

MEETING 04 MINUTES**DATE:** April 07, 2025**LOCATION:** LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES
516 MAIN STREET, LYNDEN, WA 98264**SPEAKERS:** David VanderYacht, Superintendent, Lynden School District
Ashley McClaran, Facilitator, STV**INVITED** Aaron Apps, Business Owner, Lynden**ATTENDEES:** Mike Brown, Operations Supervisor, City of Lynden
Brandon Brubaker, Operations Supt, City of Bellingham
Allen Harris, Store Director, Safeway Lynden
Andrew Koehn, Project Engineer, Eichleay, Inc.
Michelle McIlvoy, Administrative Assistant, Vossbeck ES
Kent Oostra, Founder and CEO, Exact Scientific Services
Ian Van Ry, General Contractor
Marv Tjoelker, Principal Larson Gross
Clay Pehl, Agronomy Sales Representative, CHS Northwest**Meeting Objectives**

1. Review budget costs for proposed bond projects to begin to draw out priorities
2. Review tax impacts of various bond amounts with a steady tax rate

Meeting 03 Review

- Last meeting there was a wondering about typical PAC use for other school districts in the area. How often is it used? What kind of revenue does it generate? PAC follow up is still ongoing. Question today to think about – do we need additional engagement with the community around the PAC?

Project Timeline

- Reviewed a total project timeline to determine that the soonest possible opening date would be 2029-30 SY. This assumes a measure on the ballot passes in February 2026.

Program Budget Cost Scenarios

- The total estimated cost for all identified near-term project needs, after accounting for potential SCAP matching funds, is \$162,273,060.
- High School Only Scenario — Total: \$129,006,278
 - This option includes the new High School and Performing Arts Center (PAC), but excludes elementary school upgrades and expansion.
 - The group discussed uncertainty regarding the future need for a fourth elementary school versus renovating two existing elementaries. Concerns were raised about the

inequity between new and older buildings, and the fact that system obsolescence at Isom and Vossbeck would remain unaddressed.

- It was noted that both schools have enough system deficiencies to qualify for SCAP funding. One idea was to focus only on system improvements, without expanding capacity, and revisit growth needs later.
- A conversation was had about whether leading with elementary improvements might result in a more modest bond ask. However, consensus was that high school needs are greater, and delaying that scope would result in significant escalation costs.
- High School Only — PAC Removed — Total: \$113,034,263
 - This scenario excludes the PAC while retaining all other high school scope.
 - The idea of removing the PAC was compelling to the group, who agreed that more information is needed to determine whether it should be a priority.
 - It was acknowledged that performing arts and music programs would still have appropriate learning spaces in the new high school, even without a PAC. This plan does not favor athletics over the arts — both are accommodated in the academic program. The PAC is viewed more as a community amenity than a school facility.
 - Additional community engagement is needed to explore alternative funding approaches for a PAC.
- Excluding Field Upgrades — Total: \$111,643,013
 - This option removes field improvements from the scope.
 - The group found this option unappealing, as it fails to address a known concern while offering only a minimal cost reduction.
- Removing Football Field and Stadium Improvements — Total: \$105,730,201
 - This option was deemed unacceptable.
 - The football field and stadium are community-wide assets.
 - The district is currently unable to host games, and the track program lacks a viable practice space.
- Excluding the Gymnasium — Total: \$98,217,451
 - This option was also deemed unacceptable.
- All cost estimates are escalated to 2026 dollars. If the bond measure is delayed and not placed on the ballot until 2027, an additional year of escalation—estimated at 5%—will need to be factored in.

Estimated Tax Impact by Bond Amount

(Based on cost per \$1,000 of assessed property value)

- \$140 million bond → Estimated increase of \$1.27 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- \$130 million bond → Estimated increase of \$1.18 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- \$120 million bond → Estimated increase of \$1.09 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- \$110 million bond → Estimated increase of \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- \$100 million bond → Estimated increase of \$0.91 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- \$80 million bond → Estimated increase of \$0.73 per \$1,000 of assessed value

Group Discussion

- While the cost per \$1,000 of assessed value may appear modest, the group acknowledged that community members are more likely to focus on the total bond amount, evaluating whether it feels "too large" or "too small" overall.
- One proposal involved moving forward with the high school (excluding the PAC) and including systems upgrades at the elementary schools. This approach would address the most pressing facility needs and make the most of available funding. However, some felt this might be too complex for the public to easily understand. This combined scope would require a bond measure of approximately \$120 million.
- The \$113 million scenario was seen as attractive because it covers most of the highest-priority items and is comparable to Ferndale's successful bond measure from a few years ago.
- Capacity alone does not elevate the elementary schools to a top priority at this time. Several participants emphasized the importance of revisiting enrollment projections and analyzing future needs at both the elementary and middle school levels. This review will fall to the Long Range Planning Committee.
- The PAC did not emerge as an urgent need, especially given that performing arts and music instruction spaces are already included in the new high school's academic program.
- There was general agreement on the need to simplify the bond measure and reduce potential confusion for the community.
- There is clear consensus—both from this group and from broader community feedback—that replacing the high school is a top priority.

Next Steps & Action Items

- Review Tax Impact information at a variable rate over time to reduce initial impact.
- Gather community feedback
- Come with questions and input at the next meeting
- Email/Call David for School Tours
- Final Meeting: April 21!