

**Executive Summary**  
**2026 Citizens Bond Committee Recommendations**  
(Revised as of 7/16/26)

This report synthesizes the recommendations from ten Citizens Bond Committee (CBC) small groups regarding the proposed 2026 Bond Election. The following summary details the selection of baseline options, additional propositions, final recommended totals, and critical discussion points.

**Group Recommendations Breakdown**

The ten groups evaluated four baseline options with most groups favoring Options 3 or 4 to address comprehensive district needs, though several modified their selections for fiscal or strategic reasons.

| <b>Group #</b> | <b>Baseline Option</b> | <b>Additional Propositions Recommended</b>               | <b>Final Recommended Total</b> |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>       | Option 4               | Athletics, Classroom Technology                          | <b>\$1,036,495,000</b>         |
| <b>2</b>       | Option 2               | Athletics, Classroom Technology                          | <b>\$745,945,000</b>           |
| <b>3</b>       | Option 3               | Athletics, Classroom Technology                          | <b>\$764,745,000</b>           |
| <b>4</b>       | Option 4               | Athletics, Classroom Technology, Outdoor Learning Center | <b>\$1,060,995,000</b>         |
| <b>5</b>       | Option 2 (Mod)         | Athletics, Classroom Technology, Outdoor Learning Center | <b>\$854,945,000</b>           |
| <b>6</b>       | Option 3               | Athletics, Classroom Technology (debated core needs)     | <b>\$764,745,000</b>           |

|    |                   |                                                               |                        |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 7  | Option 2<br>(Mod) | Athletics, Classroom Technology                               | <b>\$715,745,000</b>   |
| 8  | Option 4          | Athletics, Classroom Technology                               | <b>\$1,036,495,000</b> |
| 9  | Option 4          | Athletics, Classroom Tech,<br>Outdoor Learning Center (Mixed) | <b>\$1,060,995,000</b> |
| 10 | Option 3          | Athletics, Classroom Technology                               | <b>\$886,245,000</b>   |

### **Analysis of Additional Propositions**

- **Athletics (\$65.5M):** Received support across most groups, particularly for the replacement of the George Block Aquatics Center, which was noted as being at the end of its life cycle (built in 1978).
- **Classroom Technology (\$56M):** Widely viewed as a critical "need" rather than a "want" due to the essential nature of device lifecycles and 1:1 student needs.
- **Outdoor Learning Center (\$24.5M):** This was the most contentious item. Several groups recommended it be removed or kept as a standalone proposition, fearing it was a "nice to have" that could jeopardize the general bond. Supporters noted its potential as a competitive advantage against charter schools.

### **Summary of Proposed Baseline Modifications**

While most groups used the four provided options as starting points, several committees recommended specific modifications to the baseline packages to better align with district priorities of safety, equity, and fiscal responsibility.

- **Removal of Clark High School Culinary/CTE Upgrades:** Groups 5 and 7 explicitly recommended removing the \$37 million Clark HS Culinary/CTE upgrade from their final packages. These groups noted that this facility had recently received upgrades and felt the funds were better utilized elsewhere.
- **Prioritizing Infrastructure over Specialized Facilities:** Group 7 modified Option 2 by removing the Clark Culinary project and adding 27.5 million for roofing and 3.8 million for door hardware and fire alarms from the Option 3 tier. Their rationale was that addressing "wear and tear" and safety infrastructure was more critical than specialized program expansions.

- **Repurposing Athletic Funding for Instructional Needs:** Group 9 recommended reducing sports-related expenditures within Option 4, specifically suggesting that funds for synthetic track resurfacing be repurposed toward items with direct classroom impact, such as Alternative Learning Environments (ALE).
- **Strategic Relocation of Critical Technology:** Group 3 suggested moving **\$2 million for Uninterrupted Energy Supply (UPS)** from Option 4 into lower options. They identified these battery backups as essential infrastructure for maintaining campus phone and security systems during power outages, arguing this should be a universal priority regardless of the bond's final size.
- **Debated Swaps for Equity and Impact:** Several groups discussed "swapping" major projects to balance student impact. Group 10 debated switching the **Taft High School Fine Arts** project with the **John Jay Athletics** replacement; however, they ultimately decided to keep the fine arts project in their recommendation to prioritize instructional and academic programs over athletics. Group 3 also considered moving the Taft Fine Arts project into lower-cost options (1 or 2) but found the cost-balancing too complex to finalize during the session.

## **Key Discussion Points for Board Consideration**

### **1. Fiscal Responsibility vs. Facility Needs**

Groups were divided between maximizing student impact (Option 4) and maintaining taxpayer trust in a difficult economy (Options 2 and 3). Several groups expressed concern that reaching a \$1 billion price tag might be a "psychological barrier" for voters.

### **2. VATRE and Bond Timing**

A recurring theme was the potential for community confusion regarding the Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE). Committee members emphasized that the district must clearly communicate the difference between the VATRE and the Bond, and the consequences if one passes while the other fails.

### **3. Equity and Transparency**

There is a desire for the Board to provide specific details on which "sites" will receive renovations. Committee members highlighted the importance of ensuring equity, particularly for older schools and Title I campuses, to ensure they are not overlooked in favor of newer facilities.

### **4. Communication and "Storytelling"**

Groups noted that voters often struggle to understand the "why" behind technical projects like boiler replacements, dumpster pad relocations, or athletic lighting. The committee recommends using visual aids, videos, and clear narratives to explain how these infrastructure projects directly impact student safety and education.

### **5. Competition with Charter Schools**

Some members argued for including "luxury" items like the Outdoor Learning Center specifically to compete with charter schools that use such facilities as a major selling point. Conversely, others felt core classroom improvements and safety must remain the absolute priority to retain families.