



Donovan Group
School Communications

Charles City Community School District

FACILITY NEEDS SURVEY REPORT
September 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Charles City Community Schools has a number of facility needs that must be addressed soon. District leaders and the Board of Education are engaging the community to find the best possible solutions to these needs. As part of this process, the district conducted a survey of all Charles City CSD families, staff, students, and community members.

The survey was available from September 1 to September 15, 2022. This document provides a summary of the results of this survey.

As a next step, the district and board will use information gathered from community members to determine recommendations and prioritize solutions.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered using the Donovan Group's survey engine. Efforts were made to ensure that all eligible respondents had the opportunity to take the survey, but that no respondents took it multiple times. In accordance with best practices in online research and to protect the security of the survey, internet protocol (IP) addresses were logged and each response was time-stamped.

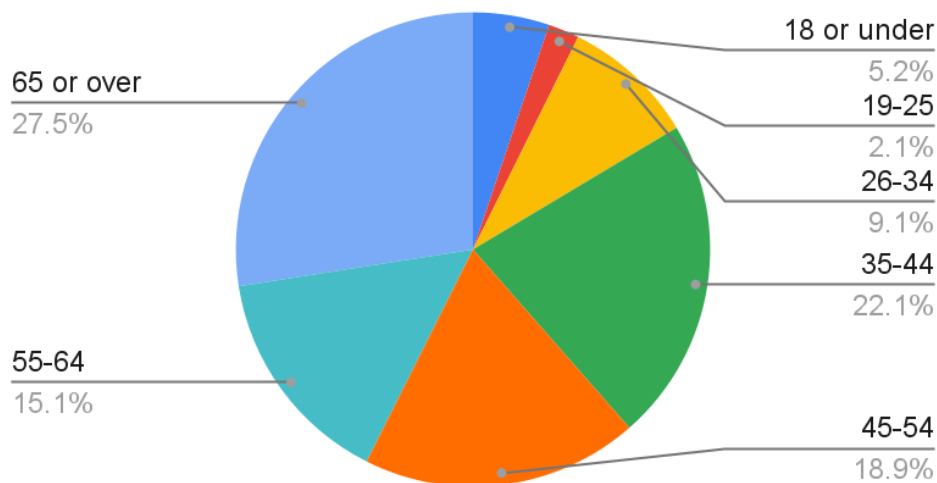
While we do not detail our specific survey security protocols, if we have reason to believe that anyone has taken the survey more than once or that there is any fraud, those responses are removed.

Finally, it is worth noting that, by design, this data is not based on a scientific sample. Therefore, it should be treated as qualitative data that is similar to data from a large number of focus groups. Because we used a convenience sample, it would be methodologically inappropriate to carry out a regression analysis or attempt to calculate error. However, our response pool to date is a solid one that provides sound data to district administration and to the school board.

SURVEY RESULTS

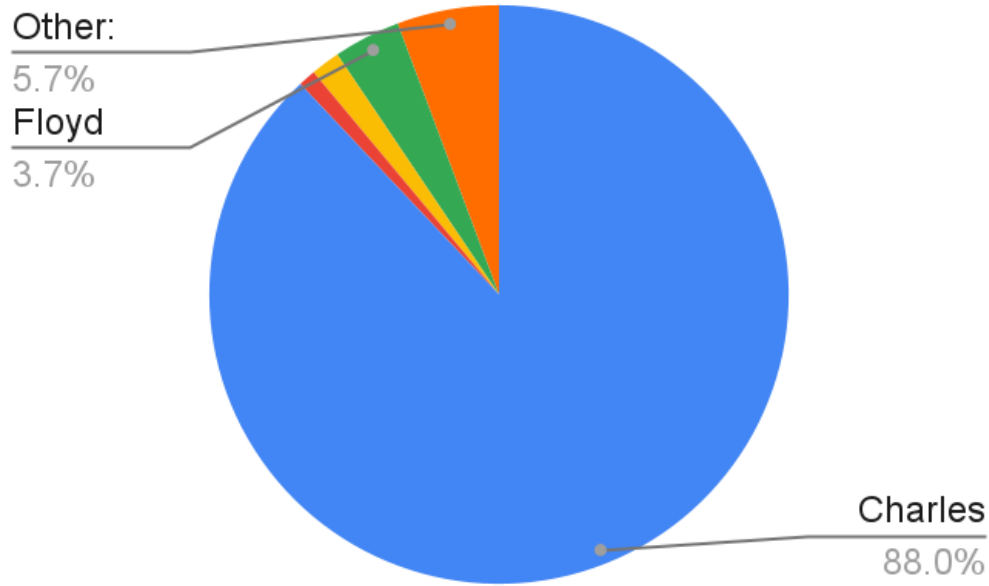
A total of **615** respondents completed the survey. Below is a summary of the results from the survey, along with some brief analysis from the Donovan Group team.

1) What is your age?



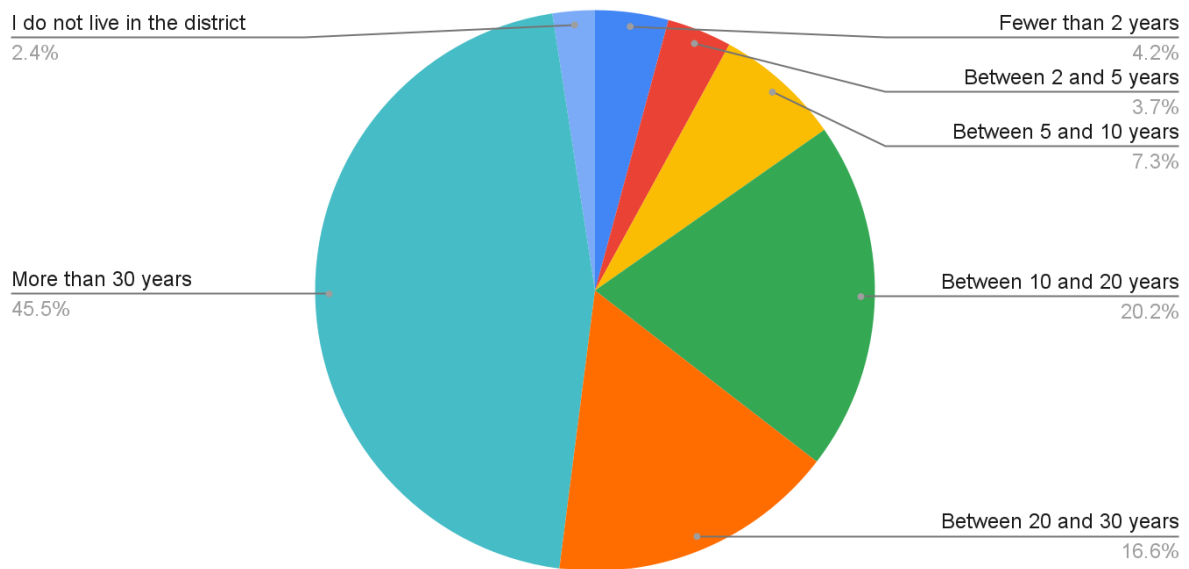
Analysis: The largest percentage of survey respondents were 65 or over, with 27.5%. This is typical for a survey like this. While we would have liked to have seen some more responses from those 19-25 years old, the survey overall received a good mix of responses across age groups.

2) Where do you reside?



Analysis: The vast majority of survey respondents (88%) live in Charles City. The survey received a handful of responses from each of the communities surrounding Charles City.

3) How long have you lived in the school district?



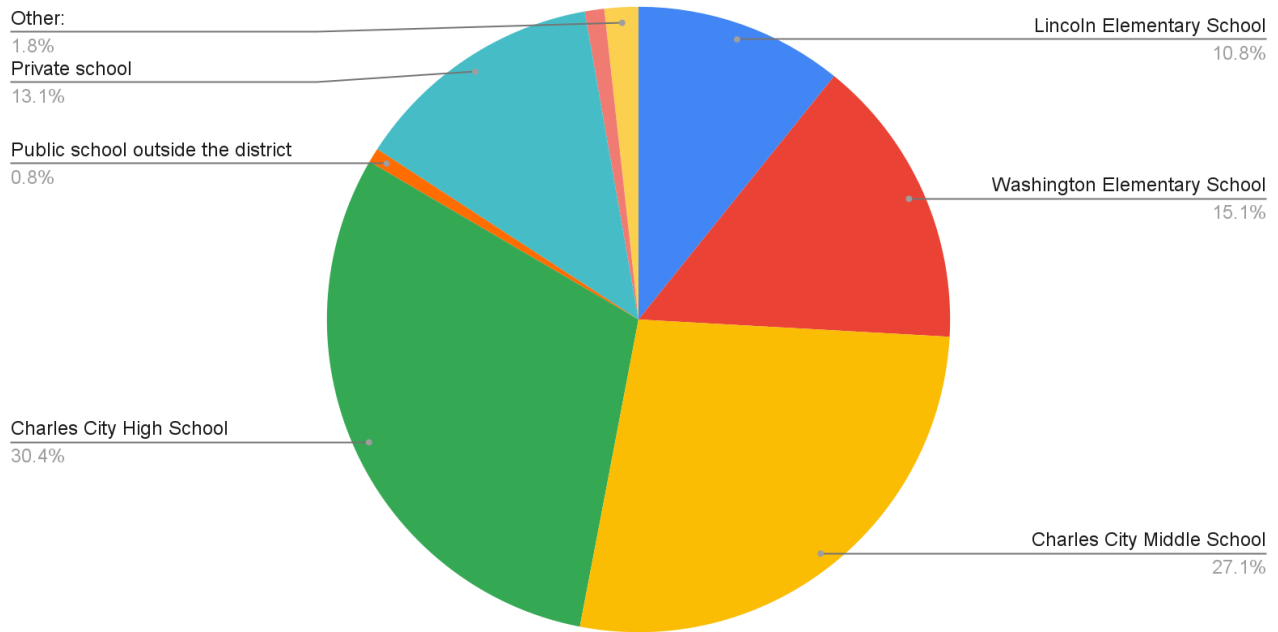
Analysis: A majority of survey respondents (62.1%) have lived in the district for 20 years or more. Approximately 7.9% have lived in the community for five or fewer years. While we would have liked to have seen more responses from newer residents, it is our understanding that these results roughly reflect the makeup of the Charles City community as a whole.

4) Please check all of the following that apply to you.

Answer	# Responses	% Responses
I have school-aged children (as of fall 2022).	227	36.91%
I have preschool-aged children (as of fall 2022).	36	5.85%
I have children who currently attend school in the Charles City Community Schools.	207	33.66%
I have children who have attended a school in the Charles City Community Schools.	232	37.72%
I have school-aged children who are open-enrolled into the Charles City Community Schools (as of fall 2022).	14	2.28%
I have school-aged children who are open-enrolled into another school district (as of fall 2022).	12	1.95%
I have grandchildren who currently attend or have attended a school in the Charles City Community Schools.	99	16.10%
I have children who have graduated or previously attended a school in the Charles City Community Schools.	272	44.23%
I have attended a school in the Charles City Community Schools.	258	41.95%
I am a community member who has never had children attend the Charles City Community Schools.	49	7.97%
I am an employee of the Charles City Community Schools and work at the High School.	40	6.50%
I am an employee of the Charles City Community Schools and work at the Middle School.	22	3.58%
I am an employee of the Charles City Community Schools and work in one of the elementary buildings.	27	4.39%
I am currently a student at a school in the Charles City Community Schools.	25	4.07%
Other:	38	6.18%

Analysis: It is typical for a survey like this one to have a large number of respondents who have a direct connection to the district, as parents and staff members are more likely than others to have heard about the survey. This is what we see here.

5) If you have school-aged children as of fall 2022, which schools do your children attend? (Select all that apply. If you do not have school-aged children, you may skip this question.)



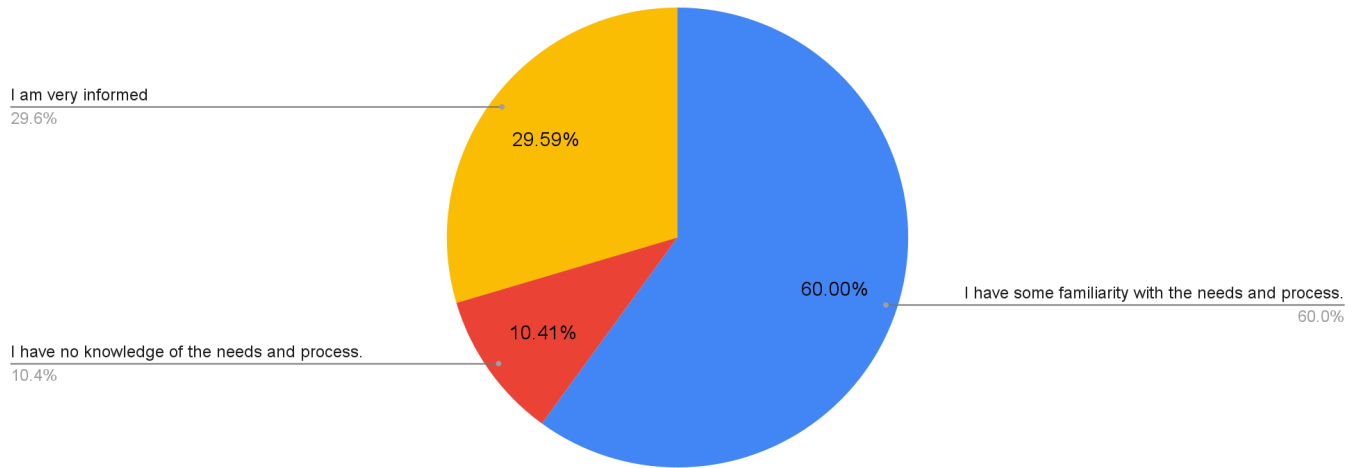
Analysis: Responses here were somewhat evenly split amongst the district’s schools, with the highest numbers of respondents indicating they have children attending the middle and/or high school.

6) Where do you get information about Charles City Community Schools? (Select all that apply.)

Answer	# Responses	% Responses
Parent organizations	66	10.73%
Friends or neighbors	318	51.71%
My children and their friends	192	31.22%
District mailings	182	29.59%
District website	259	42.11%
School newsletters (email or hard copy)	224	36.42%
District newsletters (email or hard copy)	137	22.28%
School board meetings	138	22.44%
Teachers and staff	252	40.98%
Charles City Press	358	58.21%
Local radio stations	206	33.50%
Local blogs	30	4.88%
Local television	63	10.24%
Facebook	335	54.47%

Twitter	29	4.72%
Other	15	2.44%

7) How familiar are you with the district's facility needs and the process the Board of Education is using to find solutions to those needs?



Analysis: Nearly 90% of survey respondents indicated they have at least some familiarity with the needs of the district and the process the board is using to find solutions. This suggests the district has done a great job communicating about its needs so far. In fact, these numbers are much higher than we typically see in these types of surveys.

Survey respondents were then asked to review four options under consideration. These included the following:

OPTION A

Option A would focus on addressing needs in the existing building. With this option, the district would renovate the high school to address only the most critical or immediate needs. The approximate cost of Option A would be between \$13.4 million and \$17.3 million. For taxpayers, this would equate to approximately \$4.11 per month for a home valued at \$100,000, or \$32 per month per 320 acres of agricultural property.

OPTION B

Option B would reimagine the high school building. This would be done by creating a 28,000 square-foot addition and renovating 198,500 square feet of the existing non-renovated spaces, for a total renovation of 226,900 square feet. It would include creating a new music wing and a new commons and leadership space, along with a secure entrance and providing an option for a future auditorium.

The approximate cost for Option B would be between \$28.4 million and \$32.8 million. The property tax impact would be about \$12 per month per \$100,000 home value, or \$95 per month per 320 acres of agricultural land.

OPTION C

Option C would replace the spaces that do not fit the needs of our students and staff—primarily the circle buildings. This option would include building an addition with approximately 57,000 square feet and renovating approximately 210,000 square feet of existing spaces.

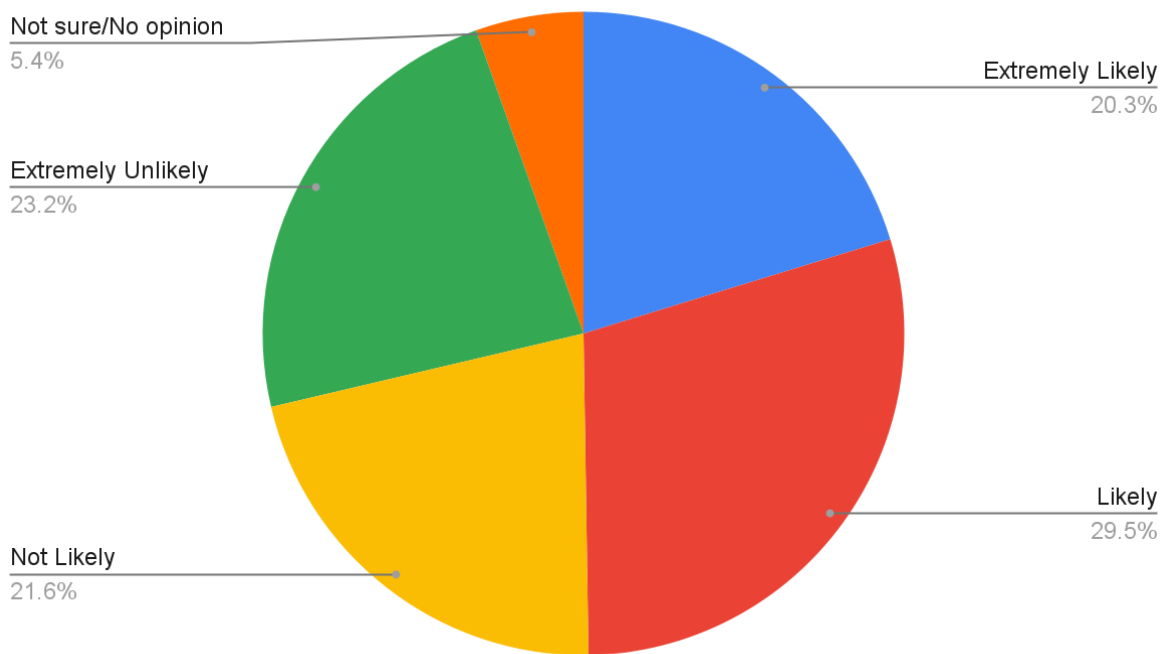
Option C would cost between \$33.9 million and \$37.9 million. This would break down to \$16.02 per month per \$100,000 home value, or \$126 per month per 320 acres of agricultural land.

OPTION D

Option D would not address the district’s facility needs at this time. However, it was noted that with projected interest rates, the project will cost an additional \$4.5 million or more if the district waits three years. It will cost an additional \$7.6 million or more if the district waits five years.

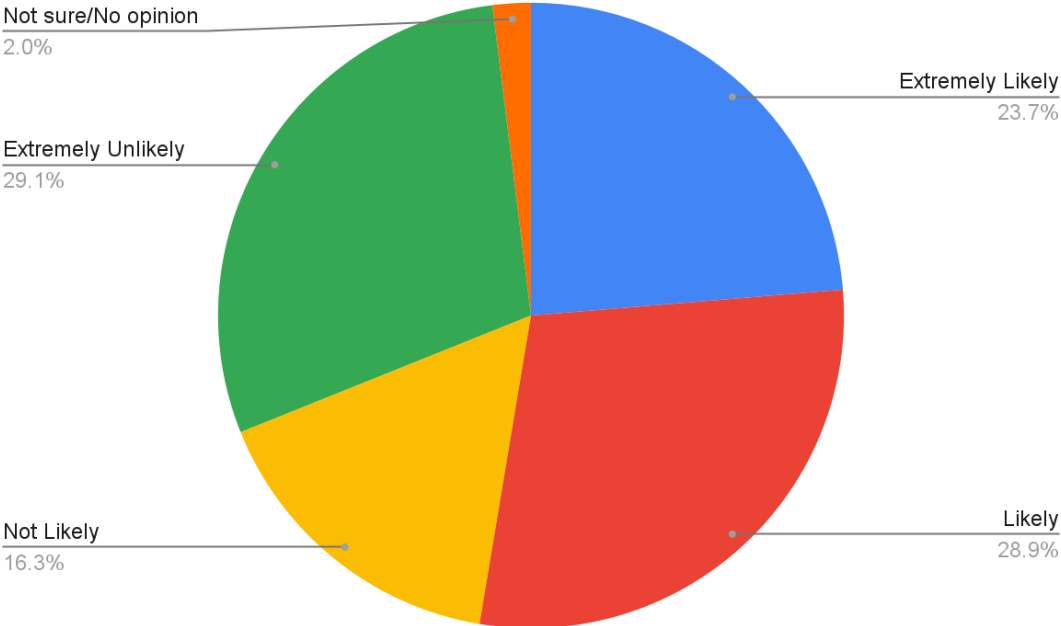
After reviewing the four options above, respondents answered the following questions:

8) How likely are you to support Option A (fix) as a solution to the district's facility needs?



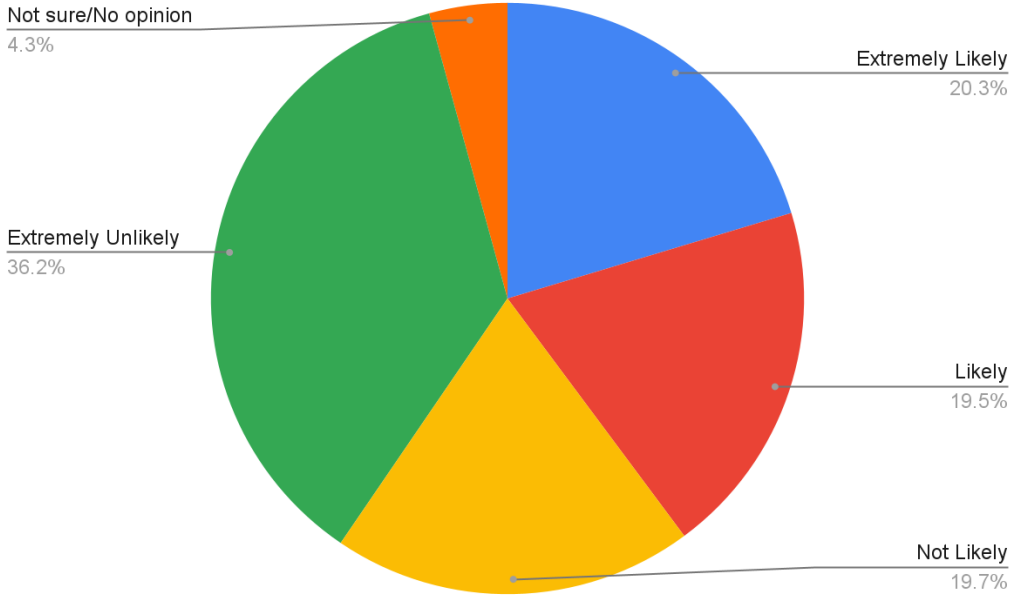
Analysis: Option A was the second-most popular option among respondents, with about 49.8% indicating they would be likely or extremely likely to support it. This was about 3 percentage points below the most popular option (B).

9) How likely are you to support Option B (reimagine) as a solution to the district's facility needs?



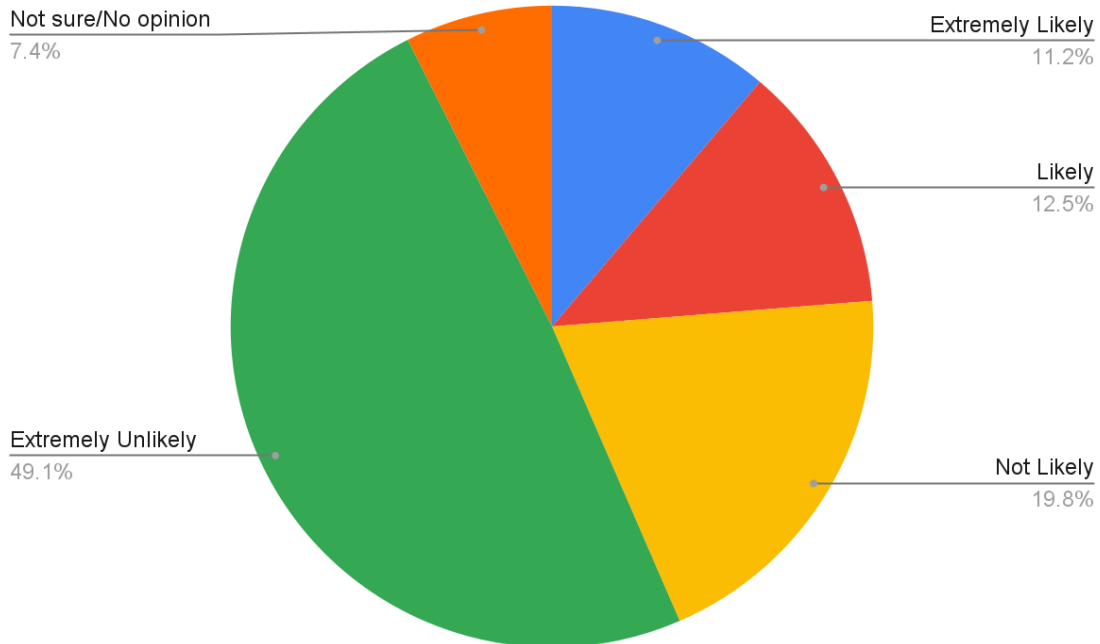
Analysis: Option B was the most popular among respondents, with 52.6% indicating they would be extremely likely or likely to support it. This option also saw the fewest number of “not sure/no opinion” responses.

10) How likely are you to support Option C (replace) as a solution to the district's facility needs?



Analysis: About 39.8% said they would be extremely likely or likely to support Option C, making it the third most popular option. Nearly 56% indicated they would be unlikely or extremely unlikely to support it.

11) How likely are you to support Option D (wait) as a solution to the district's facility needs?



Analysis: Option D was the least popular among respondents, with only 23.7% indicating they would be extremely likely or likely to support it. Nearly 70% indicated they would be unlikely to support Option D.

12) Please use the space below to provide any additional information to the Board of Education as it considers solutions to address the district's facility needs.

Analysis: Community members left a wide variety of responses to this open-ended question. These comments tended to fall into one of several categories, including:

- Concerns about previous facility projects in the district
- Support for addressing most pressing needs
- Concerns about property taxes
- Concerns about the cost of projects
- Desire to see a well-thought out plan to address needs

Below is a sampling of responses, which have not been edited.

Concerns about previous facility projects in the district:

- Look at the history of how education has evolved and often times gone back to the way things were done before. The Middle School was a disaster, still is with where lockers are located, the need to use High school facilities, and the ridiculous cost of the treehouse, outdoor patio space, and courtyard that don't get utilized. Have space be flexible for change, but make sure it can be fully utilized.

- I have noticed the middle school has expanded into the high school. Clearly the middle school was not adequate, plus I see LOTS of wasted space in that facility. It is my hope that this does not happen with a reimagined high school.
- You had a good school with auditorium swimming pool and class rooms . You choose to sell it for a dollar and it sits empty make that building work no one can afford to have their taxes raised anymore. The town doesn't have any real businesses and the ones they do have are barely hanging on No to all live with what you have. Money does not grow on trees

Support for addressing most pressing needs:

- Bite the bullet now. Do a good job of designing new spaces so that facilities are pleasant and welcoming to students.
- We need to fix the high school once right for the long term.
- We must improve the facilities that our children learn in! The building is inadequate. It is hot, dark, inefficient, and out dated. The music wing is in terrible condition, of NO fault of the staff or students. It is humid and the ventilation is terrible, putting thousands of dollars of instruments at risk. My son's math class is unbearably hot, making it difficult to focus and learn. And these are just a few of the issues that our children face at the High School.
- I would prefer to see an option with an auditorium and wrestling room on campus so they are accessible to students, particularly those who do not drive.
- With every passing year that the district chooses to not act, the students are getting cheated out of a better education. While a school can still function the way that it sits, it does not mean that it should continue what it has always done. With at least adding ac to the building, hot days aren't so bad, but very little learning happens when student are too hot to work. Something needs to happen sooner than later to at least address step A.
- An auditorium is a very important need for the Charles City Community School District. We have so many talented students and a wonderful fine arts program, but no where adequate to showcase these talents.

Concerns about property taxes:

- Can't we find a way to fund this without raising property taxes. Some of us are on fixed incomes and don't have the extra money
- The increase in taxes overall (not just from the school district) have been difficult including the LEC, the hospital, and what will happen with ambulance. I prefer a conservative approach at this time. Also remember that we did manage to function without a building related to covid for the last couple of years. I want realistic options.

Concerns about the cost of projects:

- Don't just put a band-aid on it (option A). Waiting will only be more costly in the long run as the building deteriorates and prices go up. As long as the outside building is sound just redo what is there. Keep in mind while renovating that it's the teachers that make the students. Tree houses and beanbag chairs ect., are not learning tools and are unnecessary items for learning. Let's not spend the money on 'fluff'.
- At this point in time, due to the high inflationary rates and unpredictable labor & material costs, I would prefer the district wait to support any new projects at this time. The market will likely cool & inflation should level out & then it would be possible to more accurately predict project costs.
- We want what is best for our kids BUT we also need to be able to afford the updates that we want. We need to worry about possibly paying out teachers more to get better teachers so our kids are happy & don't get looked over on what they need as a individual

Desire to see a well-thought out plan to address needs:

- Something needs to be done! As I am not a person who has a lot of knowledge on architecture, financials when it comes to the school, nor do I work in the school, it's hard to answer to exactly what needs to be done. I would hope that a team of people who are knowledgeable in all areas needed to make a well-educated decision are consulted. Be smart. In regards to budget, be more concerned about longevity and functionality and a little less on appearance. I think there are many that will support the project, as long as it is well thought out.