



Susana Measelle Hubbs &lt;susana.hubbs@capeelizabeth.org&gt;

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## [CE SBAC] Please reconsider

1 message

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**Becky Brosnan** <becky.brosnan@gmail.com>

Sun, May 12, 2024 at 11:57 AM

To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org

Dear SBAC,

I think the SBAC process was very successful in evaluating current needs and developing options. It was also very successful in terms of providing citizens with a lot of information that we didn't have at our fingertips before. I don't recall nearly as much public involvement and education about the school needs or various options leading up to the last school bond. We learned from that failure that getting the public more involved and more informed would be necessary to move a project forward.

And through that process, we've had the opportunity to make an informed decision and voice our opinions and rationale. We've seen what can be achieved. When the costs and tax implications of the top 3 options were presented, I was excited! I thought, Option E is not even that much more expensive than the cheapest option, and for what we'd get for it, it is clearly the best value! I thought, this is great news! We can totally do this!

And we've also seen very clearly what we should not do: don't keep waiting and hoping for construction costs to get cheaper, and don't spend over \$70 million dollars putting band-aids on a building that only gets us a decade at most, and ignores many of the critical needs for our schools.

Unfortunately, the SBAC process broke down last Thursday when a slim majority opted to push forward an Option that was clearly not aligned with Cape Elizabeth citizens, school board objectives, DOE standards, safety issues, student and staff well-being, or fiscal responsibility. That's why I'm spending a chunk of my Mother's Day doing my duty as a mom: advocating for my kids, and asking you to please reconsider your recommendation for Option B.

I attended a conference last week where entities from government, business, and environmental groups collected to forge a path forward for Maine's economy and climate. In discussing the updates that would be required to make the grid more future-ready and resilient, the CEO of CMP had a great quote. He said they must strive for "No Regrets Investments," where money is spent wisely in pursuit of our collective future needs.

I feel strongly that pushing Option B forward would result in significant regrets. Regrets that it isn't meeting educational standards and must be rejected by the school board, or if not at the school board or town council, at the ballot box. But even if it makes it through all those hurdles (which I don't think it deserves to), it will lead to regrets in just a few years as we are stuck in the same situation we are now, and ~\$80 million poorer.

To quote little Timmy Turner from BBC's period drama *Call the Midwife*, "Sometimes for people to make the right choice, you must first show them the worst choice."

The expert team that convened (at no small cost to taxpayers) to provide us detailed analysis of our options, risks, and costs couldn't have made the worst choice any clearer. Through citizen engagement and passionate advocacy, Cape citizens couldn't have made the worst choice any clearer. Continuing to kick the can down the road is the worst choice, from a moral, financial, and planning perspective. It does a disservice to our town. As tax paying members of a community who benefit greatly from our public schools, and as adults who must make choices for children who can't vote but who are most directly impacted, it is our RESPONSIBILITY to proceed wisely.

So again, I ask you not to move forward with Option B, which will surely fail. We have an opportunity to course-correct. Your directive was to make a recommendation that met the stated projects objectives and would likely be supported by the SB, TC, and voters. You have not done that. Please reconsider and put forth Option E instead.

Thank you,

Becky Brosnan

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