October 29, 2019

Dear Community Member,

The Slate Valley School Board voted on October 14, 2019 to move forward with the full scope of the Slate Valley Innovation Project. This means that the school board is prepared to warn a bond vote for the spring of the next year that will address facility needs across the district, which includes housing 7th and 8th grade in an autonomous middle school wing connected to the high school.

Slate Valley, like many school districts in the state, is faced with declining enrollment and huge facilities needs due to deferred maintenance. Over this past year a committee including board members, community members and staff have been working to examine facility and educational issues that are not being addressed in our current configuration or with our current infrastructure. The committee looked at ways in which the existing buildings in the district could be educationally repurposed to address both educational and facilities needs. The committee found that the current use of space is not efficient and does not match the educational programs that the district is putting in place.

There were two central ideas that emerged from the committee work, first that there was an educational need for a district middle school and, second that aging infrastructure at the High School and Orwell Village School, specifically must be addressed with immediacy.

With respect to the middle school concept, the committee looked at different buildings within the school district that could accommodate 7th and 8th grade. The committee found that there was not a perfect scenario that would allow this without some construction or major renovations. The committee then looked at the educational outcomes that were wanted for our students. Since the bulk of the renovations proposed in this project are needed at the High School and there are educational benefits to having middle school on the high school campus, the committee decided to site the middle school on the high school campus.

Over the next several months you will have the opportunity to hear more about the project, see for yourself through tours of the infrastructure needs and the impact on tax rates. All of the existing documents related to this project can be found on our website: slatevalleyunified.org.

We hope you will take the opportunity to join us in finding out more about this project and what it means for you as a member of the Slate Valley School District.

Regards,

[Signature]

Brooke Olsen-Farrell
Superintendent