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## [CE SBAC] (Probable) Final Thoughts before May 9

2 messages

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Eliza Matheson <eliza.matheson@gmail.com>

Fri, May 3, 2024 at 5:54 PM

To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org, cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org, CE School Board  
<cesb@capeelizabethschools.org>

SBAC Committee,

Thank you, again, for your time and efforts.

After all of this, many, many hours of research and back and forth, and often heated exchanges and passion, you're all in the final stages of putting forth an option that will hopefully go to referendum in November.

I have listened intently to almost all meetings, if I haven't been able to attend in person. But I am not in your seats and can only share my thoughts as a taxpayer, lifelong Caper, parent, and school employee. I'll try to be brief because I suspect you'll have a lot of emails to get through. (I just finished, it's not that brief, I apologize)

1) This is, without a doubt, the single biggest investment we will be making in a generation, if not several generations. That's a responsibility. We are working for the **current and future** generations of this town. Many of us will not see the full benefits of this project. If we are thoughtful, we will see the benefits of fruitful and careful master planning when it comes to staggered school infrastructure investments.

2) NONE of these options **are not the final design** and I don't believe this has been communicated effectively. Let the professionals do their work. Start at E-level ideas and budget (the survey results were quite clear) and work back. Seek compromise. Scale the scope back where we can, bring the costs down where we see the movement, seek private fundraising opportunities for spaces our taxpayers feel are important. **This is the compromise and leadership our community needs to see from you.** Focus on our identified needs and priorities - the students and staff that spend every day in those buildings. It is clear to anyone who works in education that the buildings we currently have are limiting our students' abilities to learn in a 21st century way. It inhibits our educators' abilities to teach the best they can. It prevents us from delivering the necessary and legally protected services in an efficient and productive way. This has been communicated again, and again, and again. By many stakeholders. Please - please listen to them. It feels almost willful to not hear it as this point.

3) I usually refrain from addressing specific comments as it relates to fellow citizens. But I would like to defend our community engagement in advocating for Concept Design E. **Community members coming together around a common cause is the very basis of a democratic society.** It is the founding principle of this country. As has been done by many other groups in the recent past, with local and state elections, with referendums, this is simply part of the process. It was done last year on the no side, it'll be done this year, it will be done with the next project, and the next project, and the next one. We are a passionate community. It's why most of us live here. We are a highly educated, highly involved group of people. No one will ever say Cape citizens aren't engaged. It's part of the deal. And frankly, when the stakes feel this high, I'm proud of that. If that's something you find arrogant or repugnant, I am not sure what to say.

4) I believe it is YOUR job, as a committee, to find the **best solution for the majority of citizens** and make sure YOU COMMUNICATE WHY. That is what the SBAC's job is. Bring the town along with you. You have literally turned over every single stone in this process, even some that aren't in your purview honestly or even close to your realm of expertise. Our contractors, whom we pay a considerable amount of taxpayer money, have provided every single answer to the very best of their ability. Our owner's rep continues to fact check and double back on the questions. Take the facts, from the experts, and move along with the knowledge you have. **Make the very best decision for the majority of this town, current and future.**

5) For all of you, **this will be a significant part of your legacy here**. Maybe that's not what you signed up for, maybe it is. But want it or not - this is part of it. I'm not sure anyone in 1994 expected their videos to be playing yet again in town council chambers, but we could ask Dr. Goldman about that. This will outlive you, me, and all of us.

6) I plan on writing to the town council about this but I would like to immediately push for some kind of town wide fund opportunity where individual citizens can donate to a town managed high yield fund that can be accessed by those who need it the most. Does this already exist? If so, why are we not promoting this? How do we get this in front of people? **If we are talking about taking care of our own - where is the mechanism to do this?** I know we are talking about tax program cut off increases and other ways. But we know the wheels of government turn too slowly for most. Cape cares about its citizens - and there is money to be given to that cause. I could easily find 50 people to give \$50 to \$100 tomorrow. And I bet you could too. If I asked all of those people to find 5 more people, where would we be? Do not tell me this can't be done. For those of you on town council - Tim and Penny - put your money where your mouth is and make this happen, regardless of what goes to referendum. Because as all of us have pointed out, this is going to have a big impact no matter what. I know you all will support me on this as you all have said this is a top priority for you. If I somehow get involved in making this happen, I will be sure to be knocking on all of your doors.

This went on a bit longer than expected. But I believe I have come to the end of my ramblings. As I have communicated in the past, I firmly believe that Concept E is the path forward for long term strategic fiscal stability for our town, provides our students and staff with the building and updates they currently need for 21st century learning, and keeps us from coming back to the citizens of Cape in 15 years begging for more money at a higher cost.

I hope you all have a restful weekend.

Eliza Matheson  
270 Fowler Road

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Fri, May 3, 2024 at 6:05 PM

To: [cesbac@capeelizabetschools.org](mailto:cesbac@capeelizabetschools.org), [cetowncouncil@capeelizabetschools.org](mailto:cetowncouncil@capeelizabetschools.org), CE School Board  
<[cesb@capeelizabetschools.org](mailto:cesb@capeelizabetschools.org)>

(Please note, typo under **2**) - **NONE of these are options ARE the final design**)

Thank you - there always seem to be a few that slip through the cracks.

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