



Phase 3 Community Engagement Report

Prepared by EOSullivan Consulting

Over the past several months, Community Consolidated School District 89 has continued to look to the community to guide us as we determine the path forward for our schools. So far, we have received 848 feedback responses from members of the community through in-person presentations, two scientific phone surveys, and online surveys on what improvements they would like to see to their schools and how they would like to fund those improvements.

Phase 3 of community engagement was conducted in February of 2022. Using the feedback provided by the public during Phase 2, we developed three options for the community to give their feedback. Throughout this phase, the district has been closely listening to the community as individuals considered and ranked each option in order of favorability.

District 89 has continued to take active steps to engage the community and solicit feedback. To achieve this, we updated messaging, met with the Community Finance Committee for another in-depth discussion, conducted another public phone survey, and urged community members to review the Phase 3 presentation and fill out the feedback form on the district's website. Feedback from the community was documented during this time through notes taken of all direct communications, responses provided on paper forms at the Community Finance Committee meeting, responses provided to the online feedback form on the district's website, and responses to the scientific phone survey. We received tremendous levels of engagement and feedback in Phase 3, gathering 347 phone responses as well as 40 responses from the Community Finance Committee meeting and online feedback.

We are nearing the end of this community engagement process, which began in November 2021. As this process enters Phase 4, the district, equipped with all data gathered from the community to date, will work with the Board of Education to determine the best possible course forward that aligns with the community's wishes.

Messaging

The district continued to use messaging to properly communicate how we arrived at this point, what our successes and challenges have been, and how to approach the path forward. This messaging detailed recent progression and improvements as well as the challenges posed by the growing infrastructure needs of our aging buildings. The five key takeaways from the messaging are below, and a full copy of the messaging is provided with this report.

- In Community Consolidated School District 89, we empower all learners to recognize and optimize their full potential. We are passionate about our students' success and committed to building a stronger community.
- Even while being one of the highest performing districts, we are one of the most fiscally conservative. Our district spends the lowest per pupil of all Glenbard feeder schools and the fifth lowest of all elementary districts in the county.
- Our next challenge is addressing the growing infrastructure needs of our aging buildings. This work isn't flashy, but it's necessary. We must maintain our community's largest physical asset and protect the community's investment in these buildings.
- Our dedication to fiscal responsibility affords us a rare opportunity to tackle this challenge while achieving property tax relief for overburdened homeowners. Because the district paid off a set of bonds that will expire in 2021, property taxes for district residents will already be reduced by an average of \$239 per year. We have a second set of bonds set to expire in the coming years, and we need to consider how much of this second set of bonds to renew so we can address urgent infrastructure projects while still providing property tax relief.
- In the coming months, our community will collaborate on a long-term infrastructure plan for our schools. While other districts pursue tax increases to build expensive new buildings, we will develop a fiscally responsible plan that protects our infrastructure, improves educational environments, keeps our students and teachers safe, and provides property tax relief.

Options Survey

During Phase 3, the district conducted a public phone survey to gauge support for each potential option. For each option, respondents were given full information on each, including which projects were addressed and not addressed as well as estimated costs and the average tax impact. The survey was taken before the full public had been educated on the options in order to obtain an accurate representation of the public's unbiased, intuitive reactions.

The results from the options survey are provided with this report.

Community Finance Committee

The Community Finance Committee continued to meet to provide the district with direct input. The committee is a cross-section of District 89 stakeholders, including residents from different neighborhoods and regions of the district, business owners, community leaders, and administration members.

The committee met on February 15 during Phase 3. Committee engagement will continue throughout the remainder of the community engagement.

Feedback Report

Attached is a detailed report of the feedback that was collected during Phase 3 of this process, which includes feedback from the Community Committee as well as online feedback collected on the district's website.

Phase 3 Analysis

In forming our analysis of Phase 3, we reviewed hundreds of data points provided by members of the community in three separate tracks. First, through the options survey, which gives us a scientifically

accurate snapshot of the intuitive reactions of members of the community to the items being discussed. Second, through the Community Finance Committee, whose responses come after hours of discussion, allowing us to track the movement of opinions as individuals become more engaged and educated on these topics. Third, through online feedback forms, which give us the more passionate responses from community members who are very invested in their schools and have taken some time to consider these issues.

The feedback during Phase 3 showed incredibly high levels of support for moving forward with a plan that invests in improving our schools. 82% support at least one of the options presented while only 9% do not support additional funding, which are among the best numbers we've seen this cycle.

The public's intuitive feelings during Phase 3 show they are favorable towards all three options. This is notable because typically we see intuitive opposition towards the more expensive options at this stage. The intuitive preference is towards Option 3 (\$27 million) first with 36%, followed by Option 1 (\$13 million) second with 25%, then Option 2 (\$20 million) with 21%.

Those who are more engaged and passionate show the most support for Option 3, then Option 2, then Option 1.

Those who are the most engaged show significantly more support for Option 3 then Option 2, with a drop off for Option 1.

All this indicates the public is intuitively open to all three options, with a preference towards Option 3. The more engaged and informed individuals become, the more they move even more in support of Option 3. This is instructive as we determine next steps.

The district could move forward immediately with Option 1. This has strong support from specific demographics within the community and would be successful in any election as a referendum. However, it should be noted this option gets significantly less support than we typically see from the general public, and those more engaged clearly prefer a different option.

The district could move forward immediately with Option 2, but it's the least supported by the public and clearly does not excite those more engaged with the schools. As a result, we don't recommend pursuing this option.

The district could move forward immediately with Option 3. This also has strong support from specific demographics within the community. Work will need to be done to engage and inform the public on why this plan is needed, but with that it would be successful as a referendum.

Since funding any of these plans requires a successful referendum, it is important we analyze the makeup of the electorate for the upcoming elections. The next election, the June 28th Primary Election, is predicted to attract a mostly older, conservative turnout. The following election, the November 8th General Election, is predicted to attract a more balanced turnout. The following election, the April 4th (2023) Consolidated Election, is predicted to attract a very small and older turnout.

The demographics most likely to participate in the June election strongly prefer Option 1. Should the district wish to pursue this option, there is no reason to wait, we recommend moving forward in the upcoming June Primary Election.

Should the district prefer to move forward with Option 3, the demographics who prefer this option are more likely to participate in the November election. However, this option has support among all demographics. As a result, the district could move forward with this option immediately if desired—the margin of victory would be highest in the November General Election, but it would ultimately be successful in any of the three upcoming elections.