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**LONG-RANGE FACILITIES PLAN**  
**Phase Two: Engagement**  
**Community Data Collection**  
**DISCUSSION DRAFT – Thursday, February 6, 2020**

### **1.0 SUMMARY**

The results of the responses to the February web-survey indicate wide-spread opposition to closing an elementary school. In support of that conclusion, respondents cited impacts on their children, their families and their school-defined communities.

*Background:* The web-survey data collection was intended to supplement the opinions and communications that have been expressed to BCSD’s decision-makers in other ways. BCSD’s web-survey drew about 1200 respondents, 91% of whom intend to have, have or have had one or more children in the District schools. Ninety-five percent describe themselves as home-owners.

Item language was designed to encourage participation and to bracket the major features of a Long-Range Facilities Plan. Hosting and distribution by the District included a Spanish language version, the availability of paper copies, and assistance from town governments and libraries.

Participation was voluntary and to encourage participation, not otherwise controlled. Residents of school attendance areas that felt themselves most vulnerable to losing a school, were over-represented in comparison to their proportion of the total. There is evidence that some individuals completed more than one survey.

*Results: Priorities.* Ninety-one percent of respondents ranked “quality of education” as their top priority: one percent chose “facilities repair and maintenance.”

Asked specifically about factors in connection with the Long-Range Facilities Plan, 47% chose “preserve the quality of academic programs” as their top rank followed by 44% who chose “preserve the current configuration of five elementary schools...”

Asked to rank curriculum and program priorities, 49% put STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) at the top.

*Results: Community-School Relations.* The survey asked, “On a ten-point scale, how likely are you to recommend schools in the Bedford Central School District to other people? [Please select a single number].” The results of asking ‘likely-to-unlikely’ to recommend something is called a “net promoter score.” It is one way to measure the relationship between an organization and those it serves. Overall, the Net Promoter Score of 7.0 is positive. “Promoters” responded positively about the schools and

numbered 429: 348 “Detractors” reached the opposite conclusion. Respondents from two schools had the lowest Net Promoter Scores – Pound Ridge (4.3) and Bedford Village (4.4).

*Results: Declining Enrollment.* Sixty-four percent of respondents are not confident that enrollment will continue to decline: 16% believe it will: 19% are undecided.

Sixty-five percent reject the idea that “closing an elementary school” is the best way to deal with declining enrollment: 13% think that it is. Ten percent don’t believe enrollment is declining and 13% don’t know.

It is possible that enrollment declines might occasion changes in the schools that children attend. Parents were asked, in the event of attendance changes, what factors would be most important?.

- The quality of teaching and learning in the new school – 40%
- Transportation, proximity of the new school – 24%
- Class size – 16%
- Property values – 15%
- My child’s friendship circle – 6%

*Results: Finances.* The first of three finance-related questions asked for agreement or disagreement with the statement, “There is no amount of dollar savings that would justify closing a school,” 45% agreed strongly and 17% agreed (62% total). The disagree group included 13% who disagreed and another 13% who disagreed strongly (26% total). Eleven percent were undecided.

A second item posed, “There is no amount of dollar savings that would justify reducing programs or services in the Middle or High School.” Seventy-one percent of the respondents agreed (44% strongly with 27% agreeing). Nineteen percent disagreed and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked where they would invest savings, if any, after a Long-Range Facilities Plan was implemented.

- Enhancing education programs – 66%
- Facilities repair, maintenance and improvement – 14%
- Tax reduction – 13%
- Keeping taxes flat – 7%

*Results: Utilization of School Buildings.* Respondents had the opportunity to evaluate the condition of each of the District’s seven buildings. Averaged across the seven buildings, 16 percent of respondents concluded “Exceeds my expectations;” 65 percent, “meets my expectations;” and 20 percent, “below my expectations.”

Asked, “If the District has available space in any of its buildings, how should it be utilized?” the top-ranked choices included:

- Add other programs to enhance BCSD student experience – 56%
- Add activities/programs that generate revenue – 24%
- Add tuition-paying students – 14%
- No changes – 6%.

Respondents were asked about “innovative learning spaces.” Should modifications support those spaces at the elementary, middle and secondary levels?

- For elementary schools, 64% agreed (27% strongly; 37%, agree)
- For the middle school, 66% agreed (29% strongly; 37% agree)
- For the high school, 67% agreed (31% strongly; 36% agree).

## 2.0 DESCRIBING RESPONDENTS

Ninety-one percent of the respondents have experience with a child in a BCSD school.

[The data are multiple response and thus do not total to 100%.]

- Sixty-one percent (723) currently have a child or children in the District’s schools.
- Thirty-one percent (369) intend to send a child or children to the District’s schools.
- Twenty-three percent (269) have a child or children who attended the District’s schools in the past.
- Nine percent have never had a child in BCSD schools.
- Ninety-five percent of the respondents report owning their residence: 5% rent.

About 1200 persons responded to the web-survey. The district has a population of about 32,000 according to the 2018-19 district profile report: with an adult population of about 27,500. There are 17,973 registered voters of whom 2782 voted in the May 2019 elections.

<b>RESPONDENT SELF-REPORT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR WHICH THEIR RESIDENCE IS ZONED COMPARED TO ENROLLMENT AND VOTING [most-to-least]</b>			
	Self-Report Zone	Enrollment 2018-2019	Voters 2019
School	% & (n)		
Bedford Village	28 (334)	15 (252)	26 (716)
Pound Ridge	23 (272)	17 (282)	23 (650)
Bedford Hills	17 (208)	17 (285)	13 (373)
West Patent	13 (155)	19 (303)	15 (409)
Mount Kisco	12 (148)	32 (516)	23 (634)
None of the above	7 (77)		
Totals	100 (1,194)	100 (1,638)	100 (2782)

<b>RESPONDENT SELF-REPORT OF THE TOWN IN WHICH THEY LIVE</b>	
<b>[most-to-least]</b>	
Town of Residence	% & (n)
Mt. Kisco/Bedford Corners	26 (314)
Bedford Village	26 (310)
Pound Ridge	23 (273)
Bedford Hills	18 (214)
None of the above	7 (86)

The web-survey data collection was intended to supplement the opinions and communications that have been expressed to BCSD's decision-makers in other ways.

The intention of the district was to encourage participation by all interested parties. The survey used a self-selection sampling method among those who volunteered.

It was also intended to be distributed as broadly and as conveniently as possible, for example to residents with and without children. BCSD: (1) hosted and publicized the survey on its website, *e-Brief*; (2) sent e-mail invitations to all current parent e-mail addresses on record; (3) made available a Spanish-language version; (4) sent flyers for placement in public libraries and, (5) recruited the assistance of town supervisors who shared it via their electronic networks.

The *Survey Monkey* platform includes options to capture respondent IP addresses and/or to prevent multiple responses from single individuals. BCSD's data collection was fielded to facilitate access and protect anonymity. Capturing unique survey identification per respondent would have been a barrier to participation and could have compromised confidentiality. Preventing multiple responses would have disadvantaged family members or public access users (i.e., libraries) who used the same device to complete the survey.

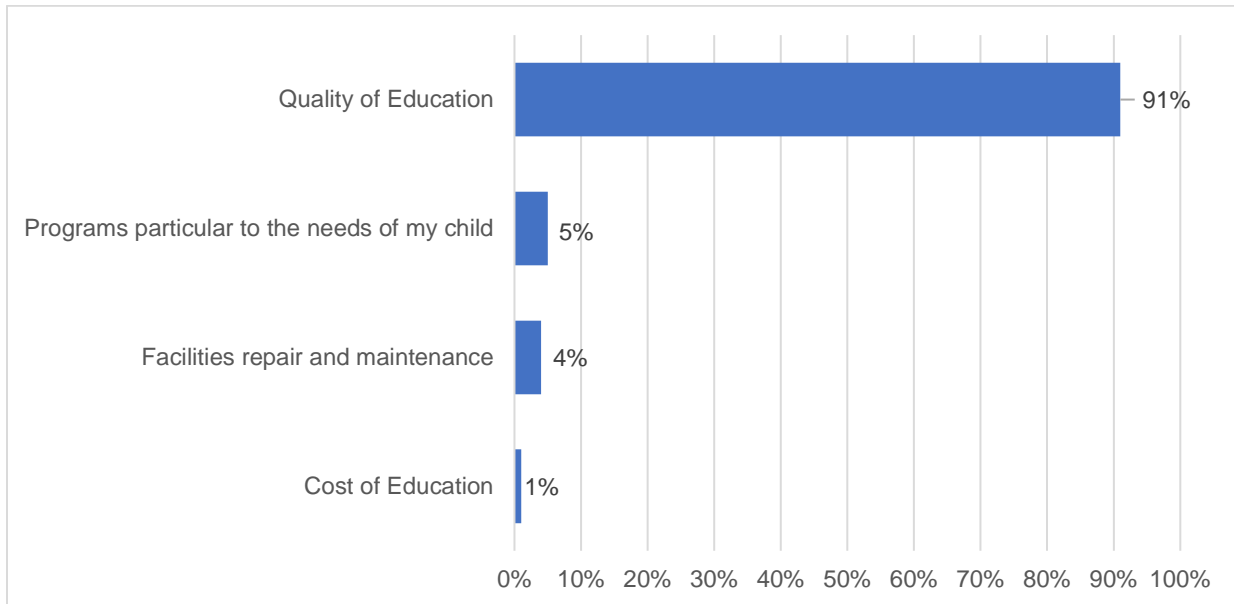
We recognize that some individuals chose to submit multiple surveys. Self-report data collection relies on the decisions of respondents. That multiple response, multiple submission phenomenon is also present anytime the same individuals make multiple presentations, week after week in the community portion of board meetings and/or at the LRFP community forums. That reflects the strength of their feelings and is an exercise of freedom of speech.

In response to requests that the District allow stakeholders to express themselves on a range of issues, we included:

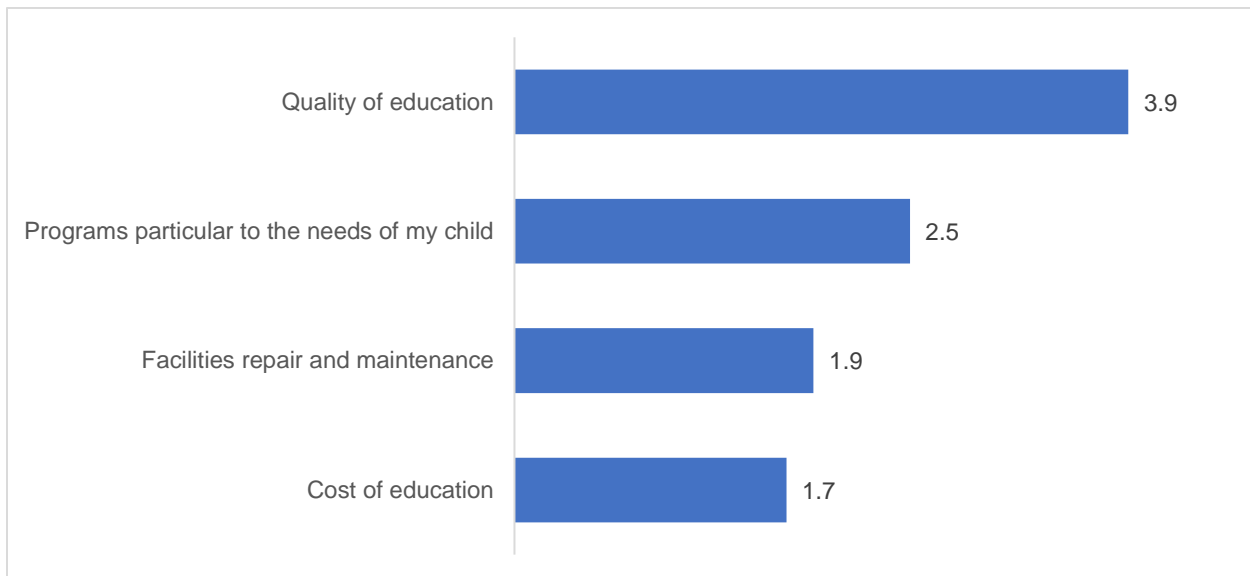
- Factors important to your child's elementary school education (551 answered, 689 did not: respondents could skip items)
- Other ways to utilize space
- Additional thoughts.

#### 4.0 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT GENERAL PRIORITIES

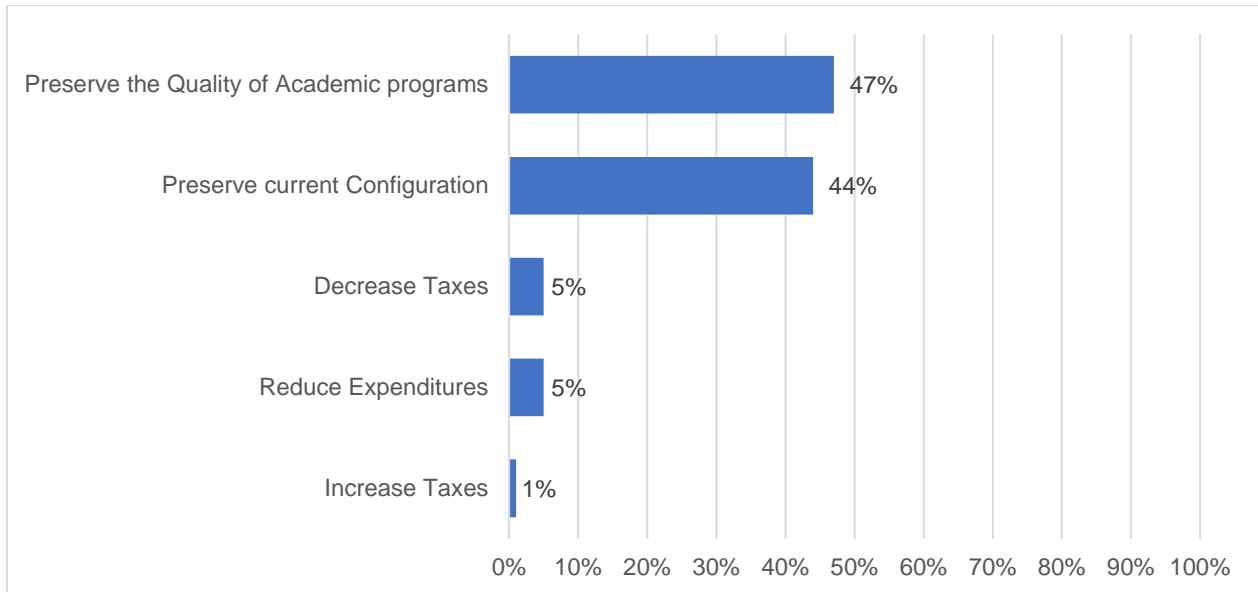
The first question asked respondents to rank four desiderata about schooling in terms of their first, second, etc. picks. “In thinking about all of the district’s schools and academic programs at the elementary, middle and high school, please rank the following in terms of your priorities.” [n’s are approximately 1,195] The top-ranked choices are as follows:



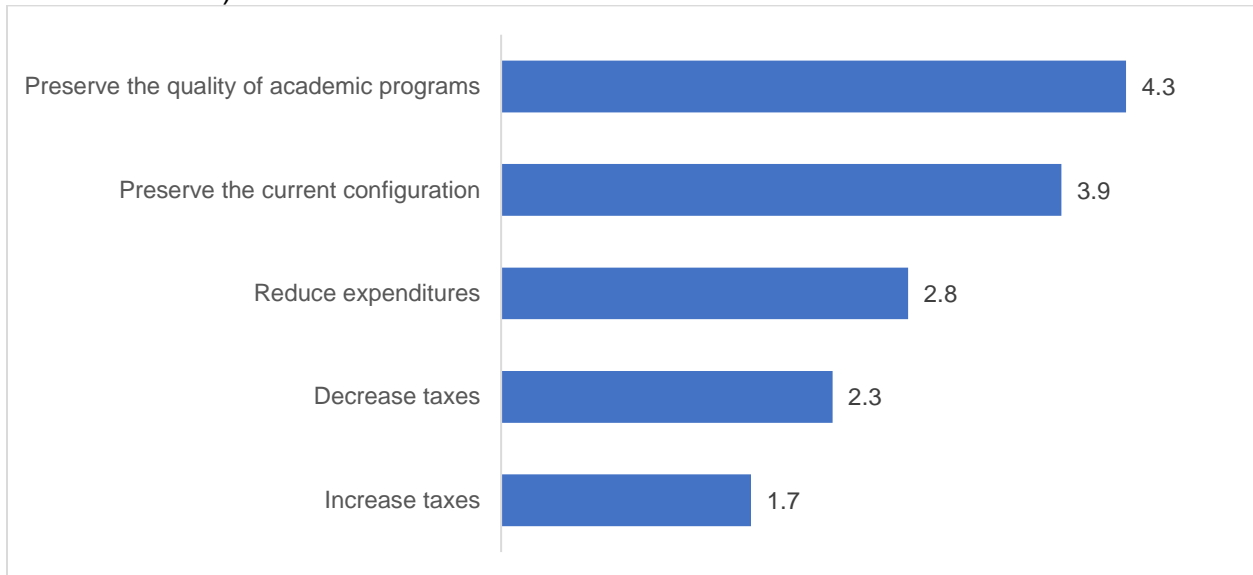
The next graphic displays the rank scores of respondent choices. Rank scores consider how each option is ranked overall – those choosing first, plus second, plus third, etc.



We asked, in developing the Long-Range Facilities Plan, which factors should have the most consideration. The distribution of first place ranking choices was:



The rank score analysis for the same question ('which factors should have the most consideration?') is as follows.



## 5.0 COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The survey asked, "On a ten-point scale, how likely are you to recommend schools in the Bedford Central School District to other people? [Please select a single number]." The results of asking 'likely-to-unlikely' to recommend something is called a "net promoter score."<sup>1</sup> It is one way to measure the relationship between an organization and those it serves.

<sup>1</sup> C.f., <https://www.netpromoter.com/know/>. There are no benchmarks for NPS in schooling. Some private sectors have low NPS scores, e.g., Internet and cable

Net promoter scores range from -100 to +100. The more positive the score the more likely those served by the organization are to talk favorably about the organization. The NPS methodology groups respondents as follows:

- *Promoters*: These respondents selected 9 or 10. The response indicates that they are generally positive about their experience with BCSD and likely to speak positively about the District.
- *Passives*: These respondents chose 7 or 8. The response indicates they have neutral views about BCSD.
- *Detractors*: These respondents answered 0 to 6. The response indicates that, if they speak about BCSD, they are likely to voice negative opinions.

The net promoter score is the difference between the percentage of promoters and the percentage of detractors.

On this information, the net promoter score for the District is 7. Among those who responded to the web-survey, there are more promoters than detractors. The score reflects this point in time – Winter, 2020 – including the crucial current context of opposition to closing a school and controversy about enrollment declines. Net promoter scores can be applied to understand a “relational” perspective or a “transactional” perspective. This application of the NPS method is “transactional” in that it is documenting opinions in a specific context. While relevant, it is not measuring an overall view of the Bedford Central School District or its future circumstances. Note that Promoters or Detractors in early 2020 may change their opinions. And either characterization does not mean that the person expresses one kind of opinion exclusively: the characterization is “transactional” and subject to change.

The table below shows the respondents’ overall NPS broken down by two of the demographic questions. Generally, respondents who report a relationship to the BCSD schools are more likely to promote BCSD than not.

Compared to the other three elementary schools, respondents who identified themselves with Pound Ridge and Bedford Village elementary schools were less likely to recommend BCSD schools to other people.

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services. Other’s have 30’s and 40’s. C.f., <https://hbr.org/2003/12/the-one-number-you-need-to-grow>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shephyken/2016/12/03/how-effective-is-net-promoter-score-nps/#e76bbaf23e4c>; and <https://hbr.org/2019/10/where-net-promoter-score-goes-wrong>

<b>NET PROMOTER SCORE OVERALL AND BY RESPONDENTS WHO REPORT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR WHICH THEIR RESIDENCE IS ZONED [most-to-least]</b>				
	<b>Promoters</b>	<b>Detractors</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>NPS</b>
Overall (All Respondents)	429	348	1156 <sup>2</sup>	7.0
<b>By Elementary School</b>				
West Patent Elementary School	60	35	149	16.8
Mount Kisco Elementary School	58	36	144	15.3
Bedford Hills Elementary School	68	49	195	9.7
Pound Ridge Elementary School	92	81	255	4.3
Bedford Village Elementary School	121	108	311	4.2
None of the above	23	29	76	-7.97
No response to the residence question	7	10	26	-11.5

The next table indicates that respondents who intend to enroll a child in the District, those who have an enrolled child and those who have had a child attend a District school are each more favorably inclined to BCSD than those without that experience.

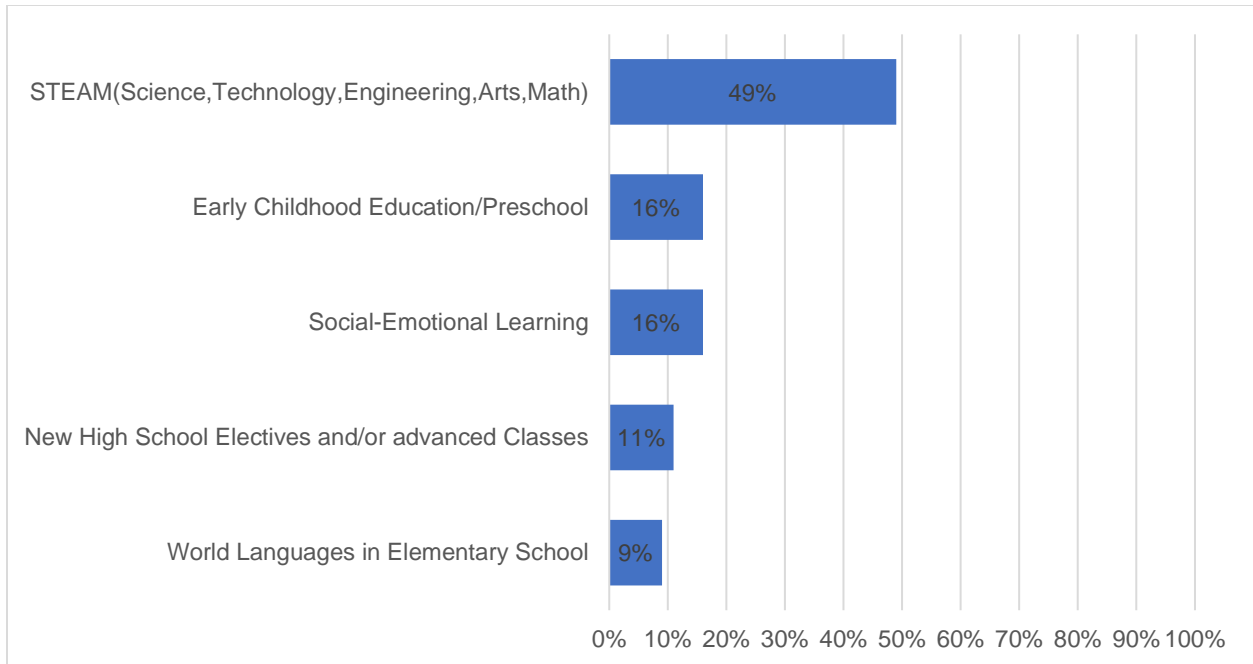
<b>NET PROMOTER SCORE BY RESPONDENTS WHO REPORT THEIR FAMILIES' EXPERIENCE WITH BCSD SCHOOLS</b>				
<b>By Family Relationship with BCSD</b>				
	<b>Promoters</b>	<b>Detractors</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>NPS</b>
I intend to send current or future children to BCSD schools	140	92	347	13.8
I currently have a child or children in BCSD schools	272	183	692	12.9
I have a child or children who attended BCSD schools in the past	96	86	260	3.8
I have never had a child in the BCSD schools	25	46	99	-21.2

## **6.0 CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM QUESTIONS**

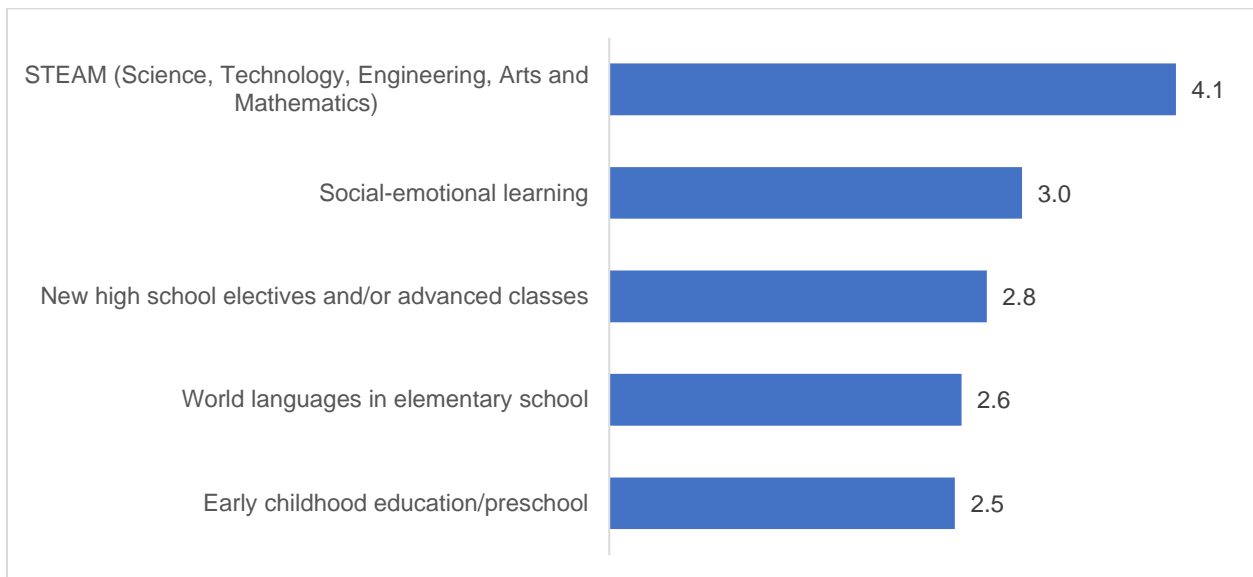
Respondents were asked to rate curriculum and program priorities. "For future improvement, how do you think BCSD should rank the following curriculum and program priorities?" [n's are approximately 1,180] From the most-to-least chosen top rank, they selected:

<sup>2</sup> "Passives" are not used in the NPS calculation.



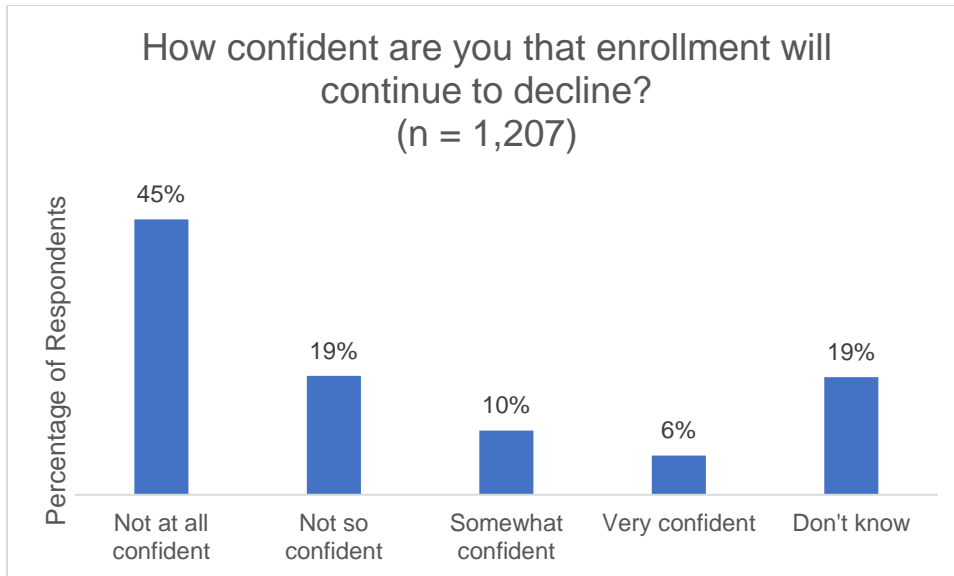


The rank score analysis for the same items was as follows:

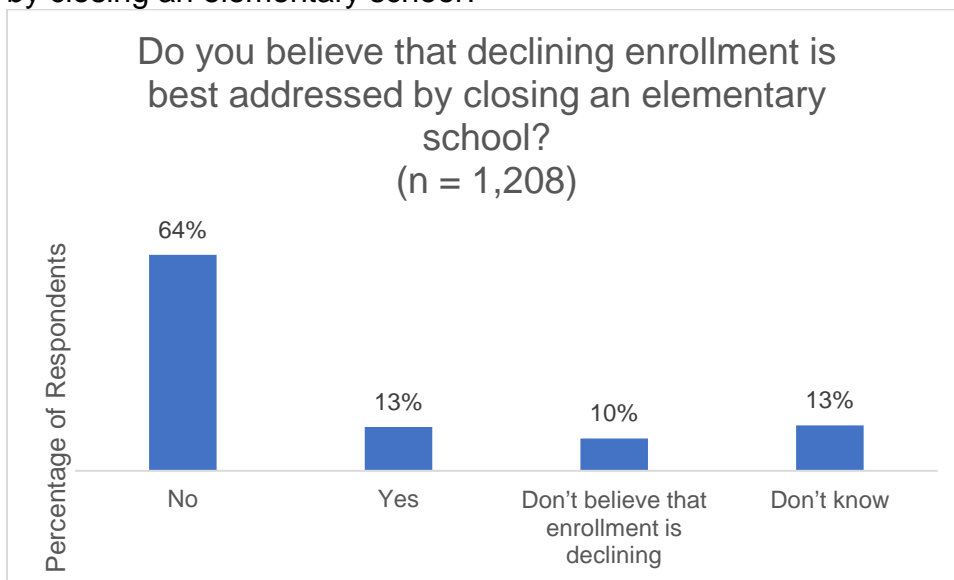


## 7.0 DECLINING ENROLLMENT

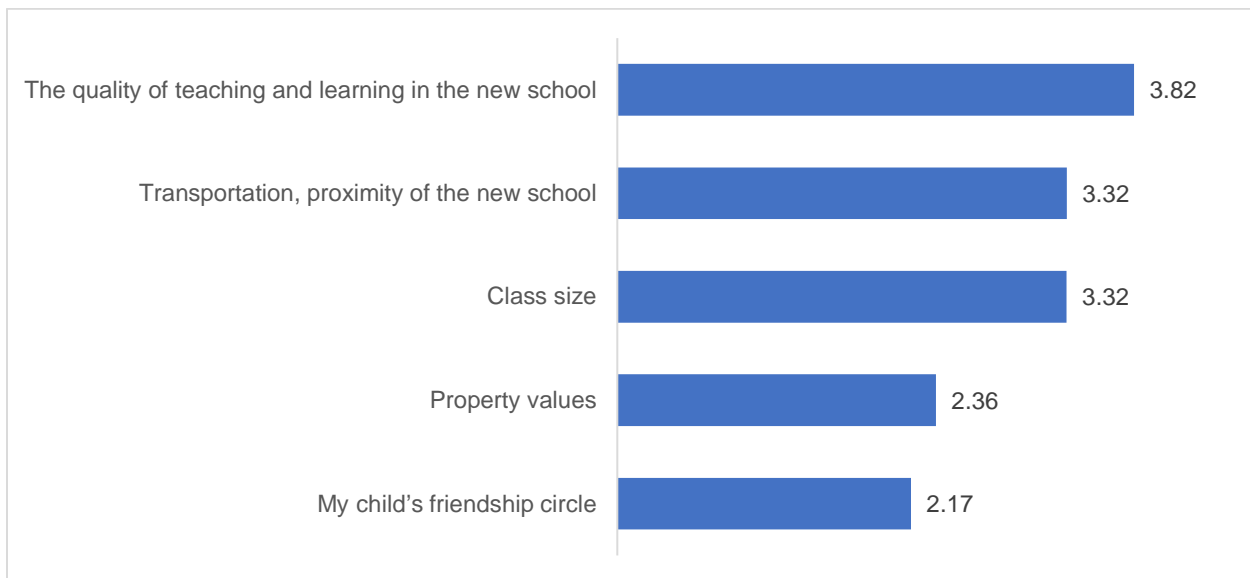
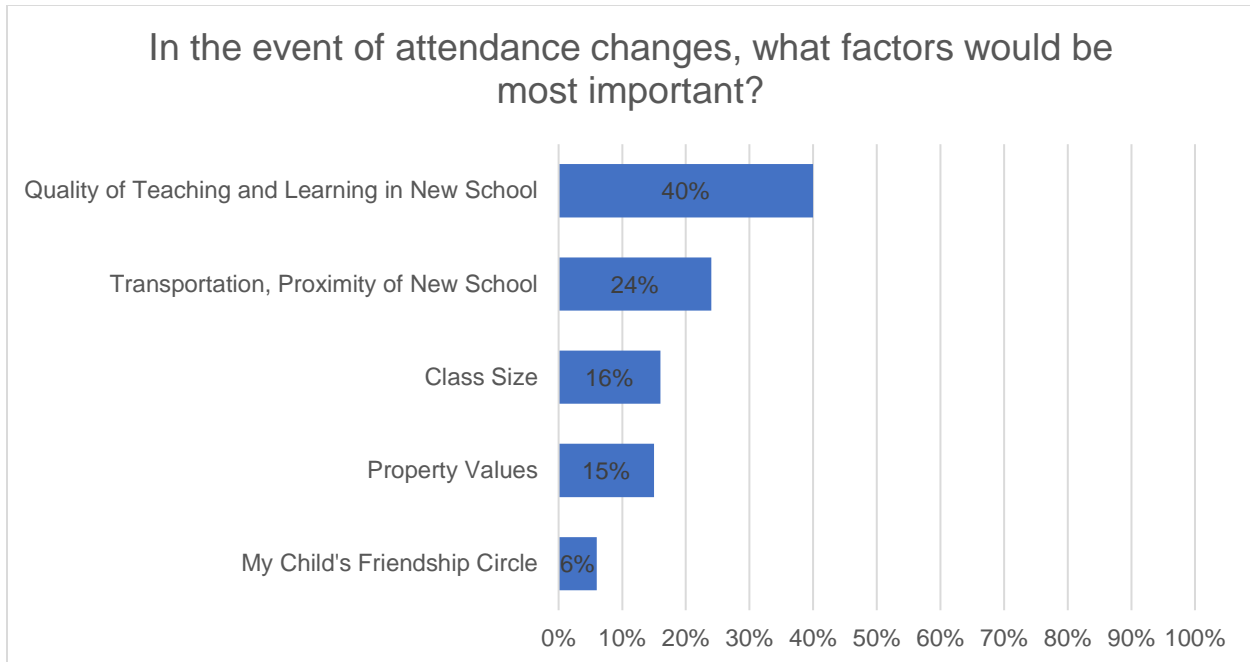
A question reviewed the recent history of enrollment declines and asked, “How confident are you that enrollment will continue to decline?” From most-to-least confident, the respondent answers are as follows:



Respondents were asked, “Do you believe that declining enrollment is best addressed by closing an elementary school?”



It is possible that enrollment declines might occasion changes in the schools that children attend. The question stem emphasized that the Board has neither been presented with options nor made decisions in that regard. Parents were asked, “In the event of attendance changes, what factors would be most important?” [n’s are approximately 1,170] The distribution of first-ranked choices is shown below followed by the rank scores.



An open response opportunity asked, “Are there other factors that are important to you about the elementary school your child may attend? [Please specify]” Of the 20 pages of responses, the most frequent was opposition to closing an elementary school. Other factors included concern with, criticism of or praise for the following factors.

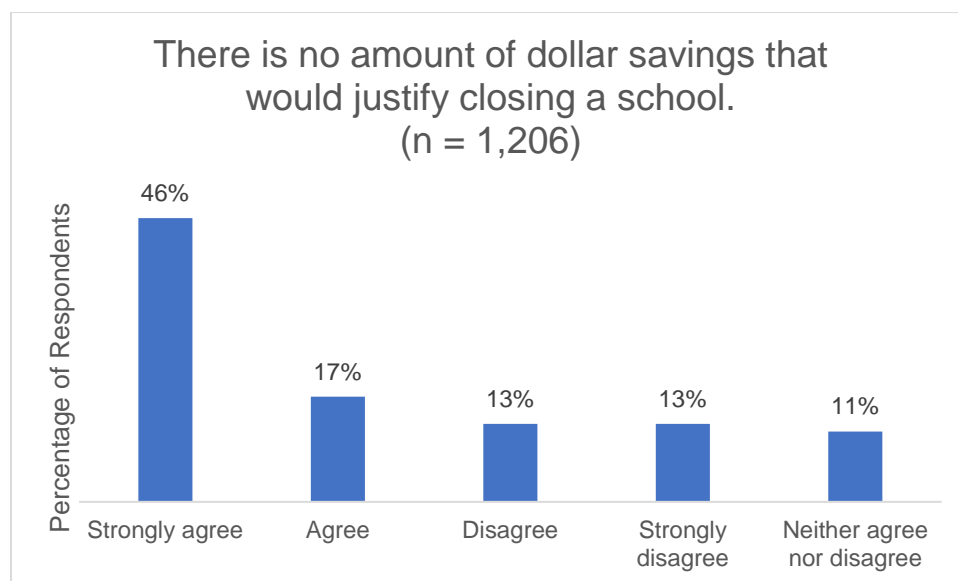
- Special Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Dual Language Bilingual Education
- Class size
- Diverse student populations
- Taxes

- Property values
- Community
- Transportation
- Academic achievement and test scores
- Teachers
- Variables that are 'soft' and damaging to students
- Criticism of Interactive, Inc.'s work.

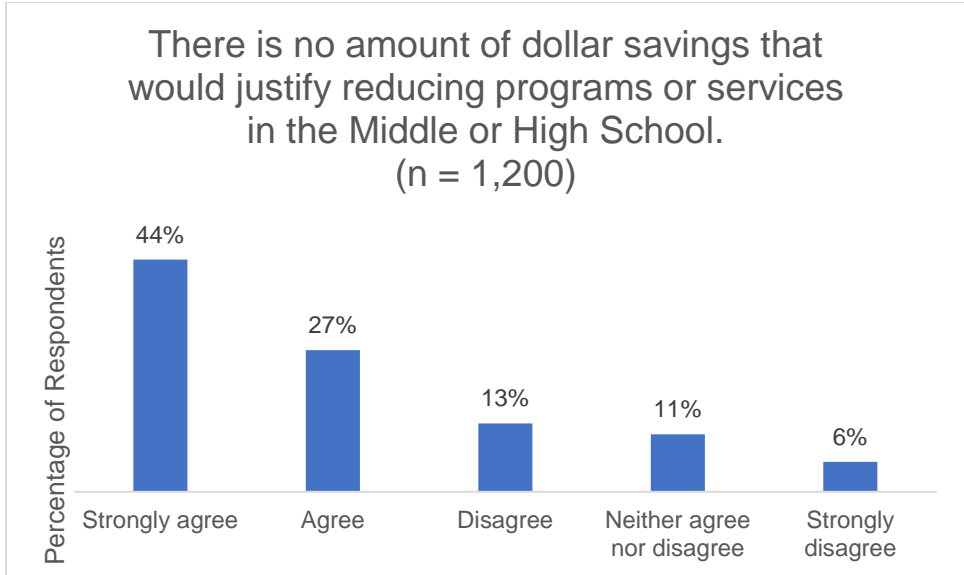
[For a word-count list from the open responses, see Appendix 2.]

## 8.0 FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

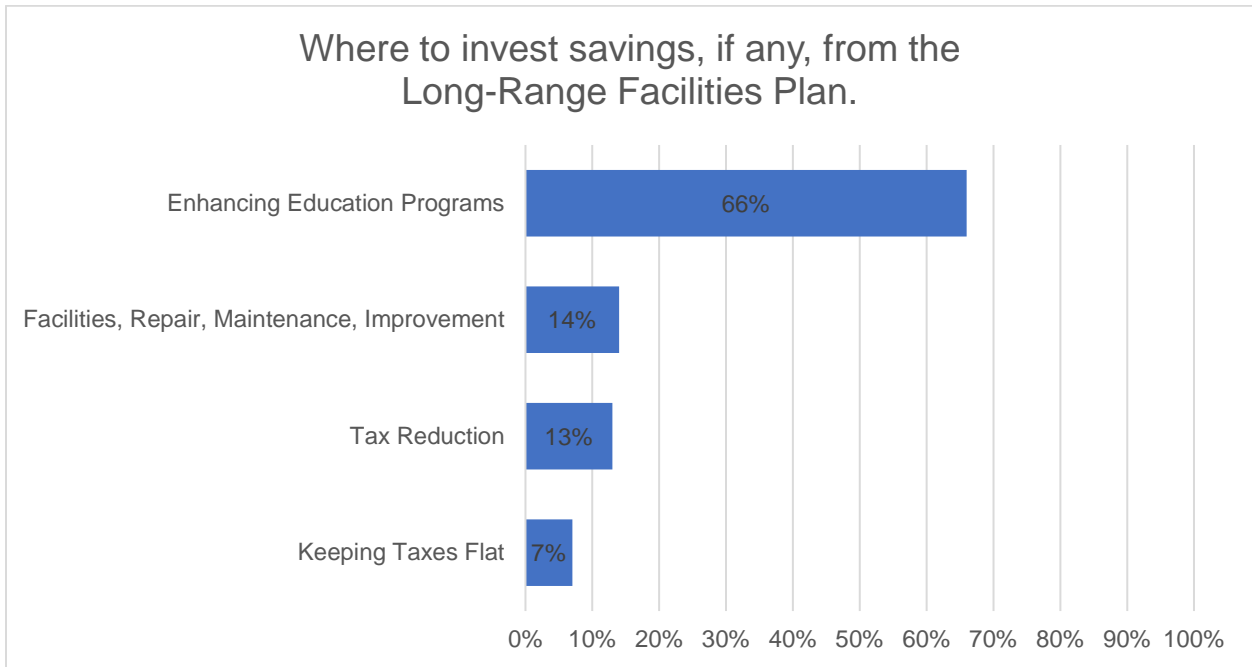
Two questions allowed respondents to express their agreement or disagreement [a Likert scale response format] with closing a school or reducing upper-grades programs. Asked to consider, "There is no amount of dollar savings that would justify closing a school," the following displays the responses.



The second item posed, "There is no amount of dollar savings that would justify reducing programs or services in the Middle or High School."



Respondents were asked where they would invest savings, if any, from the implementation of a Long-Range Facilities Plan. [n's were about 1,170] Here is the distribution of first place choices about where to put any savings.



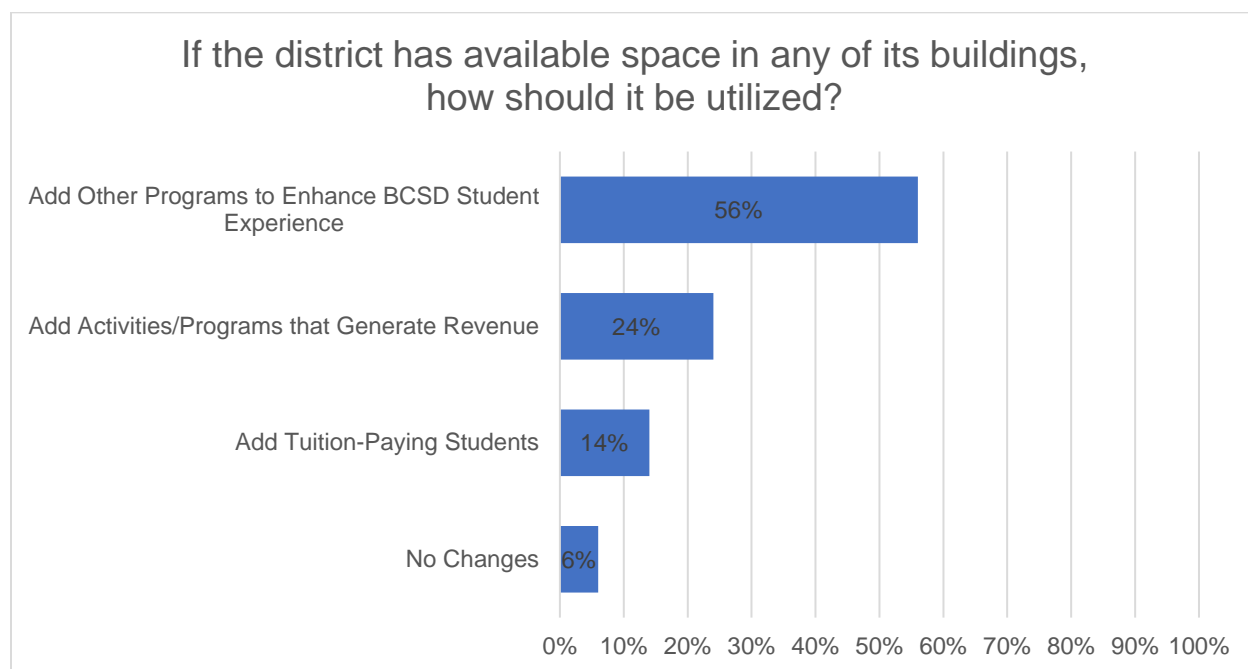
**9.0 THE UTILIZATION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

Respondents were asked to characterize the physical condition of each of the District’s school buildings. (They had the opportunity to omit evaluating buildings with which they might not be familiar. Since many people have experience with one, a few or none of the buildings, the “Don’t know” group ranged from 50% to 60% for the elementary

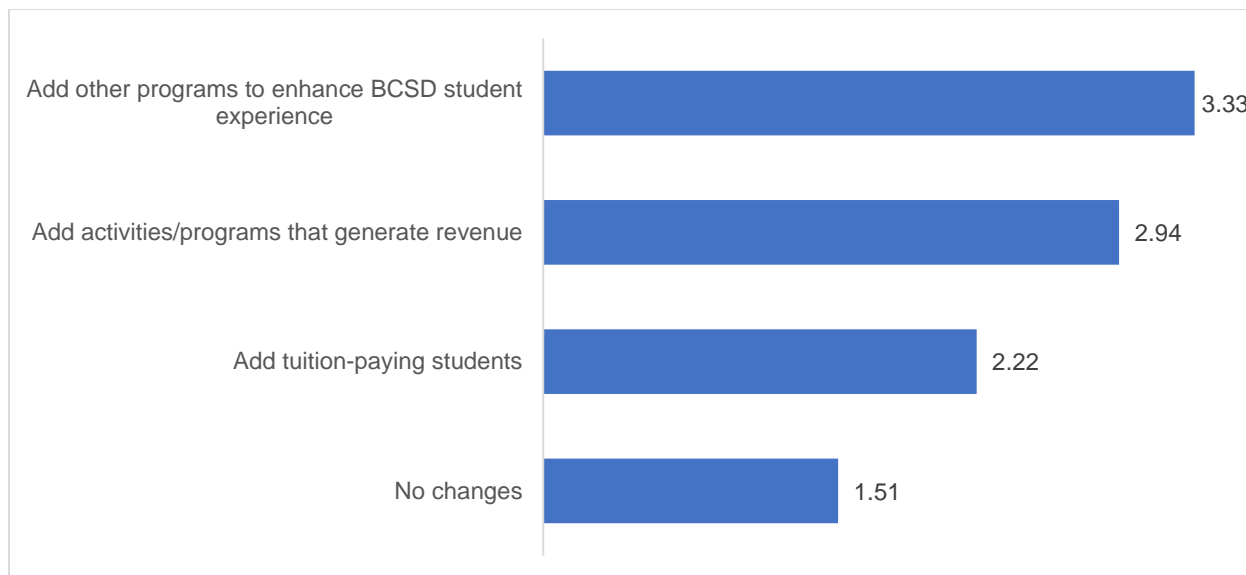
buildings. The following results show the evaluations of those who characterized a building, by name.)

<b>RESPONDENT EVALUATIONS OF SCHOOL BUILDING CONDITIONS</b>			
	<b>Relation to Expectations</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>% Above</b>	<b>% Meets</b>	<b>% Below</b>
Bedford Hills ES	8	<b>59</b>	33
Bedford Village ES	16	<b>65</b>	19
Mount Kisco ES	14	<b>68</b>	18
Pound Ridge ES	22	<b>68</b>	9
West Patent ES	23	<b>61</b>	17
Fox Lane MS	10	<b>62</b>	29
Fox Lane HS	18	<b>70</b>	12
All-building averages	16	<b>65</b>	20

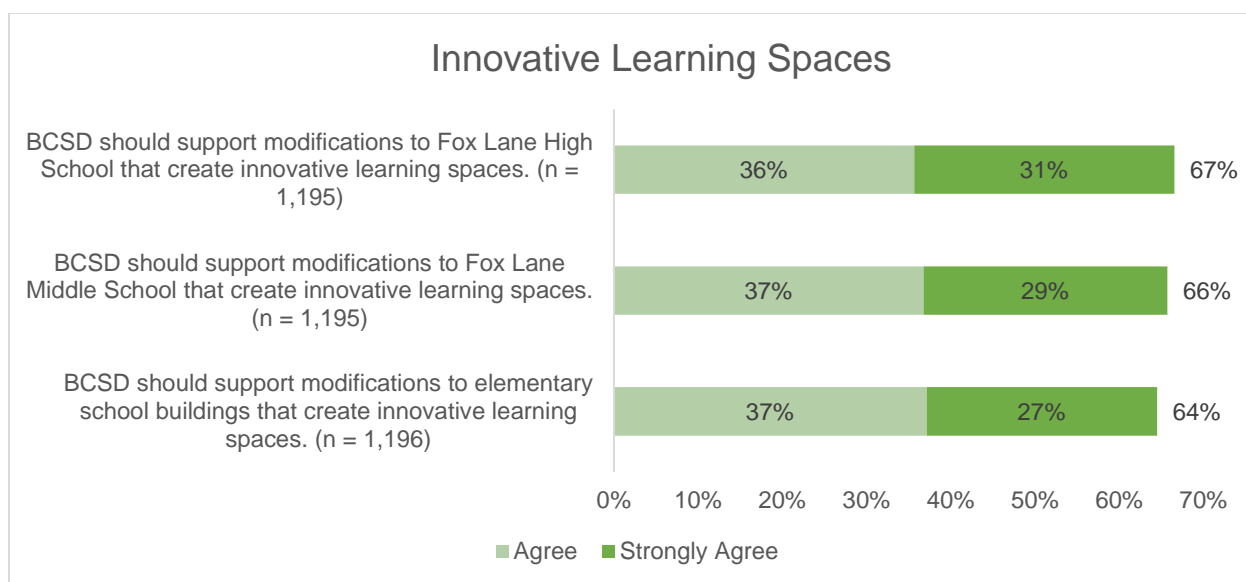
Respondents were asked, "If the District has available space in any of its buildings, how should it be utilized?" [n's were about 1,150] Their first ranked choices were as follows:



Rank scores for the item are:



Three questions at the end of the substantive part of the survey asked about “innovative learning spaces.” Should modifications support those spaces at the elementary, middle and secondary levels?



An open response opportunity in connection with facilities utilization drew 15 pages of commentary including the following factors:

- Opposition to closing a school
- There is no under-utilized space
- Rent or lease property
- Sell buildings or land
- Add programs for revenue
- Re-purpose for enrichment and other existing programs
- Add pre-K or early childhood programs

- Relocated the 6<sup>th</sup> grades
- Reduce class sizes

[For a word count list of these responses, please see Appendix 2.]

### **ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS FROM RESPONDENTS**

There were 38 pages of additional, open-ended responses. They continued the earlier pattern of frequent criticisms of the prospect of closing a school and of the demographic data. Responses repeated what had been expressed previously in the open-ended responses. Other factors included:

- Commentary about the District's history of having closed and re-opened a school
- Teacher costs
- Objections to the language of "innovative learning spaces"
- Support for closing a school
- Relocation of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students
- Tax burdens
- Budget shortfalls
- Renovations and repairs
- Attention to school grounds
- Criticism of the survey and of the LRFP's development

[For a word count list of these responses, please see Appendix 2.]



## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: METHODS

The language of the survey was developed with extensive input from the chair of the Board's sub-committee on communications, from members of the Board, from central office administrators and, in some cases from individual stakeholder correspondents.

The items selected for the survey were intended to be concise and limited to encourage participation and to bracket the components of the Long-Range Facilities Plan. The web version of the survey was available for 14 days.

The results can be generalized to the respondents. The issues with multiple same-response submissions also moot tests of statistical significance. The data are available from David Gee, Director of Technology, [dgee0416@bcsdny.org](mailto:dgee0416@bcsdny.org).

For calculating rank scores, an average is used. The item being ranked first is given the highest points and the last the lowest. For example, if respondent #1 ranks item 1 first; respondent #2 ranks item 1 second; and respondent #3 ranks item 1 third; etc.

The numeric intervals for the Net Promoter Score can be understood as follows. "Promoters," those who actively promote an organization. That requires a strong positive opinion or commitment – hence the 10 and 9 indicators. "Passives" may feel positively toward an organization, but not so much that they are willing to promote it. "Detractors" include those who may actively speak against the organization or who decline an opinion. Typically, detractors are unhappy with their interactions with the organization. Promoters and Detractors are the most likely to take action and thus the balance between the two is useful data. All characterizations are point-in-time.

### Appendix 2: OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

Word counts break the texts into single word lists. The "stopwords" are then removed. Stopwords are those required for communication but that otherwise have little significance.

Lists of 50 Most Frequently Used Words in Response to Three Questions Inviting Open Responses [includes tie]					
Q11: "Are there factors that are more important to you about the elementary school your child or children may attend?"		Q13: "Are there other ways to utilize available space in any of the District's buildings?"		Q18: "We would appreciate any additional thoughts you might have."	
Word	n	Word	n	Word	n
School	260	School	132	School	510
Community	121	Space	116	Schools	224
Elementary	106	Programs	105	Elementary	185
Schools	85	Community	57	Closing	175
Children	67	Rent	55	Close	166

<b>Lists of 50 Most Frequently Used Words in Response to Three Questions Inviting Open Responses [includes tie]</b>					
Q11: "Are there factors that are more important to you about the elementary school your child or children may attend?"		Q13: "Are there other ways to utilize available space in any of the District's buildings?"		Q18: "We would appreciate any additional thoughts you might have."	
Child	51	Pre	52	District	153
Close	50	Elementary	46	Community	138
Town	47	Schools	46	Children	111
Quality	46	Students	37	Survey	94
Class	41	Education	30	Students	90
Education	40	Activities	30	Enrollment	76
Teachers	35	Grade	26	Education	62
Neighborhood	31	Program	26	Families	62
Closing	30	Classes	25	Taxes	60
District	29	Preschool	23	Learning	59
Size	28	6 <sup>th</sup>	22	Kids	59
Programs	28	Add	22	Money	57
Program	27	Move	22	Property	55
Students	27	District	21	People	54
Moved	26	Building	20	BCSD	50
Local	25	Care	19	Values	48
Home	25	Adult	17	Questions	48
Special	22	Kids	17	Board	47
Kids	22	Special	17	Bedford	47
Proximity	20	Close	16	Closed	45
BVES	20	Children	16	Innovative	45
Move	18	Hillside	16	Savings	42
Learning	18	Language	15	Time	41
Attend	18	Private	15	Move	40
Bedford	17	Buildings	15	Quality	36
Families	17	Services	15	Child	35
Change	17	BCSD	14	Cost	34
Language	17	Extra	13	Budget	33
Live	17	Pay	13	Class	33
village	17	Lease	13	Data	33
Sizes	17	Offer	13	Teachers	32
House	16	Town	13	Programs	32
Pres	15	Revenue	13	Spaces	31
Pound	15	Educational	13	Question	31
Classes	15	Middle	12	Town	31
Impact	14	Bring	12	5	30
Ridge	14	Paid	12	Declining	29
Sense	14	Paying	12	Space	29
Bus	14	Parents	11	Student	28
Diversity	14	Class	11	Decision	28
Social	13	Spaces	11	Pay	28
Feel	13	Day	11	BVES	28

<b>Lists of 50 Most Frequently Used Words in Response to Three Questions Inviting Open Responses [includes tie]</b>					
Q11: "Are there factors that are more important to you about the elementary school your child or children may attend?"		Q13: "Are there other ways to utilize available space in any of the District's buildings?"		Q18: "We would appreciate any additional thoughts you might have."	
Current	12	Center	10	Current	27
Values	12	Enrollment	10	Don't	27
Parents	12	Families	10	Tax	26
Closed	12	Utilize	10		
Emotional	12	Events	10		
Care	12	Child	10		