

# Transcript of 7.31.24 BOE Meeting

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two other young all I buy now from yeah no they

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all right good evening I'd like to call to order the special meeting of the moorestown

3:44

Township Board of Education this meeting is called in conformance with the open public meetings act with adequate notice is

3:50

provided in The Courier Post and Burlington County Times on July 14

3:56

2024 may I please get a moment of silence

4:05

please your eyes for the pledge pledge allegiance to the flag of

4:12

the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stand one nation

4:17

under God indivisible with liberty and justice for

4:24

all you take a roll call please James Miss Arcara Burns present Mrs Barnes Mrs Fallows

4:33

Macaluso Dr Mailhiot Mrs Miller here Mrs Morano here Mr

4:40

weeks present Mrs Makopoulos here Mr Villanueva here thank you thank you James and

4:46

good evening everyone uh thank you for coming to our special meeting uh before

4:52

we get going I just wanted to uh acknowledge the passing of Dr Leisa Karanjia

4:59

earlier this month um she was the principal at South Valley for at least

5:05

20 years um I didn't have the fortune of of knowing her when she was with the district but um in all that I've heard

5:12

about her and read about her um I know that she was a a phenomenal asset to the

5:18

district I i' I'd read that she had a unique talent of very quickly knowing

5:23

the name of every student in her building uh you know within the first couple of days of school and took a lot

5:29

of time and effort to to connect with the students and their families and the staff so uh our condolences to the Karanjia

5:37

family um and our our thoughts are with them so we usually don't have meetings  
5:44  
uh in July uh we typically have our last meeting of the  
5:50  
school year in June no meetings in July and then we start back up in August and so why are we here  
tonight and Mr  
5:58  
Bendorf and others are going to get into the the details of why we're here  
6:03  
tonight but from uh a high level we are planning to have a capital referendum  
6:10  
vote in the march of 2025 and there are a number of deadlines  
6:18  
that we have to comply with to make that happen and um again Mr bollendorf and  
6:23  
others can can get into sort of the time the specific timeline but one of the steps in the process is  
6:32  
the district submission of plans to the Department of Education and that is so  
6:38  
that they can consider what and how much they will the state will reimburse us  
6:44  
for costs associated with the project and so the meeting tonight is to review  
6:51  
the current state of affairs what the plans are and then the board will vote on submitting those plans to the  
6:57  
Department of Education for their consider ation and approval uh we are not voting on  
7:04  
specifically what will be set forth in March of 2025 this allows us the  
7:10  
opportunity to show the state what we plan see how much they'll uh reimburse  
7:16  
us for and then we can continue to have conversations amongst ourselves and with the community about  
what the final  
7:23  
project will look like that's presented to the community for a vote in March of 2025 so that's why we had to  
have a  
7:31  
special meeting tonight or you know within either Late July or early August  
7:37  
because we need to get those plans to the Department of Education um in August  
7:42  
and so while I'm sure um we all have summer plans that uh we would rather be  
7:49  
doing I thank everybody for for spending a lot of time uh in the last several  
7:55  
months and particularly this summer in uh evaluating what the plan is going to  
8:00  
be so with that I will turn it over to Mr  
8:14  
Bendorf I don't know if you're gon to put this back on there George I tend to be Meander around a  
8:21  
little bit first let me apologize for our appearance um the camp is actually using this facility so they had to  
make  
8:26  
room for us tonight and as Mark pointed out um make it very clear tonight's meeting is really as a result of  
a

8:33

timeline that we have in order to be able to get this to the taxpayers for a vote in March of 2025 so tonight was the

8:42

last opportunity for us to be able to do that to make a submission in early August to the state um tonight you're

8:48

going to see a presentation from our architectural architectural firm vvhhd mainly from George duthy and his

8:56

associates Patrick Downey and Steven Shri they'll be presenting the the actual application and I want to really

9:01

emphasize that word in terms of what it is that we're doing Mark did but we are not voting on a referendum here tonight

9:07

we're voting on an application to the state to determine what monies what how

9:12

much will be funded in terms of the projects that we're putting out so the way I think and I and I think most

9:18

people would think this way it's really incredibly prudent for the board to send

9:24

as many applications as they can to see what we're getting back in exchange for those

9:29

so making specific decisions on what we will or will not actually put forward in

9:35

terms of a referendum are very much going to be tied to how much money we're going to get back in terms of

9:40

reimbursement from the state for doing those projects plus prioritizing in terms of needs wants and other things

9:46

that are going to I believe set this District up for an incredibly strong future um you're going to see a lot of

9:52

things in this tonight that perhaps you haven't been heard about or talked about and you're going to see a presentation

9:59

that really is in the neighborhood of north of a little over \$100 million in terms of what it is that we're trying to

10:04

accomplish in the district um so they'll be a lot to consider so let me talk a

10:10

little bit about the timeline because I think that that's important Mark touched on it but I want to emphasize it because

10:15

part of what you're wondering is how will we get input how will we be able to

10:20

ask questions know what's going on uh give our input in terms of what things are happening so from this point for

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once this application goes out we'll know what things are in the application so starting to have the conversation on

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what it is that we're trying to do or strongly considering doing of course based on information coming back are

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real conversations that can be had for this board and for this community to make determinations is what matters what

10:47

is it that we need so let's talk about the why why are we here um well 18 months ago and you those of you that are

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regular here heard this before but it Bears my reiterating the story because

10:59

questions come back even after the fact on things that I thought that I I talked about already but so I it Bears

11:05

repeating because it matters uh 18 months ago when it came on uh we we were

11:10

faced faced and confronted with the notion of more student population coming into mortown as a result of building

11:18

that has yet to happen but is going to happen when I looked at that Prospect and started to analyze things that were

11:24

happening in the district after about six months I was able to report back to the to the board that you your your

11:32

pressing issue is already here it exists currently why does that exist well when

11:37

I look at student population at the elementary level of 25 kids in first and second grade with kids being sent to not

11:45

their neighborhood schools because there's no room in their current grades for them to go to the school for which

11:50

they live to having kindergarten classes of only 22 up to 22 kids and many of

11:56

them are at Max is well beyond best practice practice in terms of Elementary

12:01

education for a district like moristown who's considered one of the best districts in the state of New Jersey

12:07

that was astounding to me that that's the situation that we were in so when I started to look at that situation why

12:14

well the reality of it is that the classrooms were filled there is no empty

12:19

classroom sitting somewhere that we could divide and hire more staff so we could lower class size at those grade

12:25

levels it just didn't exist so what was the other anomaly that I Came Upon that completely floored me

12:32

was that we only offered half day kindergarten in in mortown that the folks that are here

12:38

full day are paying tuition in order to keep their children in a full day program and that set a much lower

12:45

percentage than the total number of kids that could actually come to full day kindergarten in moristown so we have a

12:51

percentage of kids who are either only coming to school for half a day or going

12:58

to a private school and paying exorbitant amounts of money or perhaps because it's not mandatory

13:03

not coming to kindergarten at all offering a full day tuition-free kindergarten program is I think

13:10

Paramount to the educational process that we provide and more importantly you're one of about eight districts in

13:16

the entire state of New Jersey that does not offer full day tuition free Kindergarten now you've heard mentioned

13:22

and I want to make this very clear because one of the things that we also learned is that if this community ever

13:27

decided that they want wanted to to explore the notion of expanding preschool education there's an expansion

13:33

grant that is offered by the state of New Jersey and it's quite lucrative but mortown is not eligible to apply for

13:39

expansion Grant because they don't offer a full day tuition free kindergarten that's a that's a precursor to being

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able to do that so when we talk about the need to do this how do we make and

13:51

how do we do how do we accomplish well we need space there's no room to do the things and correct the problems that

13:57

currently exist and if the truth of the matter is that expansion through pilot programming and other housing projects

14:03

that are going to happen in this community over the course of the next few years then that's only going to exacerbate what is already an existing

14:09

problem it only gets worse and now you're talking about class sizes they're going to be north of 25 in your

14:16

Elementary level north of 22 in kindergarten it's really truly not an acceptable number for a community of

14:22

this of this silk it's just not so how do we get space so then we look at

14:28

program I was also kind of surprised to see that we are offering a combined elementary

14:34

and middle school program at the ues that combines both fourth fifth for elementary and then sixth graders in

14:40

Middle School in one building running a bi bilateral program of two different

14:45

schedules both in a teaming model for sixth graders and an elementary model and it's difficult to manage to make

14:52

work properly it's really not effective it's not best practice middle schools are typically sixth seventh and eighth

14:58

grade and they are combined and work together in houses as a teaming

15:04

model so when I look at that programmatically I'm like what it is that we need to do and then find out

15:10

that back in 2019 a referendum was floated with an expansion idea at the middle school to

15:17

accommodate a move of sixth graders to the middle level and third graders up into the middle school and that was the essence of the plan I agree with that

15:24

concept I believe that's the solution but as I look back I think it was really critical that a wing be built in such a

15:32

way that it contained an entire sixth grade um which is going to be in a minimum 12 classrooms the plan prior to

15:39

this only afforded eight so how I think they were planning on squeezing those other bodies in was by dividing a space

15:46

like this this was part of the plan that this instructional Media Center would be divided subdivided to create additional

15:52

classrooms as well as other places in the building not optimal you're going to put another 300 kids in the building and

15:58

you're going to make the instructional Media Center smaller that doesn't make a lot of sense to me so a development of a

16:05

plan that can house an entire sixth grade coming to the middle level so that third

16:10

grade can move to what is now called the ues and that alarm Bells go off we're

16:16

going to move our babies to the ues so I think it's really important and the messaging that we continue to send and

16:22

I'll continue to put out there it won't be the ues it's going to be a reimagined

16:28

elementary school for third fourth and fifth graders tonight you'll hear about designs that are going to happen within

16:34

the building new playgrounds creating an atmosphere that is welcoming warm and inviting and is in fact in its entirety

16:41

programmatically an elementary school a fourth Elementary School in moristown

16:48

that allows for creation of about four classrooms in each of your three

16:54

existing elementary schools that gives us the space that we need to go to full

16:59

day kindergarten that gives us the space we need to start concentrating on reducing class sizes in first and second

17:07

grade and you'll create a k through two model for your three elementaries a 3 to

17:13

five elementary at whatever we will call it the ues a true Middle School here at

17:21

whams or six seventh and eighth grade and then the high school where there'll be additional enhancements which you'll

17:26

hear tonight the question is say it's all focus on Elementary but it does not it goes well across the board and well

17:33

across the Spectrum in terms of the things that we need people have asked the question well how are we going to staff this what are we going to do are

17:39

we going to like kill other programs in order to be able to rob Peter to pay ball the answer to that is no in fact

17:45

part of this plan you'll see is about moving our buses moving our operational

17:51

Department to a brand new facility that will reside out in and out of the way at

17:56

the uses so that we can capture what was originally instructional space in the

18:02

high school so that we can create other programs like AI in fact we're looking very specifically into artificial

18:09

intelligence as a creation as a an elective program of choice for our students as part of our stem program in

18:15

time moving forward so what we're interested in doing is being smart

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making sure that we are putting enough kids in every single class uh and then budgeting effectively over the course of

18:27

the next few years in order to add to the staff that will be needed in order to be able to expand and provide smaller

18:35

class sizes and more opportunity in the way of full day kindergarten that's the essence of what needs to be done and why

18:41

it needs to be done but then we take a look at our facilities we see that we

18:46

have room for improvement in very many areas which you'll see tonight um so in

18:52

the era of roofing HVAC we talked about some of the problems that we have with HVAC with outdated equipment they need

18:59

to update that the locations of our univ events which are outdated and poorly located moving those to a lot of rooftop

19:05

units replacing univent units where they can be replaced a lot of that information is in here and then

19:11

expanding expanding our parking expanding our athletic facilities and

19:16

really creating an atmosphere that I believe with all my heart will make

19:21

most toown the number one school district in the state of New Jersey on every level this will be a place where

19:28

people want to come to be a part of all right raise their children in and it

19:33

will only go up tenfold in reality in terms of what it is that we're trying to do to take the district to the next

19:39

level so I speak very passionately about this I've spent my life as an educator

19:45

I've been very I feel very blessed to had an opportunity to be here in moristown to be a part of this process

19:51

um and I will continue to be here at least through December if not longer in one capacity or another to continue to

19:58

uh promote this whole notion because I think it's it's time I appreciate the support from the people who have lent it

20:04

to me and with that because I know I can be a little longwinded I'm going to turn it over to George and his team thank

20:13

you good evening everyone so I'm George duth I'm a

20:20

principal with fhd architects in Trent New Jersey I have uh Steve shrier a senior associate with me he's been

20:26

working with the uh project with me uh and also Patrick Downey is here from Dynamic traffic so I'm just going to

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kind of go over tonight where we are today in terms of the planning for the various projects and how we got here

20:39

okay and the ongoing process I'm going to talk about costs and I'm going to talk about timeline as well so uh as uh

20:49

your superintendent discussed what is being proposed and why we're going to talk a little bit more about that we're

20:54

going to talk about project categories and the priorities that have been established in kind of the methodology

21:00

behind what we did and again that same due diligence process I'm going to talk about that as well what are the

21:07

improvements that are proposed at each school and these are the projects that are going to find their way into the

21:14

applications that will be submitted to the Department of Education just so we can be prepared what the ultimate form

21:21

of that referendum is going to look like and that vote will take place next March

21:26

March 11th 2025 there is a process uh with the State

21:32

Department of Education and approvals that are needed and you know things that have to be done with the county and so

21:37

forth so that being said we'll talk about the timeline we'll talk about categories okay so what's being

21:45

proposed we're going to address traffic and parking issues

21:50

particularly at the high school middle school campus class sizes previously

21:56

mentioned we're going to show you ideas about that to ation free full day and we're going to address an important

22:02

topic aging infrastructure and critical Building Systems which are composed of

22:07



things like HVAC security systems fire laws things like

22:13

that what is the financial strategy well these projects many of them are eligible

22:20

projects that means they're eligible for State support they're eligible for the Department of Education to contribute

22:27

could be a significant cost up to 40% of the cost of some of these projects or portions of these projects okay we're

22:34

going to leverage favorable timing with debt that will be rolling off the school district has current bond issue that

22:41

will be rolling off within a favorable window for this project as well we're

22:46

going to choose appropriate options for projects that don't fit in the annual budget these projects are too costly to

22:53

do within the school district's budget okay there are a lot of restrictions on budgets and what schools can and cannot

23:00

put into their budgets right and we're going to get uh upfront funding so we're going to know how much money we're going

23:06

to have to be able to do these projects when they get approved by the state and the referendum is voted

23:12

upon so let's talk about the high school uh categories spaces for students the

23:18

things that directly affect students all these projects affect students they all for students but these are spaces so

23:24

what we're going to do and we're going to talk a little bit more about this we're going to be relocating the bus Depot we're relocating the fuel tank and

23:31

we're going to be relocating that bus service Bay at the high school to

23:37

another location at the upper elementary school which I'll show you we're going to and you're going to see this as a common theme HVAC and boilers replace

23:45

obsolete equipment more energy efficient boilers more energy efficient HVAC

23:50

equipment Safety and Security at the high school replace the fire alarm system it is beyond its useful life uh

23:58

as it gets older gets harder to service more expensive to service parking and

24:03

traffic flow improvements again relocation of the bus depot and addressing aging INF infrastructure now

24:11

at the high school we're also going to be doing uh some renovations to critical spaces such as the cafeteria uh and um

24:19

some of the other areas but focusing on the cafeteria and food service at the high school okay we'll also be when we

24:26

move the buses uh from the bus Bay service Bay we're going to be working on that block of the school as well for

24:32

technology okay and other purposes to be determined so this is the current drop

24:39

off situation uh we were aided in again this due diligence process by Dynamic

24:45

traffic with Patrick and uh his staff who have taken a look at the traffic

24:51

flow and the parking and pedestrians and bicycles at this campus and is prepared

24:58

to make recommendations still working through some of those but this shows you kind of what's going on right now for

25:04

those of you who have encountered this situation I think we can all agree it's not ideal and there are some good ideas

25:11

for how that's going to be addressed moving the bus depot adding

25:16

additional parking particularly adding parking for students at that campus okay

25:22

so we can get those students off of the streets where they're parked now and get them on to the campus in one area of the

25:28

campus where they can park modifying driveways better isolation of bus traffic and drop off traffic and

25:36

pedestrians and bicycles as well and also continually working with Dynamic

25:41

traffic we're Contin working on the improvements to the traffic flow all right so here's here's basically the

25:47

plan uh and it's hard to see I know and and that's okay because there's a lot more information coming later on this is

25:53

just a very broad brush look at what we're doing but you can see just from the number of white boxes there's a lot

25:59

of places on the campus that are going to be touched by this project okay and that includes parking it includes of

26:06

course the the additions on the middle school which we're going to talk about and athletic fields and storm drainage

26:13

improvements and potential County Highway improvements as well so there

26:18

are a multitude of project Stadium improvements also are contemplated here

26:24

and also the tennis courts are going to be refurbished okay

26:29

so here's a site plan really just just kind of focuses on just the area around the high school this is just sort of a

26:34

blow up of what you just saw the things discussed uh earlier and the areas that are

26:40

highlighted are the areas of impact of note in the lower left hand part of the screen right there the buses are being

26:47

relocated to Upper Elementary School and that is going to free up that area for additional parking as well as the

26:53

creation of a potential area for drop off and pickup that are going to be uh

26:58

changed at both the middle school and the high school and again this is just a middle

27:05

school blowup plan and you can see here two additions being planned uh two-story

27:10

Middle School wing and a gymnasium a full-size gymnasium Edition we're going to talk a little bit more about that

27:16

also a reconfiguration again of Parkway of uh parking and

27:23

driveways so here's the high school and these are the proposed renovation areas in blue and as you can see uh we're

27:29

touching upon the area again where the where the bus Bay is right in there we're doing uh a technology core here

27:38

we're going to be increasing stem potential future programming as well

27:43

there's going to be Renovations made to the Eisenberg gym and then of course we

27:48

have our cafeteria and kitchen and we're going to be making improvements to those

27:54

spaces as well so what's going on at the middle school

27:59

as I said a two-story sixth grade Wing a full-size gym addition with full-size

28:05

basketball and bleachers and the ability to use that gym facility after hours

28:10

separated from the rest of the building with its own toilet rooms and everything else a separate entrance renovations to

28:15

create more instructional spaces and CST and counseling you know because we're

28:21

bringing sixth grade over we're going to need more offices for student support uh we're also going to add some additional

28:26

main office uh conference spaces we're going to also update the PE spaces as

28:31

well HVAC and boilers there again you see that those projects once more Safety

28:37

and Security here we're going to be replacing the PA clock messaging system and the fire alarm system parking and

28:44

traffic flow which we sort of talked about already and then just some work on the outside of the building some limited

28:50

amount of repairs on the outside of the building on the bre with h with sealings so here's the here's the middle

28:56

school and you can see this is the two-story Wing

29:01

first floor second floor this will have 12 classrooms and other spaces as well connected to the building in three

29:09

different locations so you're going to have a nice wraparound circulation and away for those sixth graders to get to

29:15

the other four spaces within the building more efficiently and then of course we're going to have on the other

29:20

end a new gym nestled right in here full-size gym but we're going to more importantly renovate this entire PE area

29:28

and we're going to kind of integrate that and make it better circulation bring those spaces together make them

29:33

more efficient okay and kind of make that a large uh PE space combination of

29:39

spaces right as well as other Renovations uh again for technology and

29:45

things like that right in these rooms here so just opening up more space okay we're going to also there's your office

29:50

Renovations and your CST Renovations as well there okay

29:56

so that's the high school and middle school school George C Baker Elementary School again here we have spaces uh for

30:03

students and these projects are the supportive full day kindergarten and creating some additional what call Flex

30:10

classrooms to handle those bubbles and those extra students for those class sizes in each of the elementary schools

30:16

controls for new HVAC to improve efficiency and the temperature controls of the building ventilation and so forth

30:23

Safety and Security here again PA clock system fire alarm system we're also going to be doing at each of the

30:29

elementary schools a little bit of work at the uh about half a million dollars

30:34

at each School fencing drainage we're going to put some gates in we're going to improve some of the perimeter

30:40

security around the playgrounds uh and some miscellaneous playground improvements as well there's some areas

30:45

of drainage that are going to be addressed there's sort of little different things going on at each school but that that'll be covered in in the

30:52

referendum as well we're also where we need to roofs that need to be replaced

30:57

we're going to do partial roof replacement here at Baker also masy work and window SS okay so here at George

31:05

Baker you know we're going to be uh moving third grade right so that frees

31:10

up space and this just kind of shows you where the existing prek and kindergarten rooms are located and potentially

31:16

additional space you can see there in the blue as well okay so that's George

31:22

Baker here's Mary Roberts uh same with the uh pre space

31:28

and additional classrooms HVAC and boilers uh controls some obsolete HVAC

31:34

equipment is going to be uh replaced at Baker we're doing an HVAC project right

31:40

now we're working on a lot of the HVAC equipment at Baker in a current project

31:45

that's getting ready to go to bid fire alarm system and again those same kind of site and playground improvements

31:52

similar to what's being done at Baker uh and partial roof replacement again another Mas at Roberts so here's a

31:59

Roberts the plan uh again in blue the area that's impacted by the uh

32:05

remodeling that's being done and again the relocation of third grade still working on some of those programmatic

32:10

things South Valley you see again the kindergarten pre space adding bathrooms were

32:17

appropriate kindergartens and pre are supposed to have you know bathrooms for the kids barrier free accessible

32:23

bathrooms we're going to be putting those in as well we're going to be at South valley the uh area near the

32:30

cafeteria we're going to be closing the cafeteria off right now we walk right into the cafeteria from the hallway

32:36

we're going to create a wall and doors to secure the cafeteria so that in the

32:41

event of a lockdown or other emergency kids are safe in there we want to take the space that used to be the stage

32:48

behind the cafeteria and convert that into small group instruction rooms again creating space for the kids right HVAC

32:54

and boilers again Safety and Security with PA clocks fire alarm system closing

33:00

up the walls and again there's those site improvements as well and here we're going to be doing again some masy restoration and sealment repairs so

33:08

that's South Valley and here's a diagram of what those renovation areas are going to look

33:13

like Upper Elementary School of course this is where we will

33:19

be moving third grade creating a third grade Wing which I'm going to show you which is going to have an elementary

33:25

school atmosphere fact we've got money set aside in the referendum to kind of

33:32

make that school more like an elementary school uh with with uh furniture and

33:38

finishes and doorways and various other Design Elements kind of make that school  
33:43  
more like an elementary school HVAC and boilers uh same type of projects Safety  
33:49  
and Security PA clock messaging fire alarm uh fencing drainage playground  
33:55  
improvements and so forth and again there's that uh uh joint sealing work on the inside the building okay  
so upper  
34:01  
elementary school just to show you where the uh uh bus compound is going here  
34:08  
okay so this will be tucked kind of in the back of the site and it will house the  
34:14  
district's buses there'll be a little bus garage right there will have its pathway for buses to come in and out  
34:21  
there'll be driveway improvements being made right here okay so we're still going to maintain the drop  
offs  
34:28  
the uh drop offs in the front of the building and all of the traffic flage you see here that's the uh the  
preliminary plan for the Upper  
34:34  
Elementary School the big thing here is the relocation of the bus depot to the  
34:39  
upper elementary school to free up the space at the high school and then here's the upper elementary  
school this is the proposal  
34:46  
for the third grade classroom wing you can see those there  
34:53  
okay so how much is it all going to cost  
35:01  
the projects are broken down into the categories that we discussed and so the  
35:06  
first category is space for students that includes the building additions that you saw at the middle school  
the  
35:14  
renovations to upgrade the elementary schools and the middle school classroom modifications and it also  
includes it  
35:21  
also includes uh athletic fields okay it includes uh those spaces part of  
35:27  
Athletics part of PE uh around the uh Elementary around the middle school and the high school okay so  
it's it includes  
35:35  
those uh Synthetic Turf Fields okay second category and you can see  
35:40  
it's about 71 by far of course the largest number but again uh it includes  
35:45  
the fields and all that site work 71.5 million addressing the infrastructure  
35:51  
the boilers the roof replacement uh building Integrity projects the HVAC equipment  
35:58  
about 17.5 million the Safety and Security projects which you saw earlier fire alarms PA message and  
clocks about  
36:05  
8.1 and then you can see the campus expansion of the parking in the Middle School uh traffic flow  
improvements and

36:13

relocating the bus depot about 13.3 million we're gr total just over \$110

36:18

million 110.3 okay

36:24

five4 all right so where are we with the Tim line well one of the things we've done

36:32

is a lot of due diligence these projects we did a lot of research we did a lot of

36:37

we had a lot of meetings walk through the schools had traffic studies done a lot of work has been done we've been

36:44

here about six months tremendous amount of work has been done so we are finished

36:49

with that portion to develop the scope we've organized and compiled the data we are now getting ready to submit for

36:56

State approval to the Department of Education so we're going to submit those applications let the state can start

37:02

that review process okay there will be a community engagement process there's going to be a lot more information

37:08

that's going to be shared and be continuing that up through the referendum date in March okay the vote

37:14

again will be on March 11th we expect to know from the state of New Jersey how

37:20

much money we're going to get from the state in terms of their share of the cost by the end of 2024 hopefully sooner

37:27

and then we'll start construction design I should say not construction we'll start design as soon as that referendum

37:32

passes we're going to get started on the designing these projects okay thank

37:50

you so let me uh just kind of bring it to closure and there will be an opportunity for questions from the uh

37:56

from the audience I'll turn back to Mark at that particular point in time um tur Fields it's probably the first time that

38:01

you've actually heard that so one of the things that we've learned through working with the architectural firm is

38:07

that the state really is funding in a very unique way um the addition of turf fields because the majority of that cost

38:13

comes with drainage uh so and covering drainage to a large extent is a big part

38:18

of what the state will cover so it's worthy to look into what we can get in exchange for that and what we're looking

38:24

at is the four turf fields that four turf fields that would go out on Bridge barow Road in that complex and also the

38:32

addition of a turf field directly behind the high school which is a soccer field at this particular point in time they

38:38

would be lighted uh we would see Great Value from both a physical education perspective and the utilization of those

38:44

fields but in terms of far and wide Community use beyond the high school we think that they would have tremendous

38:49

value so how they would go out and what portion they would go out there'll be three applications related to those fields two two and one two two fields on

38:58

bridge Barrow two more fields at Bridge Barrow and one Field behind the high school in order for anything to make it

39:04

to the Finish Line as it relates to a referendum vote there has to have been an application so if we don't apply we

39:11

can't add it but we cannot we we can choose not to put something on so getting feedback as it relates to that

39:17

going to be very critical to what we're trying to do once again reiterating all the board is being asked to do tonight

39:23

is approve what it is that we're actually applying for from the state not the actual referendum that'll happen

39:29

likely at its earliest the end of November but more likely December when all this comes back and we get it out in

39:35

front of the uh the board and and with the community in terms of it being finalized but up into that point there's

39:42

going to be widespread Community engagement in fact I already have meetings scheduled at the library on

39:48

August 22nd at 10: a.m. and August 29th at 7.m that was set up graciously by the

39:54

home and school of uh Robert school I don't who's coming I know it's going to be parents but I'll be there to answer

40:00

questions to talk about the referendum and engage folks get their thoughts and ideas I would sure that if a lot of

40:06

young parents are there their main concern is going to be what about my third grader um so and I'll be prepared

40:11

to answer those questions as best as I can to try to put people's minds at ease that it's going to be okay um the

40:19

website I want to really want to uh shout out to Sherry who you know has really been very helpful along with her

40:24

firm um helping us out really helping this word there'll be a letter will go out to the community tomorrow after the

40:30

vote to make people aware of where we are and what it is that we're doing but the website that we have connected to

40:35



mtps.org really is the Hub of information and soon you're going to start seeing up there my face doing Q&A

40:42

videos um taking questions we know what the questions are you've heard me address them here trying to keep them

40:48

out there where people can visit and go and look and just not read about it but hear about it see somebody's face

40:54

because I as I said before I think there's a lot into the communication when you're talking about something and not just simply reading it

41:04

um I think I actually covered everything that I wrote down to make sure I said that's pretty

41:10

impressive um pres it back to school night we will be I will be I know some of our board members will be we want to

41:16

be there just if people want to come up and ask questions and talk uh it's really important for us to have her face out there for people who have those

41:24

questions um I know that on those nights people are focused on their children they want to learn those but for those

41:29

that want to engage we'll be there in order to be able to do that plus other opportunities for engagement um for

41:35

those of you that have come up to me after these meetings and have been so supportive I hope that you know we can count on you to spread the word get the

41:42

word out there but most importantly make sure folks in the community know that we're accessible we're available pick up

41:48

a phone send an email I'll meet I'll have coffee I'll do whatever it is um to do that and I know our board feels the

41:54

same way in terms of championing what it is to we're trying to accomplish here to take you know mors to town to the next

42:01

level um so as always we welcome your feedback we welcome your input we

42:06

welcome your ideas and uh appreciate you all coming out on a July 31st uh evening

42:13

and a happy middle of the summer to all and with that I'll turn it back to our board president Mr villan

42:20

NOA thank you

42:25

Chim we good thank you

42:30

Joe um and George and your team thank you for for the presentation uh this has

42:37

been a long time in the works um you know we've spent many many many

42:44

months and James uh Mr Heiser here has has really dug in and done a lot of leg

42:50

work in terms of gathering information from um various stakeholder groups and

42:56

getting this project to where it is today so thank you thank you to everybody that was involved in putting  
43:02  
this together and so I will why don't we open up the floor for the board for any  
43:07  
comments or questions about uh the presentation and I know we've had a lot  
43:14  
of internal meetings um so I think a lot of our own questions have been addressed  
43:19  
um there certainly will be more uh as we move forward but uh I want to just pause  
43:25  
and give an opportunity for for any comment comments James I just had a quick  
43:30  
question there was a issue kind of outstanding about door locks whether they were going to be in or out  
did they  
43:36  
make it in or out or are we not sure yet the uh door locks were removed from  
43:42  
the overall plan uh in lie of uh some other measures that we can put in place  
43:49  
uh in the intermediary to fix the issue Mark I was just looking we only  
43:56  
had like four people watching remotely um I know that we post the recording on  
44:02  
our website can we do something more proactive to kind of maybe send a link to the the board meeting to  
the  
44:10  
community put a link on the website through the meeting so people can see and I think we've been doing  
that pretty  
44:16  
much on the regular so we'll absolutely put that out okay I'll add that to the letter  
44:24  
unless it's already been there I'll add that link the letter as well that will go back to  
44:34  
first um just roughly my rough math so  
44:39  
basically about 65% of the total referendum that's being submitted as  
44:45  
around space and for the students um and I know that all  
44:51  
everything that we're doing really impacts the learning environment so I think that it's just  
44:57  
good to call out that the actual space where kids are doing the learning is really the bulk of this and I do  
just  
45:05  
want to also say that that 110 million you know it's it's not easy to go out  
45:10  
and ask for money obviously um the capital referendum is Above and Beyond  
45:15  
operating but when that number when we get the information back from the state that number will be  
lower corre I just  
45:23  
want to make sure that that's clear that that's what we're going out with but we will be getting information  
back from  
45:29  
the state about what they will fund that that is correct what we are  
45:35

ultimately submitting is the project applications to the state from there we will give preliminary eligibility cost  
45:41  
letters that will tell us what the state will fund on every one of those applications and then the board there  
45:46  
will be various meetings throughout the fall to discuss you know limiting down that number from there based off of  
45:52  
those applications thank you  
45:58  
Sor just to follow up though just as a at a so clear for understanding um so  
46:04  
what would what will come to the taxpayer in the in in the community will be the number less the payment the the  
46:13  
the money that we receive from the state so that'll be our local share whatever that local share will be will be what if  
46:20  
impacts the taxpayer in this community and as James has iterated before and I want to just reiterate now now um that  
46:28  
you know we have a lot of debt coming off the books in 2029 uh so structuring the loan cycle  
46:35  
and the implementation of projects are going to allow us to minimize as much as  
46:40  
possible that additional burden um so we're kind of in a timing timing wise  
46:46  
we're in a fortunate place as a result of that that explanation is very helpful  
46:53  
thank you Joe and James  
46:59  
could you speak I know you covered it in in both presentations but I think it's worth repeating if you could speak a  
47:05  
little bit more about moving the bus depot how that will  
47:11  
impact our parking and sort of some of the ideas that we have about traffic  
47:17  
flow and sort of what what the State of Affairs is with respect to traffic on this campus now and what we hope to  
47:24  
accomplish uh if the referendum is depend  
47:30  
yeah absolutely and I I think uh Patrick will definitely be able to tag in here uh with additional details the the bus  
47:37  
depot and the relocation of the D bus depot is huge this campus has a lot of challenges related to this campus  
47:44  
whether it's state approved open Waters whether it's uh Wetlands uh behind the  
47:50  
administration building that we've had tested um any view that we looked at on  
47:55  
this campus to gain additional parking was very very challenging and it get  
48:01  
became very obvious uh when we looked back at the 2019 referendum and we saw

48:06

you know the addition of trying to add an entrance and exit through the bus depot while still leaving the bus depot

48:12

in place that would have been a a very very challenging plan to navigate if that thing actually

48:19

operationalized um so by removing the bus depot from there it adds number one additional parking which we have an an

48:25

issue with but it also allows us to add an additional entrance Ingress egress

48:30

further down from the current egress that allows us to get more cars onto our

48:36

campus and gives us the ability to to improve our traffic flow on this campus

48:42

um and Patrick I I'll turn it over to you if you have some additional comments there

49:02

there we go yeah I think that was a great introduction um I think like you said the elimination of the bus depot is

49:07

the most significant uh gain of space for additional parking I know currently there's insufficient parking to really

49:14

accommodate all the users that would like to park on site between staff uh seniors who drive and park and then

49:20

Juniors who come of age throughout the year so um we're still developing the plans but based on the removal of that

49:25

bus depot and additional parking opportunities there's a significant increase of parking available in the future condition enough to accommodate

49:32

all those users and along with that um you know we've been involved to assist the design team throughout this due

49:37

diligence process and observe uh traffic flow conditions during the school year at the existing site um you know look at

49:45

the proposed design plans and make recommendations for how it could be maximized uh with some key factors being

49:50

you know helping bring the traffic activity associated with the schools more onsite off of the public roadway

49:57

increase parking minimize interaction between student drivers buses and parents really like uh you know make a

50:04

better situation than what it is today a leave it better than we found it so a lot of things still in play they need to be worked through but there's a lot of

50:11

room to work with on these sites compared to some other schools that we have worked with there's a lot of opportunities to make things

50:17

better so while while we're on the subject maybe we could talk a little bit

50:23

um about the efforts made in the design to minim miniz the impact of having the

50:28

bus depot at ues um both in terms of the functionality of the open space where it

50:34

would go and the and the remaining open space and the I guess access to the to

50:42

the space and then also the impact around you know with the surrounding neighborhood absolutely in terms of

50:48

vehicle circulation um without significant side improvements where the bus is associated with the depot would

50:54

need to travel would uh travel through where the parent drop off and uh pickup opportunities exist we wanted to really

51:01

minimize that interaction and help reduce the activity in the rear of the school uh it's used for the parent loading it's used for other Student

51:07

Activities and the buses associated with the depot are not necessarily coinciding timelines with the the activity of that

51:14

school itself uh so to go along with that we're looking at um the opportunity to convert the access on board Landing

51:20

Road to full movement allowing those buses to go to and from the bus depot freely without Crossing at all uh with

51:25

the activity aler Elementary School and in terms of minimizing some of the impacts you know with the

51:32

surrounding Community uh the the bus depot would be fenced in which obviously is increasing its security uh we've had

51:39

issues with that in the past uh we would any lighting would be looked at through

51:44

putting deflectors uh to make sure the light is down and it's not uh spread out

51:50

and wash throughout the campus um we looked at certain designs of how students uh if they were utilizing the

51:56

path behind U uh how we would be able to have a good line of sight on them uh

52:02

utilizing uh camera systems utilizing points and relocating the the current

52:07

bike path to be more in front of where the bus depot actually would be positioned up against the athletic field

52:15

uh also you know planning mature evergreen trees to provide additional uh

52:20

coverage and additional shade to the neighbors behind um and obviously you know the noise that would go on the bus

52:26

depot the actual uh pole barn that would be built is not against uh the bike path

52:33

it's it's closer to U and further from the uh the surrounding

52:39

Community

52:46

thanks okay well um as we've talked about and as Joe  
52:53  
highlighted there is a lot to be done uh while we uh await to hear back from the  
53:00  
Department of Education uh assuming the applications are approved tonight um and  
53:05  
we want to engage and hear from people uh we want to hear from the community about you know their  
thoughts on the  
53:12  
project uh so that we can consider what it is that will actually be set forth uh  
53:19  
on the referendum vote um so much much much more to come so thank you again to  
53:25  
everybody that's that's gotten us to this place um we only have one public comment  
53:33  
section tonight and so we're heading into that area of the agenda so this  
53:38  
public comment section will be for anything uh on or off the agenda uh  
53:44  
please limit your comments to three minutes and uh it's not necessarily a  
53:49  
question and answer session but obviously we we want to um have some flexibility as we're we're  
discussing  
53:55  
this subject so uh can I please get a motion to open public comment so moved second all in  
54:04  
favor okay if you'd like to make a public comment please take the microphone state your name and  
address  
54:11  
and uh the floor is open  
54:29  
thank you Cameron ravenue 161 phen Fields Lane um it's hard to imagine how much  
54:36  
work has gone into this thus far and I imagine there's a lot more to go so um  
54:42  
I'd like to start off by thanking everyone for all your hard work um so this is going to be a larger  
54:51  
facility uh it's uh and it's going to have a larger staff so how how uh much  
54:59  
are you anticipating the operating budget to increase with this uh this  
55:14  
change I I see it as a minimal uh expense as it relates to that and I think it's more related to our desire to  
55:21  
go with full day kindergarten and you know reduce class sizes at the elementary level uh you already  
have a  
55:28  
sixth grade faculty that would move with their sixth grades to here as well as  
55:33  
third grade teachers moving to the ues with the third grade so it's minimal  
55:39  
impact as it relates to that particular aspect of things um we would have to  
55:44  
take stock of whether or not any other additional positions may need to be created in order to help the  
support the  
55:50

students but there will be some staffing impact but I don't see it as a major impact and I think it's going to be

55:57

the uh the board's responsibility as long as the as well as the administrations to budget that in over

56:02

time as they move forward to be able to accommodate and provide for the students as needed and

56:09

I I I want to be polite but that doesn't make any sense to me if you increase the plant size there's going to

56:17

be increases in expenses in terms of maintaining the plant I understand that it's going to be more modern

but you're

56:25

increasing the you want smaller class sizes and this isn't a criticism I I just want to

56:31

understand this I mean you're very knowledgeable so um you're going to have

56:37

more classrooms reduced class sizes you're going to need more teachers and you're

56:43

going to need you know a larger staff to maintain the facility you have there has

56:49

to be a you're going to have more electricity maybe that's going to be mitigated by more modern equipment

56:57

um more water uh more Landscaping more Landscaping

57:02

Personnel um the cost is going to increase I mean I'm just what is what is

57:08

that going to be I mean I think that that's something that you should be you should be looking at well I think I

57:15

think again to answer your question there's no specific answer to your question because there's other things to

57:20

also mitigate some existing cost as an example the amount of money and time as it relates to maintenance fertilization

57:27

everything else that we put into the maintenance of grass fields for example would evaporate with the introduction of

57:32

artificial turf so you would have you would realize a savings in some areas where you may realize additional expense

57:39

I don't know that I agree with you in terms of landscaping because quite frankly when we put this wing on we're

57:44

going to be taking up ground that already needs to be maintained that no longer we maintained interior we have a

57:50

third party vendor so obviously we would have to contract them so I would agree with you that we would probably need an additional custodian to come in at night

57:57

to be able to clean that part of the building that didn't exist before so I think there's a lot of balancing that

58:02

would need to be done and so at this particular point in time I think trying to figure out all of those things I

58:09

don't believe my opinion are cost prohibitive in terms of doing the project I think that there are things  
58:16  
that can be managed and things that can be done through future budgets I don't see it as a scenario by  
which we are now  
58:24  
unable to build the classrooms or reduce class sizes because we can't hire the  
58:29  
additional support that we need that's the answer to the question as best as I can give it to you at this  
58:35  
time if you have larger staff teaching staff your costs are going to go up  
58:40  
naturally yeah okay thank you thank  
58:47  
you hi um Celie Coleman moorestown New Jersey um I like I'm so thankful that  
58:55  
you guys had this special meeting and so much information and like every question that I sort of had in  
my head I feel  
59:02  
like was answered um Sav just I think it was in another slide somewhere else but  
59:08  
um the estimated completion time of when like this goes through in March and we  
59:14  
start construction when it will all be done I guess and if that's  
59:21  
staged um like this is first this is second this move goes first if all  
59:26  
worked out yet um but really when this will impact students in the schools as  
59:33  
like okay third grade's moving to ues sixth moving to whams if that has a year  
59:39  
date season George if I may and you can I mean honestly I think that the  
59:44  
earliest it could happen would be 27-28 that school year in terms of opening up  
59:50  
the wing and moving kids because we're not going to move them mid year  
59:56  
no I think with the this is on with the level of of staging and phasing that  
1:00:03  
will have to be done because know while we're doing these projects right we we have to have swing  
space we have to move  
1:00:09  
the kids and we have to of course do it very safely so we're likely to take I  
1:00:14  
want to say I have to think about it probably four years I'm gonna also say that but it'll be in phases parts  
of the  
1:00:21  
projects are going to get finished for example we want to create swing space right so we're going to  
probably want to  
1:00:27  
finish those new additions so we have some space to put the kids in before we embark on Renovations  
so that's I would  
1:00:34  
see that I also see as an issue potentially lead times some of you may have heard of like all of the  
shipping  
1:00:40  
delays well they're still in construction very much alive we still have a lot of delays so I want to make



1:00:47

sure we allow enough time for procurement and to get all the things that we need to do and there's still

1:00:53

things we don't know right now because we have designed anything yet so there there could be infrastructure things

1:00:58

we're going to have to deal with as well and we have to be mindful of the impact that those projects have some of

1:01:04

the projects like Roofing you have to do them during the summer you really can't do them during the school year uh it's

1:01:09

not safe so fire alarms they need to be done even in the evening times are also

1:01:15

in the summer so I'm gonna say uh three to four years I'll be able to give you a much

1:01:21

better answer soon

1:01:29

hey good evening um Kate Wilson to Split Rock Place um reiterate what everybody said about thank you for all the work that's gone into this because uh yeah

1:01:36

it's obvious you guys have spent hours days weeks working on this um I know it's not a Q&A session but there's two

1:01:42

questions I had I don't think it's appropriate to answer when you talk about submitting multiple applications

1:01:47

is it like four big buckets so like right size security aging and parking or

1:01:54

is it underneath each of those headings like multiple applications so we might get a yes on the turf because it ties

1:02:00

into environmental stuff but we might get a no on moving the buses I guess it be really interesting to know you know

1:02:05

how many applications are going to go in and the state then reviews them all um and the second thing is I don't

1:02:11

know if I can find it what debt is rolling off our books because I keep hearing debts rolling off the books so it's the way you sort of you know

1:02:17

rebuild schools is that public knowledge is that confidential is that something that can be sort of built into the the

1:02:23

messaging around this whole project absolutely so first question uh the way

1:02:31

the applications are the the doe makes you submit your applications and makes you submit everything to them by

1:02:37

building so it's not just six applications we separate out some things

1:02:44

that may be uh lower priority they might be on a standalone application so we have some flexibility heading into the

1:02:50

fall around those so the applications are really strategically framed around the work being done in the individual

1:02:57

building but also our prioritization of that work and then second question I believe

1:03:03

was about Debt Service so we do have Debt Service that's coming off in 2029 and and to go back on kind of what

1:03:11

was uh the last question a little bit part of strategically placing this over

1:03:16

a few years also potentially gives us some flexibility around our debt service that as you get closer to that date of

1:03:23

that debt rolling off of our books and you're bringing on new debt then you can minimize the tax impact we're looking at

1:03:29

other methods to also minimize that tax impact by potentially going to the state and asking to do what's called a

1:03:35

non-conforming debt issuance that allows us to have years one and two of that debt issuance at a lower cost with

1:03:42

knowledge that in 2029 that debt comes off the books and then this one would ramp back up thank you very hopeful

1:03:48

you're welcome

1:03:57

okay well thank you for your comments I don't see anyone else approaching the microphone um and so could I please get

1:04:03

a motion to close public comment so all in

1:04:10

favor thank you moving on to our single action item

1:04:16

for the evening um Mark can I sure um

1:04:22

James maybe can you clarify what that old debt was for was it a previous

1:04:28

referendum or was it okay absolutely so it was for a previous

1:04:35

referendum uh you know one of the things that we did in this in this process is

1:04:40

obviously we looked at the 2019 failed referendum and what was being accomplished in that 2019 failed

1:04:46

referendum that 2019 referendum was 10 years away from the 2029 date and when

1:04:53

you look at that it didn't include and it didn't Encompass things that may have

1:04:58

been done in that 2029 debt issuance so we took a full look at that 20129 debt

1:05:04

issuance and some of the things that were done including roofs including HVAC all the infrastructure needs that when

1:05:11

that note was a 20-year note those units are now 20 plus years old so we did

1:05:16

incorporate that into this to address the Aging

1:05:23

infrastructure okay item number nine on our agenda is a resolution authorizing

1:05:30  
the submission of referendum project documents to the New Jersey Department of  
1:05:36  
Education and so I'll just read this into the record so uh the resolution of the Board of Education of the  
township  
1:05:42  
of mortown in the county of Burlington New Jersey approving the referendum project documents listed in  
exhibit  
1:05:49  
25-1 to be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education be it further resolved that  
1:05:55  
the District's architect freac Vice Hopkins and duty be authorized to  
1:06:01  
submit the listed projects to the New Jersey Department of Education for approval on the district's behalf  
the  
1:06:06  
district will be seeking Debt Service aid for the referendum projects that are being submitted to the  
Department of  
1:06:11  
Education you further resolve that amendments to the long range facilities plan by Freight Tech firm uh  
will  
1:06:19  
incorporate the above projects to be approved may I please get  
1:06:25  
a motion for approval of the  
1:06:30  
resolution second uh any comments or  
1:06:37  
questions okay this is a roll call vote Please Mr Cara  
1:06:43  
Burns Mrs Barnes Mrs FS Macaluso Dr  
1:06:49  
M Mrs Miller yes Mrs Morano yes Mr weeks  
1:06:54  
yes Mrs nais yes Mr Dona yes thank  
1:07:00  
you all right is there anything for the good of the order just I did want to recognize I  
1:07:06  
really do appreciate Mr Reno's questions um I'm on fno with m is chair and and  
1:07:12  
involved and I I think those are very important things to flush out and and hopefully we can get more  
specific  
1:07:18  
answers once we know what's going to be included um in the final referendum  
1:07:31  
anyone else for the good the order thank you can I please get a  
1:07:36  
motion to adjourn second all in  
1:07:42  
favor thank you