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[CE SBAC] Thank You

1 message

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Mon, May 6, 2024 at 11:52 AM

To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org, cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org

Hi all –

Thank you so much for all of your incredible work over the last 18 months. Your commitment to our town is truly commendable.

As I mentioned at the meeting last week, we have a responsibility to leave this town better than we found it. To plant the trees under which we may never sit.

It is with that goal that I hope you'll agree that Option E is the best choice for our town's children, and for our town's fiscal future.

I know you're getting a lot of messages from retirees, families and other residents about why E is the right choice. It has the least amount of student disruption, it makes long-term financial sense. It sets the town up for a healthy financial future, breaking the cycle of decades of poor investment.

I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that E is a compromise. Many of us want two new schools – we believe that E does not go far enough. But we are willing to compromise. To find common ground with those who want to do as little as possible. **E is that common ground.**

Perhaps you think that those of us pushing for E will vote for whatever we're given. That is not true. Option B is financially irresponsible, plain and simple. It puts a huge tax burden on the town, but offers no long term solution. You'll be asking taxpayers to pay for something twice, something many of us cannot afford to do.

I've spent a lot of time with the survey data over the last few days and even when presented with the cost implications, the vast majority of people in Cape understand that it is time to finally do the hard thing and build a new school. It was incredible to see just how many who voted 'no' in the last referendum are willing to support E now. That's a testament to the hard work you've been doing to educate the town on the desperate need of the schools. You should take pride in that jump – that's a credit to you.

I know one of your key criteria in making a decision is bringing forward a proposal that will pass a public vote. B will not pass a public vote.

I'll speak personally here: I was laid off earlier this year. My family is not in a place financially to be asked to take on a massive burden with B now, only to be asked to do the same thing in 10 years because of poor planning. My husband and I believe this so strongly that we are willing to pay the difference

between B and E for 10 Cape households who truly cannot afford that tax increase. That's right: even while we are temporarily down to one income in our household, we've done the math and realized that by offering to pay the way of 10 other households, we will still end up paying less long term.

That's just one family's offer to decrease the financial impact of this critical investment. I'm sure we can think of other solutions together – charging out-of-towners more at the Headlight, and asking for a portion of the profits from Beach to Beacon, have already been offered up as potential solutions. Working with the town council to create annual funding that anticipates infrastructure needs is long (long!) overdue.

I mentioned last week that three generations of my family live in this town. I don't want my parents, retirees in Oakhurst, to be unduly taxed. I want them to have the retirement of their dreams, they worked hard for that. I want my children – who are 7 and 3 – to have schools that are safe and welcoming. I want my husband and I to be able to live in this town for decades. It is with this perspective – one that is **conscious not just of the needs of the present, but thinking of the needs of Capers 10, 20, 30 years from now – that I encourage you all to unanimously support E**. It is the only way forward. It is the only option that has a chance of passing.

By picking E you will set up your legacy, breaking the cycle of decades of poor investment and setting our town up for a strong financial future. By picking E, you will clearly be able to say that you will leave this town better than how you found it.

Thank you for your time and for your vote.

Joy Engel

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Joy S. Engel

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