



Strategic Planning for George F. Baker High School: ADDENDUM

A Report to Tuxedo Union Free School District



10/5/18

ADDENDUM:

On September 26th, 2018, FourPoint Education Partners presented highlights from the recently completed report [Strategic Planning for George F. Baker High School](#). School Board members and members of the community raised several questions about various aspects of the report. This addendum is intended to address and/or clarify issues that were raised during the meeting. It is also important to re-emphasize that the cost estimates presented at the meeting and in the report are based on the best available data at a point in time. The amount of savings and/or additional costs would be affected by changes to a variety of factors, including:

- **Enrollment changes will affect tuition costs.** If the number of students that will be sent to another district increases, tuition costs will rise and savings will decrease. Conversely, if enrollment falls, savings will increase.
- **Special education service needs will affect other cost.** If additional students require services that cannot be provided by the home high school (students need to attend a BOCES or other program) savings will decrease. Conversely, if more students can be served by the home school savings will increase. (Special Education costs are included in “Other Costs” in Table 7-Cost Savings Estimates on page 19 of the report.)
- **Transportation.** Estimates are based on the ability of the district to use current buses and revised schedules and routes. If schedules cannot be aligned, additional buses may be needed and costs will rise.

While each of the factors listed above would have an impact on the bottom-line savings associated with closing GFBHS, the impact is likely to be small with the Best Case savings scenario remaining under 15 percent.

Questions from the Board of Education:

What extracurricular activities do other districts offer? Do we know which activities require students to compete for spots?

All four comparison high schools offer many more sports and clubs than GFBHS. In general, varsity sports teams have competitive entry requirements (tryouts), although many traditional sports offerings, including football, basketball, cheerleading, baseball, and softball, also include junior varsity and, sometimes, freshman team options, with varying levels of competitiveness. Other sports, such as swimming, skiing, and ice hockey are offered only as a single team, typically at the varsity level, where students compete for a spot on the team.

High school interest clubs (e.g. Environmental Club, Italian Club, and the Gay-Straight Alliance) and activity clubs (e.g. Art Club, Debate Club, and Chess Club) are typically open to all students. Participation is selective for some academic competition clubs (e.g. chemistry league, math

team) and some – but not all – music programs (e.g. jazz ensemble, marching band, choir) as well as roles in school plays and spots on student government. The following table summarizes information on extracurricular activities provided at GFBHS and the comparison schools from the study.

Addendum Table 1. Peer School Extracurriculars Comparison

Peer School Extracurricular Comparison					
Activity	Tuxedo	Suffern	Ramsey	Northern Highlands	Monroe-Woodbury
Sports					
Football*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cheerleading		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Basketball	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Basketball	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Soccer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Soccer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Baseball	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Softball	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Lacrosse		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Lacrosse		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wrestling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Cross Country	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Cross Country	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Track/Track & Field		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Track/Track & Field		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Indoor Track (winter)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Indoor Track (winter)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Swimming		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Swimming		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Tennis		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Tennis		✓	✓	✓	✓
Field Hockey		✓	✓	✓	
Volleyball	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ice Hockey		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boys Golf		✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls Golf		✓	✓	✓	✓
Bowling		✓	✓	✓	
Other** (Skiing, fencing, crew, gymnastics)		✓		✓	✓

Academic Clubs					
Art Club/National Art Honor Society	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Band/Marching Band/Color Guard	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chess Club			✓	✓	✓
Choir/Vocal Ensemble	✓		✓	✓	✓
Drama Club/ Theatre Production	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Club		✓	✓	✓	
French Club			✓	✓	✓
Future Business Leaders/ DECA		✓	✓	✓	✓
Gay-Straight Alliance		✓	✓	✓	
History Club/National History Honor Society		✓	✓		✓
Italian Club		✓		✓	✓
Interact/Service/Rotary Club		✓	✓	✓	✓
Jazz Ensemble	✓			✓	✓
Literary Magazine Publishing	✓		✓	✓	✓
Math Team	✓		✓		✓
Mock Trial			✓	✓	✓
Model U.N./Model Congress		✓		✓	✓
National Honor Society	✓	✓		✓	✓
Robotics Team/Club		✓	✓	✓	
S.A.D.D. (drug use prevention)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Science Clubs (Academic): Science Olympiad, New York State Science Honor Society, Biology League, Chemistry League, Physics League, etc.)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Spanish Club			✓	✓	✓
Speech and Debate Club		✓	✓	✓	✓
Student Government/ Student Congress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yearbook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*TUFSD has an arrangement with Chester UFSD for students to play on their football team.

**The "other" category includes sports and activities offered at two or fewer schools.

How many students took the community survey?

Eight current students and 15 recent graduates (within last 5 years) took the survey (page 47 of the report). FourPoint also spoke with approximately 50 students who participated in focus groups.

Did FourPoint collect any examples/names of districts who chose to close and then reopen a school?

Page 36 of the report provides information on New York State's policies and procedures for closing and opening schools. The report also includes an example, Holland Middle School, which was closed in 2012 and reopened this year. Information on Holland Middle School can be found at the link below (NYSED SEDREF - Core Information on SED Institutions).

[https://portal.nysed.gov/pls/sedrefpublic/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw\\$.startup](https://portal.nysed.gov/pls/sedrefpublic/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw$.startup)

Does the Other Costs figure of \$650,000 include special education costs for sending students either out of district or to a BOCES-run program?

The largest portion of the reductions in the other costs category pertain to Special Education (SPED) costs for students attending BOCES programs. (See report page 38.) The district estimated the costs at \$518,000 for high school students receiving SPED services through BOCES. Savings would occur if larger schools have more robust special education offerings than TUFSD and students who are currently attending a BOCES SPED programs will be able to receive services at their new home school. If TUFSD decides to close GFBHS, the district will still be responsible for the costs of special education services for students who continue to receive services through BOCES. Thus, the exact amount of the savings from a reduction in special education costs would depend upon the needs of the students and the availability of services at other schools. This amount would also change over time as students with varying needs age into high school.

It is highly unlikely that all current special education students, and especially high-needs students, who are receiving services from a specialized BOCES program would attend a program housed in a new home school. This means that savings would be less than \$518,000. For instance, if two-thirds of the students who are receiving SPED services through BOCES continue to do so, the amount of savings would be reduced by approximately \$341,880. This, in turn, would change the overall cost savings estimates in Table 7 of the report (page 19) to 10 percent in the Best Case scenario and 3 percent in the Worst Case scenario. A revised version of Table 7, based on two-thirds of students remaining in a BOCES program, follows.

Addendum Table 2. Report Table 7 REVISED: Cost Savings Estimates for Closing GFBHS (based on two-thirds of Special Education students remaining in a BOCES program.)

Cost Savings Estimates for Closing GFBHS Based on 2/3rds of Special Education Students Remaining in A BOCES Program				
Cost Element	Best Case		Worst Case	
	Increases	Savings	Increases	Savings
Salaries and Benefits		\$1,600,000		\$1,600,000
Administration Costs		\$220,000		\$220,000
Facilities and Maintenance		\$230,000		\$230,000
Transportation	\$62,000		\$62,000	
Other Costs		\$350,000		\$350,000
Reduced State Aid to TUFSD	\$100,000		\$100,000	
Reduced Tuition from Current Non-resident Students	\$100,000		\$100,000	
Non-resident Tuition Paid to Other Districts	\$800,000		\$1,700,000	
Total	+\$1,062,000	-\$2,400,000	+\$1,962,000	-\$2,400,000
Total Savings	-1,338,000		-438,000	
% Reduction in Annual School Budget	10%		3%	

Did FourPoint collect and analyze fiscal data on other school districts?

FourPoint did not conduct a fiscal analysis of comparison school districts. We did learn that the student population in Suffern has declined by about 8 percent, and the population in Monroe Woodbury has increased by about 2 percent between school years 2012-13 and 2016-17.

Addendum Table 3. Enrollment Trends in Suffern and Monroe-Woodbury

District Enrollment Trends			
	SY 2012-13	SY 2014-16	SY 2016-17
Suffern	4528	4334	4168
Monroe-Woodbury	2275	2300	2327

Source: New York State Department of Education

Is it legal for TUFSD to enter into a 10-year contract with a school district in New Jersey? New York state law stipulates five-year contracts.

We recommend that your attorney responds to this question.

Questions from the Public:

What was the time horizon for the study? Did FourPoint consider how the student population might increase when Tuxedo Farms is built?

The time horizon for the study was five years. FourPoint did not adjust estimates to account for future development for several reasons. First, at this time, it is not clear if/when the Tuxedo Farms development will be built; recent reports from town meetings indicate that the developer has been speaking with commercial entities about possible use of the land. Even if building began next year, it is unlikely that GFBHS would see a significant increase in students in the next five years. Second, estimates on the number of potential students that could be added, if residential building occurs, varied widely and ultimately would depend upon the mix of units built (small/large or for target residents-seniors/families), all of which is still unknown. Third, if the district keeps GFBHS open, there is enough space to accommodate many more students eliminating the need for costly renovations or expansion.

What percent of GFBHS students participate in extracurricular activities? How does this compare with other districts?

The district reported that 80% of GFBHS students participate in at least one extracurricular activity. Information from other districts was not readily available but Census data, show that 57% of school-age children participate in extracurricular activities nationally.
<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2014/cb14-224.html>

How are per-pupil expenditures calculated?

The per-pupil expenditures included in the report (page 13) were calculated by the New York State Department of Education. Its formula includes expenditures for classroom instruction, as well as expenditures for transportation, debt service, community service, and district-wide administration.

Other Questions

In response to the report, the district received a few other questions that were not addressed in this addendum. Questions that were not addressed were either outside of the scope of this project or required data that were not readily available.