned based on the Desirable Range.

We will continue to design for classes within the desirable range. Class sizes in the “low” range limit instructional opportunities for students to work in small groups and participate in diverse social-emotional opportunities in the classroom.

Other

I commend you all for taking on this very difficult and essential task. The information you have presented tonight appears to favor having Bennett as the elementary school for the entire district for both educational and financial reasons. The parents in Woodstock and Phonecia that are objecting to closing those schools eventually will have students that age out of the elementary schools. Parents of West Hurley students adapted.

The realities the district is facing must be addressed in an informed, thoughtful and non-emotional way.

Yes! This type of decision making that impacts communities, reshapes communities, involves dialogue and isn't in lecture-format as today's meeting is.

Before deciding to reduce taxes, would you consider investing the money into mental health services due to the current youth mental health crisis?

I don't love the idea of my kindergartner sharing a campus with high school kids for both safety reasons and because it won't give them a true elementary experience. What would the plan be to keep them separate?

What will be done with the annual savings from school closures?

There's a lot of useful data here. Great job gathering and presenting. Can you please provide insight into how factors (cost savings, community input, capacity etc.) will be weighted into the ultimate decision?

What are the long term planning impacts?

Can you talk about the community Budget Advisory Committee report 2007? It got lost in BOE change 2008.

Update on electric buses and who will operate them. Why are we buying property for a contractor to operate.

Are realtors promoting the housing as related to the schools. Seems like people are buying houses specifically for a school area.

Rephrasing - what about equity among the towns?

Other

We have increased our mental health services in order to provide additional support for students. We design our staffing based on student needs. Currently, we have the highest rate of mental health providers per pupil in the county.

If we close a school/schools, savings may be utilized to reduce taxes, to offset debt for capital projects, to provide additional student supports, etc.

Although the survey had 470 responses, we actually have 11,582 parcels that are owned by taxpayers (not including NYC, NYS, Town, County, or tax exempt entities). The survey responses account for **4%** of our taxpayers.

If there is a K-5 building on the same campus as the MS/HS, it will remain a separate building as currently exists. The Bennett Elementary building was previously a K-6 building and the separation between the buildings has been well established.

The Budget Advisory Committee report from 2008 can be found on the Long-Term Planning webpage: [BudgetAdvisoryCommitteeReportTownBoards.ppt \(live.com\)BudgetAdvisoryCommitteeReportTownBoards.ppt \(live.com\)](#)

Next Steps

4/18 Board of Education Study Session during public meeting held at Onteora High School