

**Slate Valley Unified Union Facilities Project – Talking Points
May 20, 2109**

Overview:

What’s “wrong” with our current facilities?

- I. All of the schools throughout the district have facilities issues that need to be addressed.***
- II. These issues are not cosmetic but involve the need to repair and or replace core infrastructure.***
- III. A comprehensive list of needed infrastructure repairs has been compiled for each school and is available for community members to review.
- IV. These repairs and/or renovations will need to be addressed regardless of whether or not the district proposes to create a district middle school.***
- V. Opportunities for community members tour our schools and review proposed repairs/renovations will be provided throughout the coming fall.

Do our current facilities meet the educational needs of our children?

- I. The Slate Valley School Board has a clearly defined set of educational goals and initiatives designed to meet the current and emerging needs of our students.
- II. Every school in the district needs to renovate and/or add instructional areas in order to fully achieve those educational goals.***
- III. Maintaining a quality school system in our district is essential to the long-term health, economic, and cultural vitality of our communities.
- IV. Repairing and updating our schools will ensure that Slate Valley remains a destination community for young families looking for a great school system in our region.***
- V. *Maintaining great schools is the best way to protect the property values of homeowners across the district.*

Why Bond?

- I. Updating our facilities will require the district to put a multi-year bond before community members for their consideration.
- II. A bond is the most cost-effective way to address the district’s core infrastructure needs and ensures that those who will benefit from the use of those facilities pay for them.***
- III. The cost of the bond along with the facilities needs that will be addressed is currently being compiled for review by community members.
- IV. The date of that bond vote has tentatively been set for next March – Town Meeting Day.***

Why a District Middle School?

- I. The creation of a unified school district here in Slate Valley has opened up the possibility of creating a district middle school to better serve our 7th and 8th grade students.
- II. As enrollment across our elementary schools has dropped, meeting the educational needs of middle school students has become more challenging and expensive.
- III. ***A district middle school would create a critical mass of students needed to offer the full range of program offerings typically offered to 7th and 8th grade students in Vermont. e.g. Arts, Foreign Languages, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math currently being offered by the schools in our region.***
- IV. Duplicating educational offerings to small numbers of middle school students across our current elementary schools is expensive and limits the educational programs we can offer our children.
- V. Creating a district middle school would enhance educational opportunity for our children and better utilize existing resources – E.g. a more cost effective use of taxpayer dollars.
- VI. **What is the proposed location for a new Middle School?**

The district has concluded that the only educational complex large enough to meet the needs of a self-contained, autonomous middle school is on the grounds of Fair Haven High School.

- I. Locating a middle school at FHHS would provide students with additional opportunities for academic acceleration, access to arts and co-curricular programs (athletics, clubs, and extra-curriculars), and enriched support services.
- II. Creating a new middle school adjoining the current high school facility would result in
- III. Greater long-term, operational efficiency – space utilization, staffing, field space.
- IV. A more cost-effective district-wide renovation plan to address our district's overall facility's needs.

What new programs and instructional opportunities would a renovated High School/Middle School campus provide our students?

To be completed

What new Elementary programs and instructional opportunities would a district bond support?

To be completed