



MEETING 01 MINUTES

DATE: February 24, 2025

LOCATION: LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES
516 MAIN STREET, LYNDEN, WA 98264

SPEAKERS: David VanderYacht, Superintendent, Lynden School District
Tim Faber, Principal, King Architects
Ashley McClaran, Facilitator, STV

INVITED	Kent Oostra- Founder/CEO	✓
ATTENDEES:	Brandon Brubaker- Superintendent, Public Works	✓
	Mike Brown- Operations Supervisor	✓
	Andrew Koehn- Project Manager/ Civil Engineer	✓
	Allen Harri-s Store Director	✓
	Aaron Apps- Business Owner	✓
	Ian Van Ry- General Contractor	✓

Michelle McIlvoy- not in attendance

Marv Tjoelker- not in attendance

Clay Pehl- not in attendance

Meeting Objectives

1. Establish a shared understanding of the district's facility needs and community input.
2. Define the role of the committee.
3. Review work completed to date.
4. Recognize and address community concerns.
5. Develop a feedback mechanism to serve as a conduit for community engagement.
6. Formalize committee objectives and desired outcomes.

Welcome and Introductions

- Attendees were provided with biography cards to complete, including their reasons for participating and the importance of this work.
- A brief overview of Lynden School District's role in the community was presented. While historically the district has been the largest employer in Lynden, it has recently been surpassed by Lynden Door.
- Enrollment and key demographic data were reviewed, noting that the student population served by the district may not fully reflect the broader community due to the influence of Lynden Christian School.
 - Total enrollment 3,751 students
 - Student Composition
 - 61.7% White

- 28.5% Hispanic/Latino
- 4.2% Asian
- 35.5% Low Income
- 13.7% Multilingual Learners
- 16.4% Special Education
- 156 students are agreed 3-4

Committee Charter

The Community Solutions Committee (CSC) was established to address Lynden School District's facility challenges by incorporating community perspectives and developing actionable solutions.

Committee Responsibilities

- Validate facility needs.
- Identify barriers to community consensus.
- Recommend a prioritized plan for future improvements.
- Deliver a public recommendation to the Lynden School Board that balances educational priorities with community expectations.
- Support transparency and fiscal responsibility throughout the process.

Group Agreements

To support a productive and respectful dialogue, committee members reviewed and agreed upon the following principles:

- Discretion – Maintain confidentiality in discussions while ensuring transparency in public recommendations.
- Respect – Value diverse perspectives and engage in thoughtful discussion.
- Openness – Listen actively, consider new ideas, and collaborate toward solutions.
- Honesty – Provide candid insights, even when discussing difficult topics.
- Student-Centered Focus – Prioritize student needs in facility recommendations.
- Public Accountability – Members should be comfortable having their names associated with committee decisions and recommendations.

Foundation of Community Efforts

- **Historical Context and Bond Planning**
 - A timeline of facility planning efforts leading to the 2024 bond measure was reviewed, dating back to 2011. Key factors in assessing a bond measure include:
 - Facility Condition – The State Study and Survey determined that three Lynden High School buildings require replacement, while Isom and Vossbeck Elementary Schools need significant mechanical upgrades but remain in generally good condition.
 - Capacity vs. Enrollment – Lynden High School is significantly over capacity. Common areas were originally built for 500 students, and classroom expansions did not accommodate growth in shared spaces. Current classroom capacity is also insufficient for both existing enrollment and future projections.
 - Modern Learning Spaces – Facilities must support contemporary workforce and college-readiness standards.

- **Prior Cost and Funding Analysis**

- A past high school renovation and replacement study found that renovation costs were nearly equivalent to new construction. However, abatement and phased renovation costs could not be fully calculated, making new construction the more financially viable option.
- Initial cost estimates were based on price-per-square-foot comparisons with similar regional projects. While early estimates aimed to minimize pre-design expenditures, additional design efforts were later undertaken to refine cost projections.
- A Bond Planning Task Force analyzed funding scenarios at \$80M, \$120M, and \$150M, ultimately recommending a \$160M measure to account for inflation and minimize future escalation costs.
- The Lynden School Board subsequently revised the bond request to \$157.5M by incorporating alternative funding sources.
- Despite these efforts, two bond measures failed to pass.

Community Concerns & Key Takeaways

- The need for improved facilities is widely recognized, but the financial impact of a large-scale bond measure remains a challenge.
- Attendees discussed the importance of gathering community feedback to better understand concerns and refine future proposals.
- Committee members shared feedback they have heard from the community since the last bond measure. These statements represent individual opinions and perceptions. The purpose of this exercise was to categorize concerns to better understand recurring themes, gain empathy for different perspectives, and develop a deeper understanding of community needs.

Category	Community Concerns Heard from Others or Held by Attendees
Personal School Use	"I should just homeschool my kids."
	"My kids go to Lynden Christian."
District Finance	Does the district save money for things like this?
	Concerns about this bond stacking with future bonds.
	Are bond rates set by interest rates?
Personal Finance	This is a personal finance impact.
	How much will this affect me personally?
	I will have to pay an additional \$60/month and I'm on a fixed income.
	I cannot afford another tax increase.
Comparative Costs	Neighboring schools had lower costs (relative to BPS and FSD).
	Why is this high school so expensive?
	How much is the contractor making off the community?
Alternative Funding Options	Why can't we use a levy for funds instead?
	Have we exhausted all other sources of funding?
	Why weren't impact fees assessed when the city was growing?

Transparency & Trust	Anger from 2011 bond that the district didn't have transparency.
	Will there be oversight?
	Why are we adding HVAC to new schools?
	Feelings that the district does not care for their facilities, "Why give them more money?"
	Schools waste money on unnecessary design.
Facility Maintenance	I hear the school district doesn't take good care of its facilities.
	Why can't we host home sporting events?
Bond Planning Process	2nd bond request didn't change from the first.
State vs. Local Responsibility	Isn't this a state responsibility, "paramount duty to fully fund education'?
Validating Needs	Is enrollment still going up?
	On the outside, the building seems fine.
Public Sector Wages	Why do we have to use unions?
	Why are wages so high for capital public work (prevailing wage)?
Construction Methods	Can we use modular building systems to speed construction?

Committee Objectives & Outcomes

- Review upcoming meeting agendas.
- Reiterate committee objectives.
- Establish consensus on desired outcomes.
- Emphasize the importance of sustained collaboration.
- Commit to a transparent process moving forward.

Next Steps & Action Items

- Assignments for Committee Members:
 - Calendar Invitations – Accept all meeting invitations.
 - Community Feedback – Gather insights from community members.
 - Pre-Reading – Review relevant materials before the next meeting.