



MARCH 2021 PROJECT UPDATE

www.fhsbuildingproject.org

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF THE FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT OVERVIEW

As the Town of Farmington prepares for an early June vote on the new high school, the Farmington High School Building Committee is committed to providing a complete understanding of the value, impact, and cost of this very important community investment. **This newsletter includes:**

- Highlights of the Town's survey results
- Calendar of activities
- Assessment of current high school facility
- Important facts such as enrollment estimates, project costs, and property tax implications

We are committed to comprehensive community engagement through summary and topic specific meetings, newsletters, and website updates. The committee will provide information on the project, but we will also listen and answer questions.

Prior to the June referendum, the Building Committee will:

- Present how this new high school will enhance learning for all students
- Explain how the new high school provides a safe and healthy learning environment
- Highlight the benefits the new high school will have beyond the school community

All virtual meetings will be recorded and accessible on our website in a timely fashion.

This information will be accurate and thorough. It will explain why and how the new FHS design was selected and the anticipated next steps after referendum.

Included in this newsletter is a calendar of meetings that are open to all Farmington residents. We ask you to virtually attend the meetings, if possible, and watch the recorded meetings you cannot attend. We encourage everyone to read the newsletters and visit the officially sanctioned factual website, www.fhsbuildingproject.org, as your source for information, updates, and anytime you have questions regarding the project.

The FHS Building Committee is grateful for your continued engagement and hope you join us at one of our many upcoming community events.



Status of the 1928 Building

The Farmington Town Council directed the FHS Building Committee not to include the 1928 Building as part of the cost or scope of the proposed new high school project, as a decision on the future of the 1928 Building will be determined at a later date by the Town.

Voting at the Referendum

If you are a Farmington resident, you must be registered in order to vote at the June 2021 referendum. Please go to farmington-ct.org/departments/registrar-of-voters to register or check your status.

Summary of the 2021 Findings of the Community Wide Survey



Tall Timbers Marketing of Glastonbury, was retained to conduct a survey for the Farmington High School Building Committee (FHSBC). The survey is part of a communication planning process and is based upon the FHSBC proposed recommendation to build a new high school facility on the current municipal complex. The objective was to find out what information Farmington residents want to have in order to make an informed decision at referendum time. The survey was sent in January 2021 to every household in Farmington. Households had four weeks to respond. To read the total survey findings go to the FHSBC website, www.fhsbuildingproject.org.

There were two components of the survey:

- The first was a summary of the quantitative findings.
- The second provided qualitative (anecdotal) comments.

The Statistics:

- The newsletter/survey was sent to 11,600 households (25,422 population in 2020, CERC town profile).
- There were 1,111 responses postmarked by the due date, a 9.8% response rate, which is much higher than average (3% to 5%).
- There is a confidence level of 97% in the responses. This means that even if every household responded, the responses would have been the same level of confidence.
- Respondents 65+ years old self-identified as retired and living in town over 20 years make up 17% of the town population, but were 45% of respondents.
- Over 50% of the respondents are working full or part time.
- 85% of the respondents were aware or have read the Statement of Needs, which outlines the issues with the current high school facility and was the basis for taking action on the decision to build a new high school.

High School Project Priorities to Focus On

Enhancing Current Educational Programming	75%
Current Facilities Limitations	76%
Improving the Learning Environment/Facility	79%
Security and Safety	81%
Cost and Tax	84%

Comments on Topics From 180 Respondents

Coronavirus, Security, ADA, and Safety	7%
Questions (timeframe, enrollment, accreditation)	15%
Positive Comments About the Project	19%
Recommendations and General Comments	28%
Cost and Tax	31%

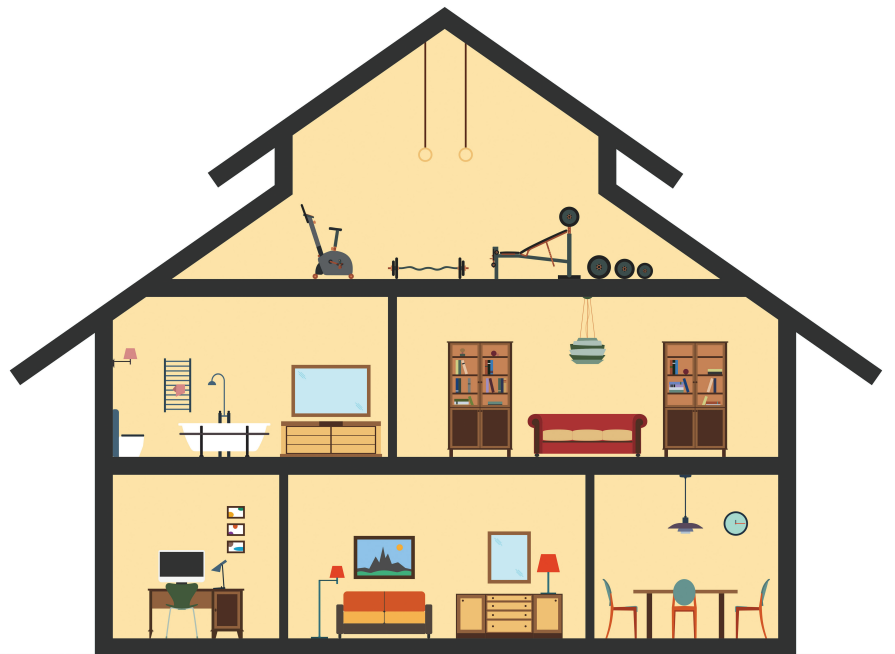
Process and Decision for Recommending a New High School Building

The Farmington High School Building Committee (FHSBC) was appointed in May 2019 by the Town Council and is comprised of residents, elected officials, school administration and town staff. They were directed by Town Council to solicit and evaluate conceptual design options from two noted school architectural firms to provide the Town Council with the information required to set the overall project scope and the municipal project cost range. After a 9 month competitive process, FHSBC thoroughly reviewed the conceptual designs from each, which included an option for maintaining the current facility, doing major renovation on the current facility, or building a new school. FHSBC recommended the construction of a new high school as the best solution to address the Board of Education's Statement of Needs. On February 4, 2020, the Town Council unanimously voted to select the new building solution, which will provide a flexible and engaging learning environment for our students and the community.

Estimated Project Cost and Property Tax

The estimated total project cost is approximately \$135.6M. The Town Council set a net municipal project maximum of \$110M for the project, which will be achieved through reimbursement from the State of Connecticut, estimated at approximately \$26.3M. The FHS Building Committee is committed to delivering a project below the net municipal project maximum.

Because of Farmington's ongoing retirement of existing capital projects bonded debt, there will only be five years (Fiscal years 2023 to 2027), the high school project will increase the property tax. For example, a homeowner with an average assessed value of \$226,777 (assessment is 70% of the market value of a home worth \$324,000), **is estimated to be \$466 in total, averaging \$93 per year, or under \$8 per month.** In the remaining years of the bond(s), there is no incremental increases to taxes due to the high school debt issues, as the required debt service is absorbed by the retirement of old debt.



A home with an average assessed value of \$226,777 increase in property tax for the high school bonds is estimated to be **\$466 in total over a period of five years.**

High School Enrollment Projections

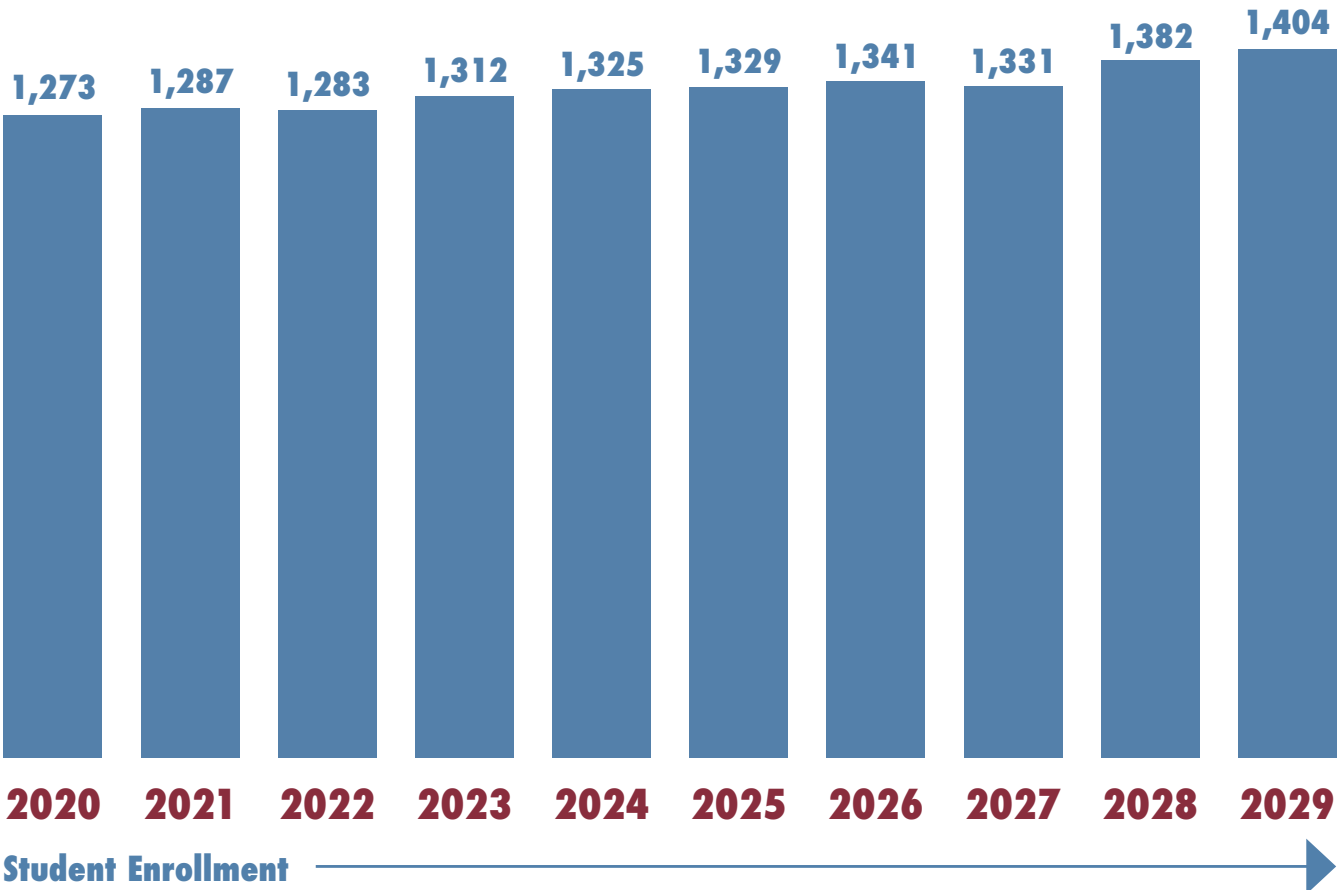
In 2019, Farmington Public Schools retained the services of Peter M. Prowda, PhD, an expert in public school enrollment, to do a 10-year projection. Below is a summary of the report related to the projected enrollment at Farmington High School.

Enrollment projections are a valuable planning tool. For budgeting, the numbers can place requested expenditures into a per pupil context. This can inform the public about which expenditures represent continuing expenditures to support on-going programs and expenditures for school improvement and program expansion. They are an essential step in determining the staffing that will be needed in the future. This may facilitate the transfer of teachers from one grade to

another or allow the hiring process to start earlier, which can increase the likelihood of attracting the best teachers in the marketplace.

Projections are a critical and required step in planning for school facilities. The State of Connecticut requires an eight-year highest projected enrollment school-based projections as a critical component of determining the size of the project for which reimbursement is eligible. Several factors that influence school enrollment – town population, women of child-bearing age, labor force, housing, grade 9 repeaters, dropouts, non-public enrollment, non-resident enrollment in the Farmington schools, resident enrollment in other public schools and migration.

In 2029 an estimated 1,404 students will be enrolled at Farmington High School, **an increase of 131 students** over the current enrollment, which is a growth of **10%**.



Please visit www.fhsbuildingproject.org or enter zoom links listed below.

CALENDAR OF FHS BUILDING COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Date	Event	Zoom Link
MARCH		
March 29, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	East Farms Neighborhood Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89713306139
March 31, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	Noah Wallace Neighborhood Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82312713625
APRIL		
April 1, 2021 @ 12:00 P.M.	Topic Thursday: Side-by-Side Facility Comparison Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437072259
April 5, 2021 @ 10:00 A.M.	Presentation to Senior Community Residents	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89039098042
April 7, 2021 @ 5:30 P.M.	Communications Subcommittee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85671572635
April 7, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	FHS Building Committee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82622463947
April 8, 2021 @ 12:00 P.M.	Topic Thursday: Project Timeline Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437072259
April 15, 2021 @ 12:00 P.M.	Topic Thursday: External Building/ Site Plan Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437072259
April 20, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	Union Neighborhood Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84714459779
April 21, 2021 @ 9:15 A.M.	Communications Subcommittee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81736631902
April 21, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	FHS Building Committee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89612929695
April 22, 2021 @ 12:00 P.M.	Topic Thursday: Building Interior Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437072259
April 23, 2021 @ 1:00 P.M.	Presentation to Senior Community	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88008471303
April 27, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	Community Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83429911759
April 28, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	West District Neighborhood Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86334402596
April 29, 2021 @ 12:00 P.M.	Topic Thursday: Project Cost Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437072259
MAY		
May 4, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	Community Presentation	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83429911759
May 5, 2021 @ 5:30 P.M.	Communications Subcommittee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84599697251
May 5, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M.	FHS Building Committee Meeting	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89863516146

Committee Members

Voting Members

Meghan Guerrero, Chair
Chris Fagan, Town Council Member
Ellen Siuta, Board of Education Chair
Johnny Carrier, Resident
Michael Smith, Resident
Sharon Mazzochi, Resident
Wendy Ku, Resident

Non-Voting Members

Beth Kintner, Board of Education Liaison
Kathleen Blonski, Town Manager
Kathleen Greider, Superintendent
Scott Hurwitz, Farmington High School Principal
Kathryn Krajewski, Assistant Town Manager
Alicia Bowman, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Sam Kilpatrick, Farmington Public Schools Director of Facilities
Devon Aldave, Clerk of the Committee

Contact info:

Please go to <https://fhsbuildingproject.org/contact-us> and fill out the form.