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[CE SBAC] Support Option E

1 message

Jim Sparks <jimsparksphd@gmail.com>
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Mon, May 6, 2024 at 7:28 PM

Jim Sparks
14 Woodcrest Rd
Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107

May 6, 2024

Dear SBAC,

First of all, thank you for your tireless work in tackling the thorny problem of addressing aging school buildings in a way that is fiscally responsible. Addressing this long-deferred task is a vital mission for our town, and I realize your committee has been under enormous pressure to arrive at a solution.

Of the options before you, I urge you to select Option E. It accomplishes less than I would ideally want, but is a far better choice than Options B and C, which at best kick the can down the road despite the expenditure of a tremendous amount of resources. If we are going to spend tens of millions of dollars to address problems in our schools that have needed attention for decades, please do so in a way that substantially improves our schools for the long-term, and minimizes the disruption to students.

Options B and C, in my opinion, amount to profound mismanagement of our resources, offering a Band-Aid approach to significant problems that will simply have to be addressed in the near future at much greater cost. In terms of fiscal impact, the benefits of a new middle school offered by Option E can be achieved with only marginally higher taxes than the temporary fixes offered by Options B and C. Estimates provided by the Town of Cape Elizabeth indicate that by FY '30, for example, the difference in the tax impact per household between Option E and the renovations proposed in Option B, amounts to \$390 a year. Option E provides much more benefit for the money. This is money well spent.

We only have one child left in Cape Elizabeth schools. My son will be a high school senior next year, thus I have no tangible personal benefit from upgrading and improving our schools. I will be one of the older residents of Cape Elizabeth who will be paying more in property taxes. However, I am profoundly grateful for the ways Cape schools have contributed to the lives of my daughter and my son. In my view, these schools are the crown jewels of this town, and they are one of the most important reasons for why we crossed the country to relocate here. I believe that an essential part of preserving the vibrancy of Cape Elizabeth is to support the excellence of our schools for future generations. Please make the meaningful and fiscally smart decision to propose Option E.

Sincerely,

Jim Sparks

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