

Hanover School Building Needs Committee Survey Results and Recommendations Report

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Committee Members

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Hanover School Building Needs Survey Summary

Submitted by the HSBN Committee, Chris Martin (Chair), Brian Connolly, Suzanne Brady (School Committee representative), Brian Barthelmes, Don Buckley

A survey was conducted by the committee to better determine the feelings of the townspeople of Hanover with regard to future steps in addressing the Hanover High School and Sylvester Elementary School.

Over 3000 surveys were distributed as well a printed version in the Hanover Mariner. Two information Forums were also held at Town Hall.

All work and survey production were done on a donated basis and results represent approximately 300 returned surveys and 23 attendees at the April 9 and 23 Information Forums held at Town Hall.

SURVEY RESULTS

1. If you voted No on the school proposals, which one of the following below most closely matches your reason? (Approximately 35 % of respondents voted No)

A.) High School		B.) Sylvester School	
a. Tax impact	45%	a. Tax impact	38%
b. Did not understand the proposal	2%	b. Did not understand the proposal	5%
c. Did not want existing building demolished	24%	c. Did not want to see building decommissioned	23%
d. Need was not clearly identified	10%	d. Need was not clearly defined	16%
e. No choice of options	19%	e. No choice of options	18%

2. If you voted Yes on the last school proposal, which one of the following was the primary reason? (Approximately 65% of respondents voted Yes)

A.) High School		B.) Sylvester School	
a. Saw school condition and need for improvements	4%	a. Saw school condition/need for improvements	10%
b. Understood the reasoning behind the proposal	10%	b. Understood the reasoning behind the proposal	12%
c. Made sense to invest in schools	4%	c. Made sense to invest in schools	4%
d. My children attend Hanover schools	4%	d. My children attend Hanover schools	4%
e. All of the above	78%	e. All of the above	70%

3. Which of the following would you support regarding the building needs of Hanover High School?

a. Renovation	5%
b. Renovation and Addition	26%
c. Do nothing	4%
d. Make Capital Improvements as necessary	15%
e. Construction of new building	50%

4. Based on your response to question 3, how should the Town of Hanover pay for these improvements?

a. Use capital improvement funds	20%
b. Take out a bond with state reimbursement	63%
c. Do nothing	4%
d. Fundraise	3%
e. Raise taxes	10%

5. Which of the following would you support regarding the building needs of the Sylvester School?

a. Renovation	18%
b. Consolidate students to Center School with an addition to handle student population in one building	62%
c. Do nothing	7%
d. Make Capital Improvements as necessary	13%

6. Based on your response to question 5, how should the Town of Hanover pay for these improvements?

a. Use capital improvement funds	22%
b. Take out a bond with state reimbursement	61%
c. Do nothing	6%
d. Fundraise	4%
e. Raise taxes	7%

**7. Based on current needs, any renovations/additions/improvements will require new funding.
Would you be more apt to support funding for:**

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| a. Renovations | 6% |
| b. Renovations and Addition | 31% |
| c. New Building | 46% |
| d. Capital Improvements only | 10% |
| e. I would not support any program | 7% |

10. What do you perceive as the building condition of the High School?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| a. Needs cosmetic improvements | 12% |
| b. Needs major improvements | 38% |
| c. Needs complete overhaul | 46% |
| d. Is in adequate condition | 4% |

12. I have enough information to make an informed decision on current school conditions and future needs.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| a. Strongly agree | 35% |
| b. Agree | 46% |
| c. No opinion | 5% |
| d. Disagree | 11% |
| e. Strongly disagree | 3% |

14. How would you like to receive future information about school building needs?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| a. Mail | 33% |
| b. E-mail | 15% |
| c. Newspaper | 44% |
| d. Attend meetings | 7% |
| e. Other (sent home with students) | 1% |

16. Do you have children in the school system?

- | | |
|--------|-----|
| a. Yes | 78% |
| b. No | 22% |

18. In 1996, the Town of Hanover made a commitment to education and voted to adopt optimum classroom sizes. This is important to maintain.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| a. Strongly agree | 65% |
| b. Agree | 22% |
| c. No opinion | 6% |
| d. Disagree | 4% |
| e. Strongly disagree | 3% |

20. Presently, the community can use the school facilities: i.e. walking track, hiking trails, classrooms, gymnasium, and auditorium. The use of school facilities is important to me.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| a. Strongly agree | 38% |
| b. Agree | 38% |
| c. Neutral | 18% |
| d. Disagree | 5% |
| e. Strongly disagree | 1% |

8. Have you visited the High School or Sylvester School in the last 12 months?

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|--------|-----|
| a. Yes | 85% |
| b. No | 15% |

9. If no, would you like a tour of the High School or Sylvester School?

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|--------|-----|
| a. Yes | 32% |
| b. No | 65% |

11. What do you perceive as the building condition of the Sylvester School?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| a. Needs cosmetic improvements | 7% |
| b. Needs major improvements | 34% |
| c. Needs complete overhaul | 49% |
| d. Is in adequate condition | 10% |

13. Where have you gathered your information about school building conditions and current/future needs?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| a. Town meeting | 29% |
| b. Information forum | 9% |
| c. Newspaper | 43% |
| d. Town committee meeting | 3% |
| e. Tour | 6% |
| f. Other (word of mouth, internet) | 10% |

15. Would you attend an open forum to discuss the school needs?

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| a. Yes | 72% |
| b. No | 28% |
| c. If yes, what time of day/night would make sense? | 7PM Weeknight |

17. Are you a registered voter?

- | | |
|--------|-----|
| a. Yes | 99% |
| b. No | 1% |

19. With projected class size increase, the use of portable classrooms will be necessary. (Cost: Approximately \$68k per unit) I support the use of portable classrooms as a permanent option to handle increased enrollment.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| a. Strongly agree | 2% |
| b. Agree | 9% |
| c. No opinion | 14% |
| d. Disagree | 25% |
| e. Strongly disagree | 50% |

21. What additional community programs would you like to see at the schools?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| a. Fitness facility | 29% |
| b. Community theatre | 31% |
| c. Computer access | 13% |
| d. Art facilities | 9% |
| e. Other (All of the above) | 19% |

22. My biggest concern in supporting any school building project is.

a. An increase in taxes	44%
b. Lack of SBA (SBA program) Reimbursement	37%
c. I am not convinced that current and future student population warrant increased space	10%
d. I am not convinced that there is a real need	2%
e. Other (Economy, Poor planning)	6%

23. Your age range

a) Less than 25	1%
b) 26-35	9%
c) 36-45	52%
d) 46-55	22%
e) 56-65	8%
f) 65+	8%

General Comments

Participants were asked for general comments at the survey end. Following is a summary.

- Show us cost breakdowns for ALL options.
- Plan now for the future.
- Stop building houses - it is bankrupting us!
- Wait for State reimbursement before we spend another dime.
- Raise taxes of school children households willing to support the schools.
- Health and safety are crucial to our schools. Fix these problems.
- Hire an accountable Maintenance department.
- Too many new projects with poor town planning.
- Not now! Will support it when fiscal crisis subsides.
- Leadership should support the best possible school system.
- Allow proxy voting to Town Meeting, as many working residents cannot attend.

Committee Review

Survey Realizations

The majority of Survey respondents (83%) support some form of improvement to the High School and Sylvester School. 82% of respondents feel that the building conditions are bad and require major improvements or a complete overhaul. 75% of respondents do not support the use of portable classrooms to handle space needs. 80% of respondents major concern in any new school projects is the lack of State reimbursement or an increase in their taxes.

Respondents who voted no on the previous school projects primary concern was an increase in their taxes.

Breakdown of survey respondents

78% have children in the schools
22% do not have children in the schools

Recommendations

Appoint new SBN committee to further address needs.
Continue to explore best possible options to address these needs.
Publish committee activities to keep townspeople fully informed.

Develop a realistic plan to address these needs which respects the educational needs of Hanover children while being fiscally responsible to the townspeople of Hanover.