

Community Bond Advisory Committee
Meeting #10
Tuesday, July 21, 2026
Scappoose School District

CBAC members present: David Wasylenko, Kendall Williams, Beth Rajski, Vance Chauncey, Megan Hallstone, Monica Ahlers, Lucy McCoy, George Dunkel, Jeff Howard, Joanna Wagner, Jennifer Herrick, Jarrett Trtek, Jennifer Jones, KaraLyn DeWalt, Robert Kessi, and Darlene Marquardt.

CBAC members absent: Josh Komp, Lindsay Elder, Russ Pickett, Charlene Bassine, Vanessa Lao, Triison Meza, Penelope Smith, and Anton Oehlert.

SSD Board of Directors present: Gwynn Klobes

SSD staff support present: Tim Porter, Paje Stelling, and Julie Hinkle

Others present: Cassie Hibbert and Patrick Linhart, Wenaha Group; Kyle Laier, Assist Education Services; and Joel Haugen, Scappoose City Councilor.

Cassie Hibbert of Wenaha Group called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

The committee reviewed the agenda and timeline for the bond planning process, noting that the work has progressed from facility tours and financial education to developing draft recommendations and gathering community feedback. The purpose of the meeting was to review community feedback, examine survey and polling results, and discuss next steps.

The committee reviewed the two draft bond package options, both of which focused on addressing the Scappoose Middle School facility needs and included critical districtwide capital improvements, such as roof and HVAC replacements at several schools. Members also reviewed updated cost estimates, including the confirmation of the district's \$6.1 million OSCIM (Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching) matching grant for a November election.

Committee members participated in a pulse check regarding the draft recommendations. While many continued to support the committee's work and favored replacing the middle school, members expressed concerns that current economic conditions and the overall cost of the proposed bond could make voter approval difficult.

During small-group discussions, members shared feedback they had received from the community. Common themes included:

- Broad recognition that the middle school requires significant improvements.

- Concerns about affordability, taxes, and the overall bond cost.
- Questions about why costs have increased since the previous bond proposal.
- Interest in repairing existing buildings rather than constructing new facilities.
- Requests for greater transparency regarding project costs, timelines, and priorities.
- Recognition that support tended to be stronger among parents and families with students currently in the district than among residents without children in the schools.

District staff summarized the community outreach efforts conducted during the feedback period, including open houses, presentations to community organizations, direct mailings, newsletters, social media outreach, business outreach, and an online survey. Staff reported receiving 320 survey responses and emphasized that the survey was intended to provide directional feedback rather than serve as a scientific poll.

Survey results indicated that respondents generally understood the district's facility needs, with strong recognition of the importance of roof and HVAC replacements. While no clear preference emerged between the two middle school options, many respondents supported one of the proposed concepts. Among those who opposed both options, the most common concerns centered on affordability, overall project scope, and the desire for more detailed cost information. Additional themes included concerns about property taxes, requests to prioritize critical repairs, and appreciation for the committee's thorough and transparent process.

The committee then reviewed the results of a scientific voter poll conducted in July 2026. The consultant explained that voter support for school bonds has declined since 2023 and noted that current economic conditions are significantly influencing public opinion. Polling showed the community generally agrees that the middle school requires attention but remains divided on the preferred approach. Taxpayer cost and affordability were identified as the strongest concerns among likely voters. Messaging focused on local control, accountability, accessibility, and protecting the community's investment resonated most positively, while messages emphasizing tax impacts, costs to fixed-income residents, and remodeling instead of rebuilding were the most persuasive arguments against the bond. The consultant concluded that, while support exists for addressing the district's facility needs, a successful bond measure would require strong community engagement and voter education.

The committee continued discussing the polling results and the likelihood of a successful November 2026 bond election. Members acknowledged that while the community generally recognizes the need to address the middle school, current economic conditions, tax concerns, and the potential impact of a statewide election could make voter approval difficult. The polling consultant emphasized that a successful November campaign would require a well-organized and well-funded community-led political action committee (PAC), significant volunteer support, broad community endorsements, and extensive voter outreach.

Committee members discussed whether a November election or a later election would provide the best opportunity for success. Several members expressed concern that the committee and community would not have sufficient time to organize an effective campaign before November, while others noted that delaying the election would allow additional time for outreach, fundraising, refinement of the proposal, and continued community education.

The committee also discussed whether the bond package should be modified by reducing the scope of the project or focusing only on essential maintenance or middle school improvements. Members recognized that previous polling showed the strongest support for addressing both the middle school and critical districtwide facility needs together, although affordability remained the primary concern among voters.

Following additional discussion, committee members completed a second anonymous pulse check regarding whether to recommend moving forward with a November 2026 bond measure. The majority indicated that additional time was needed before proceeding, citing the current economic climate, the need for greater community engagement, and the importance of building a stronger campaign before asking voters to approve a bond.

The committee then brainstormed potential next steps, including:

- Continuing outreach with additional community partners and stakeholders.
- Further refining project scope and cost estimates.
- Reviewing potential project alternatives and maintenance priorities.
- Evaluating possible future election dates.
- Developing an updated timeline and process for continuing the committee's work.

The committee agreed to recommend that the School Board not pursue a November 2026 bond election and instead continue refining the proposal and outreach efforts before selecting a future election date. Volunteers were identified to provide a progress update to the School Board at its August meeting. District leadership thanked committee members for their significant time, thoughtful discussion, and commitment throughout the bond planning process.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.