

Additional FAQs for “Update the 8” Project and Addressing the Capital Needs at Doyle, Kutz, and Linden (Feb. 19, 2025)

From Feb. 13, 2025 CBSD Finance & Operations Committee Meeting

- 1. The estimated cost of renovating all eight elementary schools is \$234.5M, compared to \$249.7M for the Doyle and Linden consolidation plan. Therefore, it seems the fiscally prudent action for the district to take would be to renovate all eight, unless the real motivation is staff cuts? Is that the case?**
 - a. There is no desire or need to cut staff to fund renovations and/or new buildings.
 - i. The same number of students will still need the same number of teachers. If there are consolidations of student populations while maintaining the small class size the district is used to then these would be handled through attrition as people retire – there are no furloughs built into any of these plans.
 - ii. The statistic in the Jan. 30 town hall relating cost to staffing was to explain why the district wanted the most cost-effective option – so less would be spent on facilities in order to spend more on staff.
 - b. Estimates were revised based on updates from the market over the last six months since the capital planning numbers were first put together.
 - i. Updates are based on square footage costs on bidding for Mill Creek as well as other bids that other districts have put out for similar work.
 - ii. Revised estimates are \$240,205,342 for a combined Doyle and Linden and the renovation of the other six schools.
 - iii. Costs to renovate all eight schools including all regularly planned capital upgrades to the buildings is \$241,411,064.
 - c. In addition – discussions with the architect indicate renovations have a useful life of approximately 20-30 years, while new construction has a useful life of approximately 75 years.
 - i. New Doyle/Linden = \$62M – useful life 75 years
 - ii. Renovate both in place = \$60.1M - useful life 25-30 years
- 2. Will additional debt be required to fund the full scope of CBSD’s capital improvement projects beyond elementary schools? If so, what is the projected tax impact over the next decade?**
 - a. Yes, debt will be required.
 - b. One mill of taxes in CBSD is approximately \$3.9M in revenue. Assuming a full debt scenario of \$240M by the end of all the renovations, it will be approximately four mills per year dedicated to debt service (or approximately \$16M per year in debt) through 2050, with declining amounts through 2058, assuming no new debt is taken.
 - c. Given the eight-year tax increase hiatus during the 2000s and 2010s, the district will likely need to raise taxes for the next five to seven years. Given that three labor contracts are coming up in the next three years, the district will need to stay vigilant with other costs.
- 3. If the district proceeds with building a new combined Doyle and Linden (DL), how close is the cost to triggering a referendum under Act 34? How much flexibility exists in the budget before requiring voter approval?**

- a. The new DL would not require a voter referendum because the district would design the school to meet the criteria outlined in Act 34. We would be required to host public meetings about the new DL school under Act 34, but there would not be a public vote
- b. Voter approval for an Act 34 compliant building is through the election of the school board as the representatives of the constituents and their decision is therefore the voice of the voters
- c. Act 34 isn't triggered by cost, but the ratio of students to costs. A full discussion of Act 34 with illustrations was given at the November Finance Operations Committee.

4. Who conducted the Linden HVAC analysis, and how many independent opinions were sought? Many viewed the visuals and options presented at the Jan. 30 town hall as misleading. Have options like ceiling cassette ductless systems or ThermaDuct been considered, which could minimize structural changes?

- a. The district issued a request for proposals (RFP) for architectural services in 2023 – the RFP had two respondents – SiteLogiq and KCBA. KCBA was selected through this competitive process and approved by the board at the Oct. 8, 2023 board meeting.
- b. All information presented was factual and indicative of the impacts of lower ceiling, door swing, and classroom square footage lost to air handling.
- c. The district has consulted with our architectural and mechanical professionals on the feasibility of renovation options to Linden. In the classroom spaces, an insulated duct system would be used for air distribution.
 - i. Ceiling cassette ductless systems do not provide the required fresh air for students and will not provide the necessary four air exchanges per hour that provide optimal air quality. Outside air can be provided ducted to the cassettes such as at the Administrative Center, but this is still not ideal.
 - ii. Cassette systems also only provide heating or cooling in a concentrated area and provide poor air distribution for a space, along with noise issues for a classroom environment of the constantly blowing air.
 - iii. The other challenge of a cassette system lies in the efficiency of the refrigerant system itself. Refrigerant-based systems are great for small conference rooms or isolated spaces. For a larger building-wide application that operates efficiently, the industry standard is a four-pipe water-based heating and cooling system that chills/heats water at a central location and then the water is distributed via piping through the building.

5. Has KCBA provided a comprehensive list of necessary renovations to bring Doyle and Linden up to code? Can a similar analysis be shared for the other six elementary schools to compare scope and costs?

- a. The original "Update the 8" presentation provided on September 25, 2024 addressed all the deficiencies in each building.
- b. All buildings currently meet safety codes.
 - i. There are current deficiencies that do not meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility regulations; these buildings are essentially "grandfathered" into not having to comply with accessibility regulations until a major renovation.
 - ii. The buildings do not currently meet air quality codes, but again this is unnecessary until a major renovation.

- iii. Energy code is likely not up to current standards in terms of lighting and HVAC controls, but typically these do not have to be addressed unless there are replacements or a certain level of renovation is reached.
 - c. The purpose of these renovations is to improve air quality, provide air conditioning in hot weather, update spaces to a 21st-century model of instruction with flexible meeting spaces and ADA-compliant buildings, and improve energy efficiency.
- 6. **The projected renovation costs seem to be greater than necessary due to non-essential items like playgrounds and parking improvements. Can these estimates be revised to focus on “necessary” maintenance?**
 - a. The renovate-only options include all things the district needs to do if the eight schools are kept as is and properly reflect the total cost of these upgrades.
 - b. Playground cost analysis is that they cost approximately \$575-\$675K depending on the school. Bids will be presented and discussed along with a comparison of the playgrounds the district has installed over the last three years.
 - c. Administration gains nothing from inflating numbers; the items included provide the full capital picture of what needs to be maintained and improved for these buildings.
- 7. **The district has raised concerns about steel tariffs impacting renovations. Wouldn’t new construction be even more affected by rising material costs?**
 - a. There is currently no clarity on which tariffs may or may not be imposed. Any construction material could be taxed over something else – there's just no way to know right now. Federal policy currently is very fluid.
- 8. **Is the proposed “mega school” concept of a combined Doyle, Kutz, and Linden (DKL) officially off the table?**
 - a. At the Feb. 13 Finance and Operations Committee Meeting, the option to combine Doyle, Kutz, and Linden was removed from consideration. The current decision to address the capital needs at Doyle, Kutz, and Linden is now between 1) renovating all eight schools, including Doyle, Kutz, and Linden, or 2) combining Doyle and Linden into a new building on Doyle's current property and renovating Kutz, which would include the replacement of the 1930s section of Kutz with new construction.
- 9. **According to CBSD’s “Physical Deficiency” assessment, Linden and Doyle have lower deficiencies than the other eight schools slated for renovation. Why are they being proposed for replacement instead of schools with greater needs, such as Gayman?**
 - a. Doyle has the highest overall physical deficiency functional capacity index (FCI) at 87%. Linden and Kutz are also in the top five of all elementary school FCIs. While Gayman and Warwick have higher FCI scores than Kutz and Linden, the physical site constraints of topography, a street that runs through the site, as well as building constraints such as low ceilings in the corridors and classrooms in the two-level space (especially the lower level classrooms and some rooms with very few windows) does not make a renovation at Linden a financially sound decision.
 - b. Gayman and Warwick building structures can accommodate the necessary renovations to update these schools with 21st-century spaces and HVAC systems for air quality.
 - c. With Doyle at the top of the deficiency list a replacement school is needed. Linden, which is also in similar need of replacement, is only two miles away and still within Doylestown Borough. A new DL school provides borough students with the opportunity to attend a

brand-new, start-of-the-art elementary school that can be built without interruption to the student school year. The new DL school can be constructed on the grounds behind Doyle then students and teachers can be moved at one time.

- d. Building a new DL on the site of Linden would require major disruption to the students at Linden. The district has no place to house 300+ students; portable classrooms and moving to another school during construction would be required. The same is true if Gayman was replaced.
 - i. By building a new school on the Doyle site there would be no in-building disruption. Understandably, traffic around the site would be busier during construction and athletic fields would be impacted, however once the new school is finished the previous Doyle would be removed and new traffic patterns and fields for Lenape Middle School would be replaced.

10. How is the functional lifespan of a school building determined, and who makes that decision?

- a. There are industry standards. Generally, new construction has a useful life of 75 years and renovations 25 to 30 years.

11. Why is CBSD willing to redistrict a portion of Linden's student population but not consider a broader redistricting approach across the district?

- a. Redistricting is a very complex and sensitive process. None of these renovations is about creating space and all these buildings will be needed in a redistricting.
- b. Redistricting will not be enough to consolidate schools.
- c. Specifically, regarding Linden, the attempt was to co-locate students in a school with the same peers they will learn alongside in middle and high school. The Doyle -Linden school students will follow the path to Lenape and CB West.
 - i. The CB East-bound portion of the Linden student population requires busing and there is an opportunity to further evaluate route efficiency as those students shift to Cold Spring Elementary School on the path to Holicong and CB East.
 - ii. The shift also provides a lower population of the combined DL school and provides more efficient use of the space at Cold Spring.

12. Gayman has the same enrollment projections as Linden. Why is a small school renovation supported at Gayman but not at Linden?

- a. The building at Gayman has a different physical structure than Linden. It is a single-story building with a higher roof line, allowing for more space in the ceiling for updates. It also has wider hallways. While the square footage is arguably similar, the structures are different. The property itself is also flat with less site constraints.

13. Enrollment projections for 2033 differ between the "Update the 8" presentation and the Jan. 30 town hall. Which data set is accurate, and who is responsible for these projections?

- a. All of these numbers were based on the same demographic report created by FutureThink, a demographics firm.
- b. These are the same numbers presented two different ways. The district has excerpted the data used from the demographics firm below. The school board was provided with this study previously.
- c. Superintendent Yanni's presentation at the Jan. 30 town hall showed the high/low; the Upadte the 8 presentation used the projection in year 2033-34.

- i. The Update the 8 presentation listed Linden at 305 (215 to CB West and 90 to CB East), which is the number shown below in 2033-34.
- ii. Superintendent Yanni pulled the low – 290 & Hi 308 for the period after renovation to show capacity comparisons with the renovations.

Doyle Elementary School

Projected Enrollment

Grade	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
K	39	54	51	57	54	54	54	54	54	54
1	32	63	59	66	63	63	63	63	63	63
2	58	33	64	60	67	64	64	64	64	64
3	73	59	33	65	61	69	65	65	65	65
4	59	76	61	35	67	63	71	67	67	67
5	76	59	76	61	35	67	63	71	67	67
Total	337	344	344	344	347	380	380	384	380	380

Source: FutureThink

Kutz Elementary School

Projected Enrollment

Grade	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
K	42	53	50	56	53	53	53	53	53	53
1	44	61	58	65	61	61	61	61	61	61
2	62	45	63	60	67	63	63	63	63	63
3	59	65	48	67	63	71	67	67	67	67
4	62	60	67	48	68	64	72	68	68	68
5	91	64	62	69	50	71	66	75	71	71
Total	360	348	348	365	362	383	382	387	383	383

Source: FutureThink

Linden Elementary School

Projected Enrollment

Grade	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
K	39	44	41	47	44	44	44	44	44	44
1	36	51	48	54	51	51	51	51	51	51
2	50	37	52	49	55	52	52	52	52	52
3	62	51	38	53	50	56	53	53	53	53
4	44	61	50	37	52	49	55	52	52	52
5	49	45	62	51	38	53	50	56	53	53
Total	280	289	291	291	290	305	305	308	305	305

Source: FutureThink

14. With full-day kindergarten potentially impacting future enrollment, would it be more prudent to evaluate enrollment trends over the next five years before making school closure decisions?

- a. Enrollment projections that were prepared by the demographic consultant included the impacts of full-day kindergarten upon the district's enrollment. Statistics from the districts that move forward with full-day kindergarten indicate that some see no impact while others may see slight increases. The demographer accounted for a slight increase in full-day kindergarten.
- b. There are no "closures" being considered, only replacements. The district needs the same general square footage and student capacity. The DL option replaces two buildings into one larger building – it does not reduce student capacity.

15. With major changes already underway—such as the 9-12 grade realignment and the CB West construction project—why not wait to evaluate the impact of these initiatives before making additional large-scale changes to elementary schools?

- a. The necessary maintenance on these schools has been delayed since 2017.

- b. The district has developed a systematic long-range plan to meet the capital needs of all facilities. All of these plans are evaluated against the long-term feasibility.
- c. In fact, the district is completing additions at all three high schools and Mill Creek.
- d. The renovations to these schools have been delayed too long and need to be moved forward.

16. The district previously stated it would conduct public outreach (e.g., postcards to all residents, open houses to tour affected schools). Why have these efforts not occurred?

- a. One of the reasons for the in-person town halls was to save the multiple thousands of dollars that mailing postcards to a district of 15,000 families and more residents would cost.
- b. The district is considering hosting tours during school off hours. There are security considerations and tour groups may be limited in size.
- c. The timing of the tours is being considered for the spring to avoid weather events and potential cancellations.

17. The Jan. 30 town hall was primarily a presentation rather than a discussion. What is the school board doing to actively gather and incorporate public input?

- a. The board is always reachable by email and phone. In addition, Superintendent Yanni has been meeting with parents from Linden, and Chief Operating Officer Tara Houser has stressed that anyone is able to contact her for more information.
- b. The Jan. 30 town hall was meant to be a review of the information for those who did not attend Finance and Operations Committee meetings where the “Update the 8” project was discussed. It was not necessarily meant to share new information, but to make sure the district supplied multiple times and venues for community members to get the same information.
- c. The presentation slides were a summary of the relevant information from Finance and Operations Committee meetings and intended as a jumping off point for the question-and-answer portion of the town hall.
- d. The district will consider adjusting the Q&A section of the town hall for the presentations at CB East (Feb. 27) and CB South (March 27).
 - i. The plan is still to use note cards for questions for the following reasons:
 - 1. To document the questions for the FAQ portion of the project webpage.
 - 2. To allow people who prefer not to speak in front of large groups to ask questions.
 - 3. To mirror Superintendent Yanni’s community meet-and-greet in May 2024.
 - 4. In the interest of time, to summarize the submitted note cards for their questions only. The interpretation of this method as skipping or ignoring the other content on the note cards was not the district’s intention. All content on the submitted note cards will be read at the next two town halls.

18. The architect’s renderings in the Jan. 30 town hall presentation seem to emphasize deficiencies while ignoring potential solutions. Is a more balanced analysis available?

- a. The constraints were presented around potential solutions, which are limited. The goal was to demonstrate how the ceilings and door swings would be affected by lowering to make room for piping and ADA compliance changes.

- b. The feasibility analysis of the school is objective and straight forward. The architect is guiding the district to be aware of critical infrastructure conditions that will impact decisions that the district makes regarding renovation or replacement.
- c. The district asked the architect to present solutions that are financially responsible to all taxpayers in the district and that provide the greatest potential for providing high quality educational spaces.
- d. Renovations of Doyle and Linden were not recommended as part of the larger picture. A combined borough school was the solution presented to the district as the most financially responsible.

Via Email Submission

1. **Has the architect that is involved and drew up the plans given the district plans for the renovations? If not, why work with a company that doesn't seem to do all the options?**
 - a. The current feasibility study was done in 2017 by KCBA. The district issued a request for proposals (RFP) in fall 2023 to review building conditions and provide options for realignment and renovations. The options provided were used to generate a long-range capital plan with project estimates using market standards.
 - b. The district will engage the architect to provide detailed design and construction documents for each project roughly 12-18 months in advance of the planned project date in the master plan.
 - c. For the actual construction work, the district will go out for bids (as required by law) for the specific renovations. For example, KCBA gave the district a baseline idea on what Mill Creek would cost then prepared full construction documents for bidding. The district bid the job to qualified contractors and the bids came in within five percent of the estimate.
2. **The Jan. 30 presentation outlined all the deficiencies with the buildings.**
 - a. **Why are the fire alarm issues not fixed now? Aren't they a safety issue?**
 - i. The fire alarm system and public address system in Doyle is coming to its end of life. This is a work issue, not a safety issue. The district's life safety systems are inspected on an annual basis by a third-party certified company. However, eventually Doyle's system will need to be completely redone and will require going into the ceiling and running new cabling, etc. This is an issue that will be fixed in time, even if the building is not renovated.
 - b. **It was stated that Kutz has a water leak. Shouldn't that be fixed now?**
 - i. The water at Kutz is an exterior rainwater piping issue in a walled-in courtyard. After the first incident, the district regraded and protected the area, but a full renovation would allow for the digging out of the piping in the courtyard and a full regrade. This is a major repair that requires building work as well. Again, the delay in these large building overhauls prevents large scale fixes.
 - c. **It was stated that kitchen appliances are not functioning. Shouldn't these be fixed now?**
 - i. Kitchen appliances are functioning, but many pieces are past normal useful life. A kitchen equipment consultant went through all kitchens as part of the preparation to issue a cafeteria RFP and there is a list and priority for replacement.
 - d. **Why does it seem these buildings were left in disarray while it seems the district has replaced turf every 5 years?**
 - i. It is not true that the buildings are in disarray as a result of turf replacement.

- ii. Synthetic turf has a warranty life of 10-12 years and a useful life of 15 years or more, depending on the regular maintenance.