

# A Community Conversation - Exploring the Future of GHS

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- Setting the Stage
  - Why are we doing this?
  - What we will/will not cover
  - What has already happened
- Review of the Data
- Clear understanding of options
  - GMHS Redesign
  - Tuitioning to another district
  - Regionalization
- Next steps

# Agenda

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# Why are we talking about this?



## Declining Enrollment

### Declining Enrollment

- School Enrollment numbers have been declining across all the districts in the North Shore, not just Georgetown.
- Total Georgetown enrollment **down 23.5%** over last 10 years
- Georgetown HS (9-12) enrollment **down 42.6%** over last 10 years
- Declining enrollment means less State funding

### Projected Increasing Costs

- Like everything, costs continue to rise and school districts aren't immune to this (increased salary & wages and supplies & services)



## Projected Cost Increase



## Socio-economic shifts

### G'town Socio-economic Shift over last 10 years

- Median Home prices up 88% vs 2016 in Georgetown
- Median Household income in Georgetown is 1.5x higher than the Essex county average
- Non-public education options more accessible
- As enrollment has decreased in surrounding towns, more school choice options have opened up



## Data

### Community Voice and Data

- Callout for Proactive vs. Reactive approach to **future** planning in the 2023 survey
- Community empowerment through information gathering and sharing
- Sharing the voice of the community by laying out the data and outlining options
- **Community members have asked for this information**
- **Clearing up misinformation being shared on social media**



## Community Voice

# Setting the Stage

## What we will cover:

- The data as it was collected
  - Make up of survey participants
  - What the data tells us
- The options ahead of us
  - Pros/Cons as we currently understand them
- The next steps/road ahead of us

## What we will not cover(and why!)

- No decisions will be made today
  - Purview for each option varies– will explain in upcoming slides
- Specific financial impacts
  - We don't have these numbers yet– will cover in next steps
- Specific future impacts on the town
  - Impossible to predict at this stage



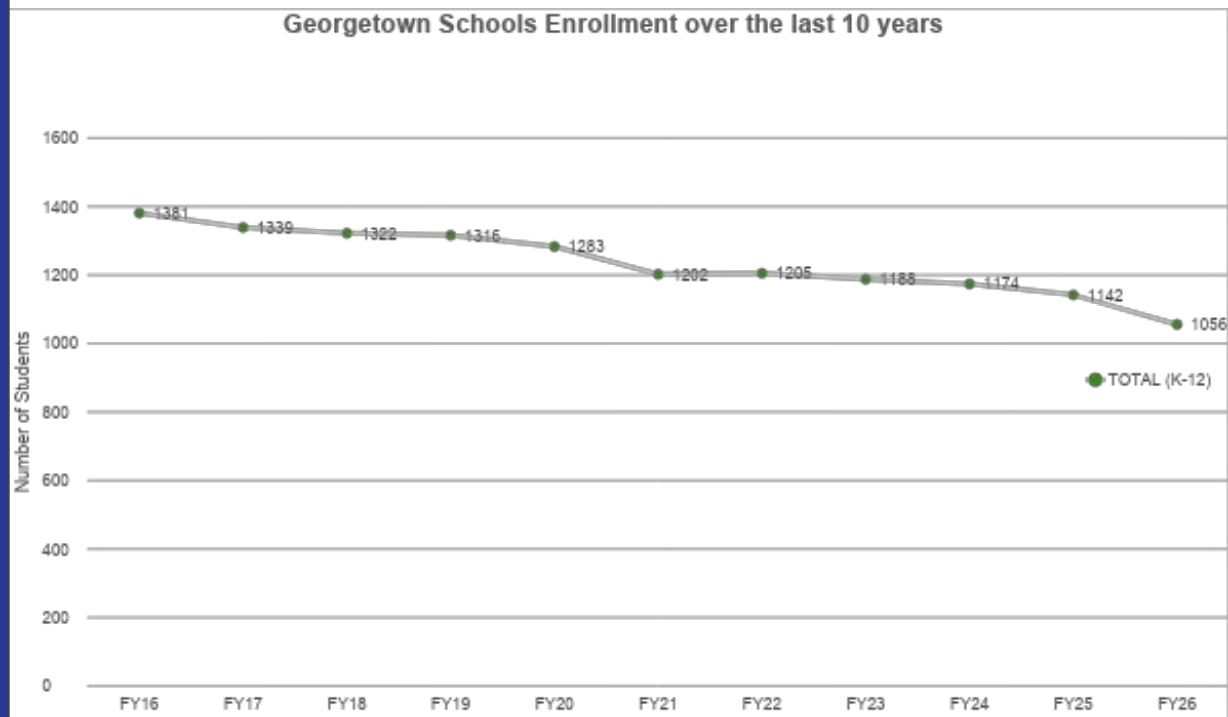
# Local Context

District	School Year 2018/2019 Enrollment	School Year 2024/2025 Enrollment	change	% change
Georgetown	1,404	1,197	-207	-14.74%
Amesbury	2,058	1,793	-265	-12.88%
Andover	5,957	5,414	-543	-9.12%
Boxford	718	778	60	8.36%
Danvers	3,481	3,238	-243	-6.98%
Gloucester	2,886	2,838	-48	-1.66%
Haverhill	8,047	7,940	-107	-1.33%
Ipswich	1,708	1,563	-145	-8.49%
Lawrence	13,658	13,313	-345	-2.53%
Marblehead	3,051	2,564	-487	-15.96%
Methuen	6,927	6,464	-463	-6.68%
Middleton	700	730	30	4.29%
Newburyport	2,232	2,107	-125	-5.60%
North Andover	4,769	4,416	-353	-7.40%
Peabody	5,973	5,774	-199	-3.33%
Rockport	888	631	-257	-28.94%
Salem	3,718	3,831	113	3.04%
Topsfield	641	598	-43	-6.71%
Hamilton Wenham	1,769	1,669	-100	-5.65%
Masconomet	1,785	1,477	-308	-17.25%
Essex North Shore	1,413	1,830	417	29.51%
Manchester Essex	1,387	1,190	-197	-14.20%
Pentucket	2,437	2,238	-199	-8.17%
Triton	2,421	2,074	-347	-14.33%
Whittier	1,246	1,285	39	3.13%

**Declining enrollment is  
not just a Georgetown Problem**



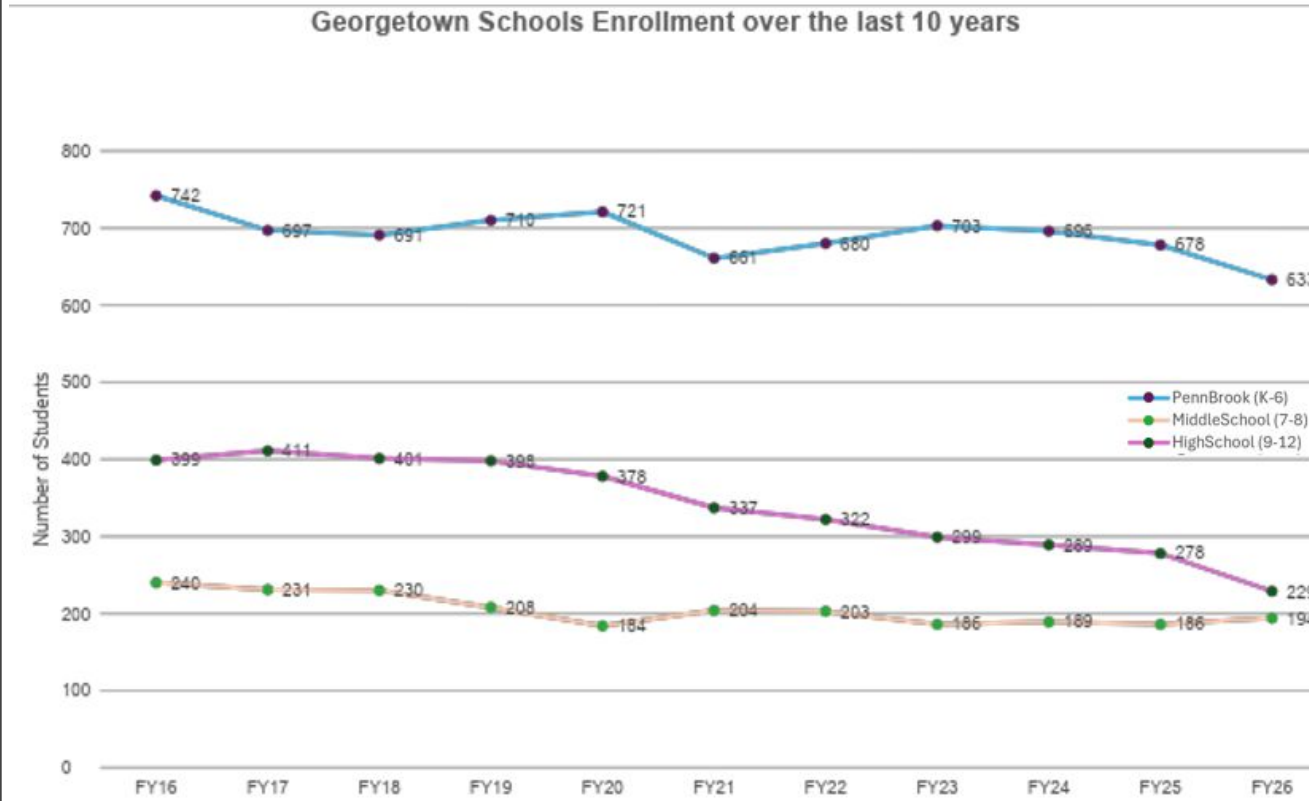
# 10 yr Enrollment Trend – Total District K-12



## Georgetown Enrollment Trend vs 2016

	2024 vs 2016	2025 vs 2016	2026 vs 2016
Total (K-12)	-15.0%	-17.3%	-23.5%

# 10 yr Enrollment Trend – Penn Brook / Middle School / High School

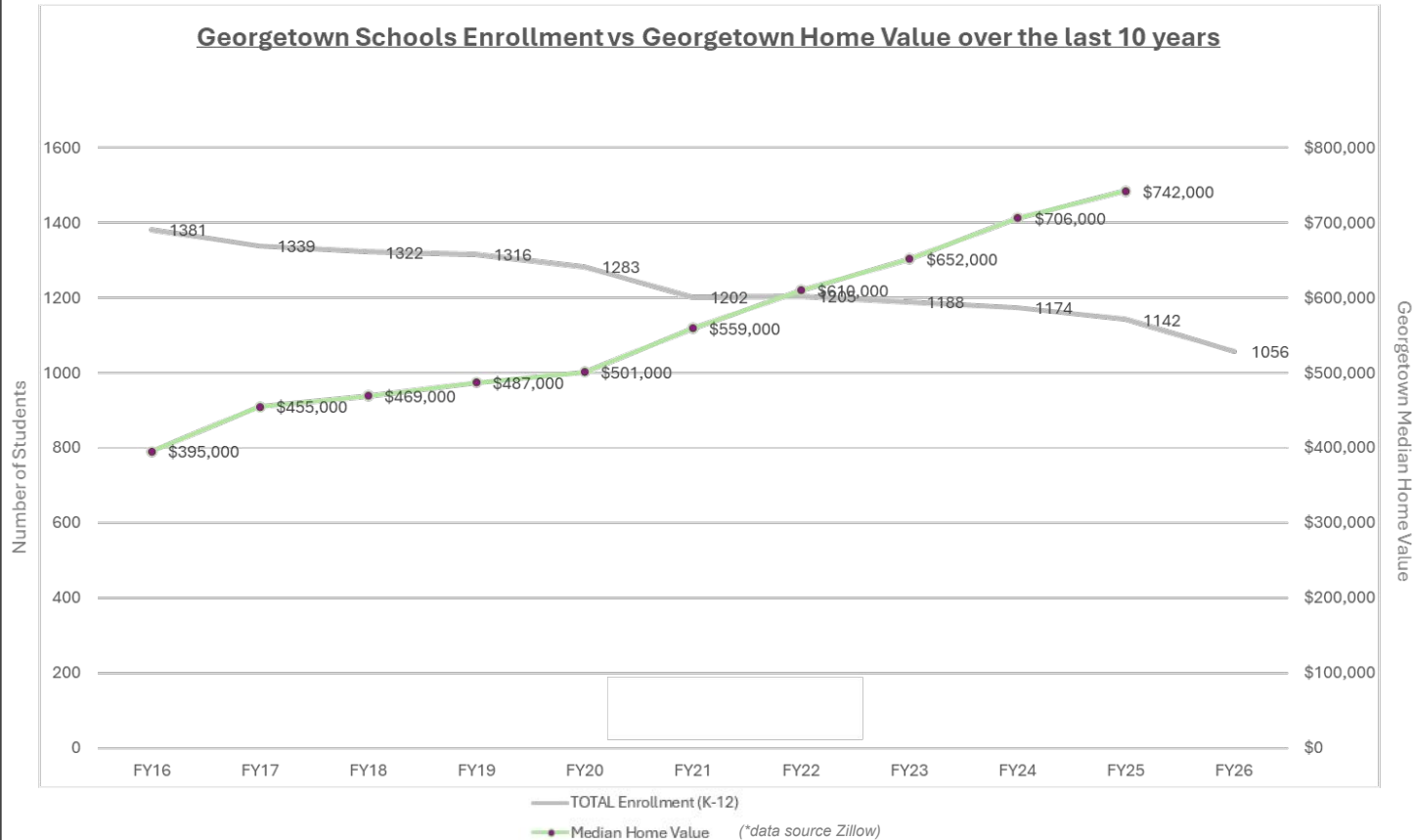


Georgetown Enrollment Trend vs 2016

	2024 vs 2016	2025 vs 2016	2026 vs 2016
Penn Brook (K-6)	-6.2%	-8.6%	-14.7%
Middle School (7-8)	-21.3%	-22.5%	-19.2%
High School (9-12)	-27.6%	-30.3%	-42.6%

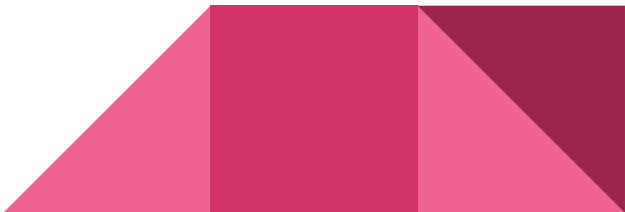


# 10 yr Enrollment Trend – Total District K-12 VS Georgetown Home Value Trend



*As home prices go up, it changes the socio-economic profile of the town, creating a scenario where non-public education becomes more accessible*

# The work up to this point

- High School Redesign initiatives are underway with no plans to slow down
  - Community Data Collection over last two months
    - Survey delivered this fall with regular reminders to GPS families.
    - Collaboration with the town to execute the survey with the greater Georgetown community
    - 695 Respondents
  - Community Conversations
    - A series of 6 Conversations (approximately 200 participants) during October taking place at various locations and various times of the day to maximize participation and give everyone the chance to be heard
  - Identification of potential partnering districts
  - Collaboration with other town boards/committees
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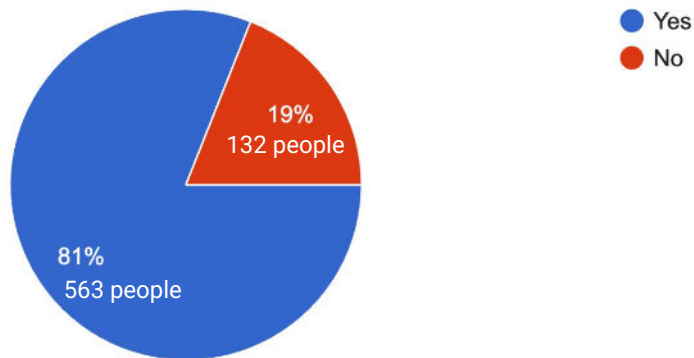


# **DATA - The Voice Of Our Community**

# Survey Participation

Do you have one or more children enrolled in Georgetown Public Schools?

695 responses

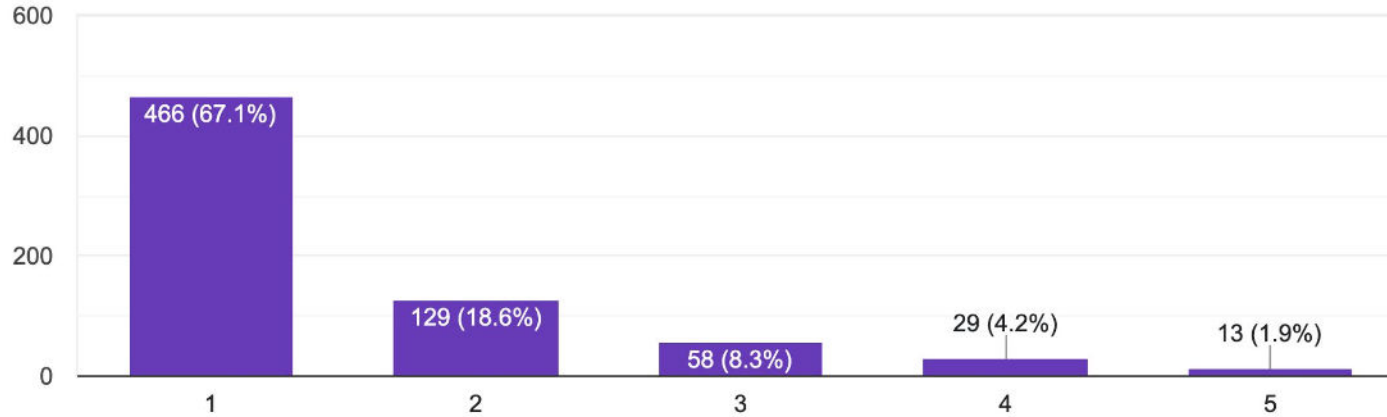


There are  
approximately 750  
families in the district  
with 1,056 students

# Data Review-Community Perception & Awareness

Based on the information shared, how concerned are you about the declining enrollment trends?

695 responses



595 (85.7%) Concerned about low enrollment

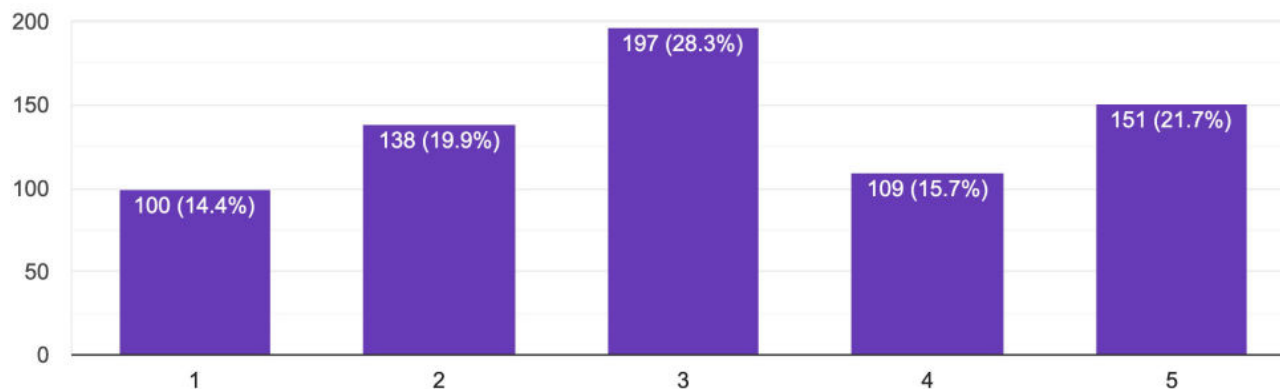
Very Concerned      1      2      3      4      5      Not Concerned at all

☐      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐

# Data Review - Community Perception & Awareness

How familiar are you with the idea of either regionalizing (fully or partially) or entering into a tuition agreement?

695 responses



More information and education is needed about the potential options

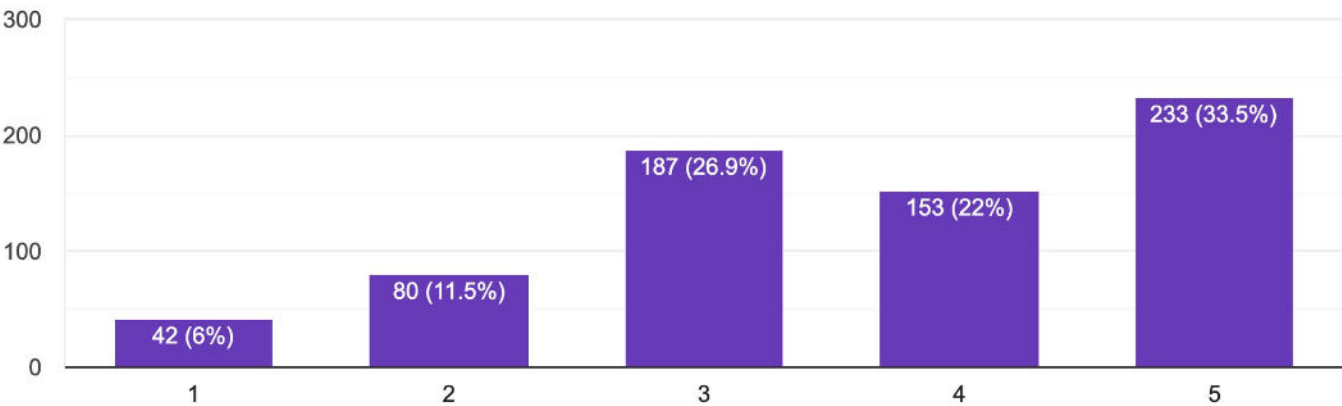
1 2 3 4 5

Very Familiar ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not Familiar at all

# Data Review: Community Perception and Awareness

How informed do you feel about the potential benefits and drawbacks of either regionalizing (fully or partially) or entering into a tuition agreement?

695 responses



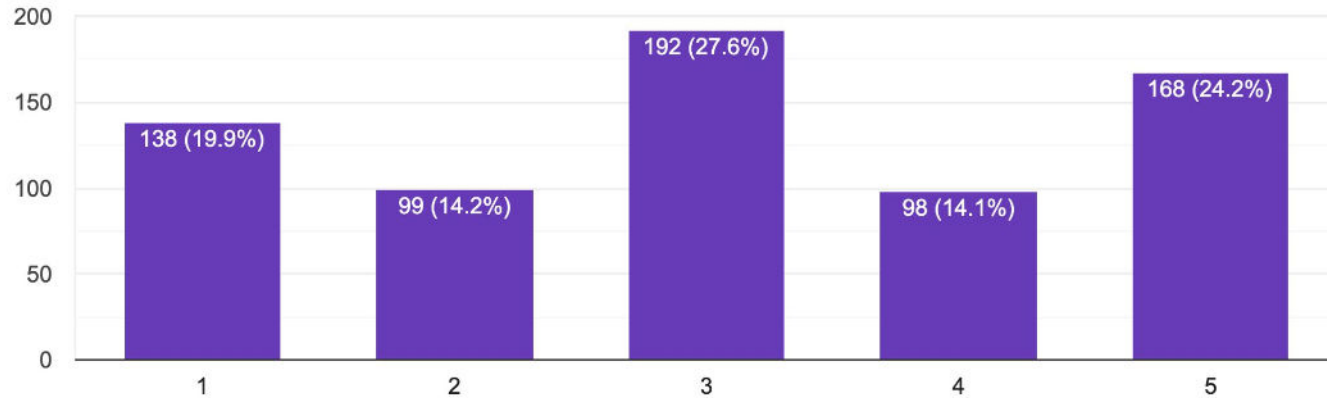
More information and education is needed about the potential options



# Data Review: Community Preference at this Stage

How important is it to you that our school district remains independent?

695 responses



- 237 (34.1%) remaining independent is important
- 266 (38.3%) not important to remain independent

1 2 3 4 5

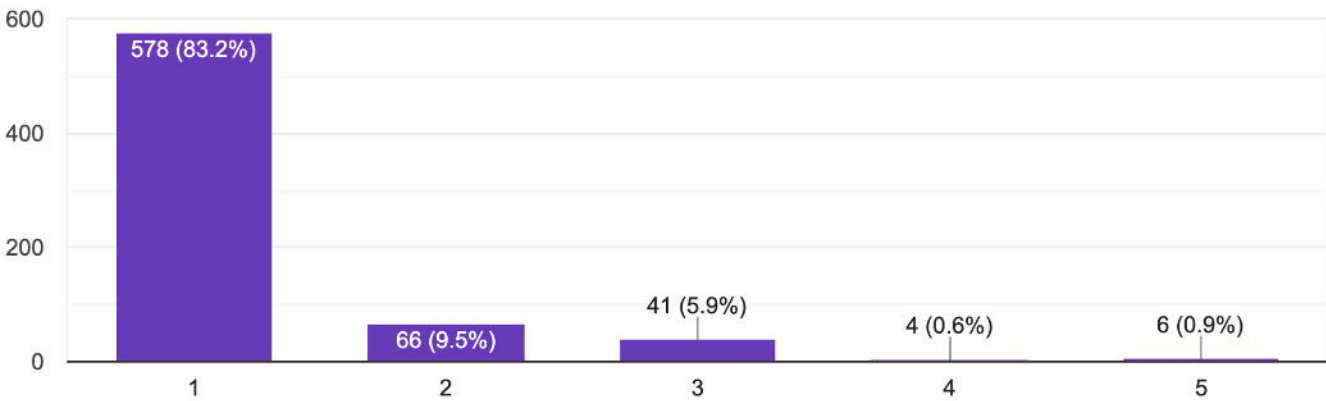
Extremely Important ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not Important at all



# Data Review: Community Preference at this Stage

How important is it to you that Georgetown students have access to strong academic programs, sports, and extracurricular opportunities, even if that means partnering with other districts?

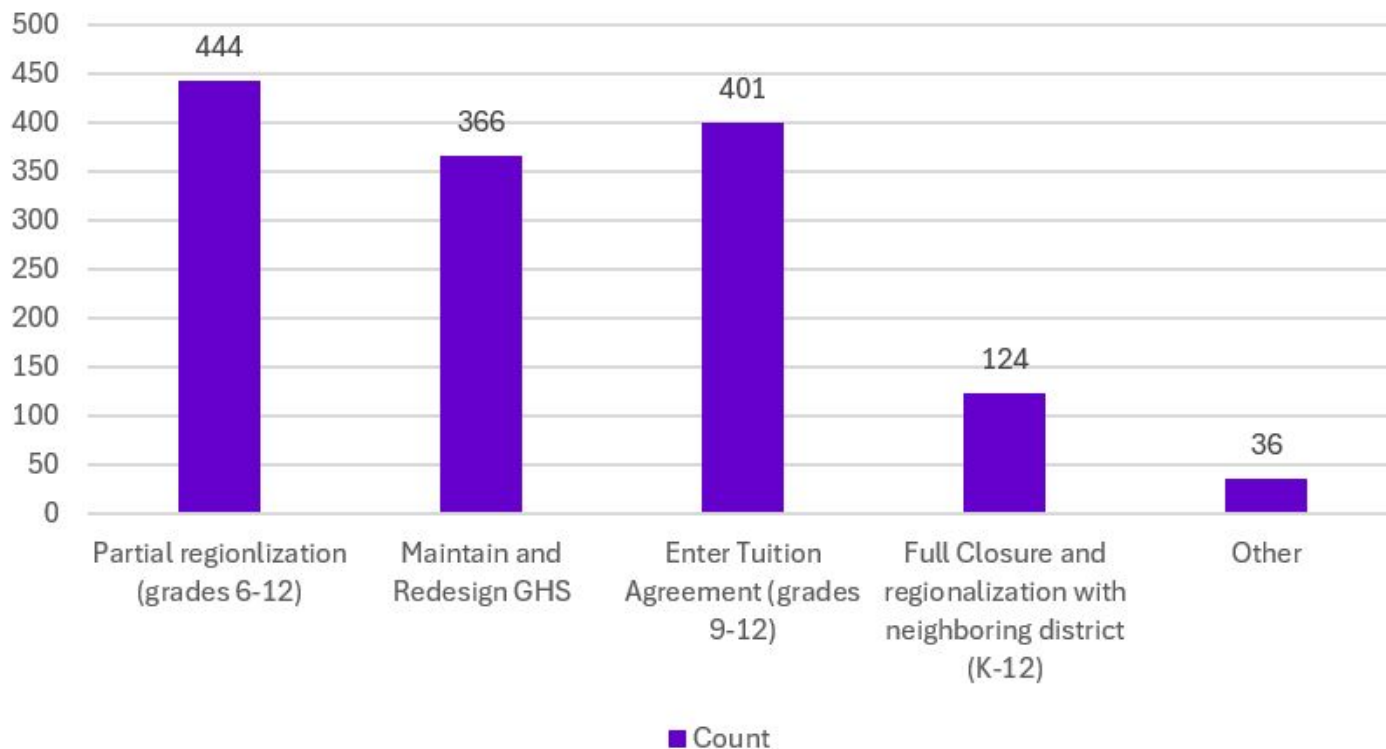
695 responses



Community wants a robust high school experience for their children even if it means partnering



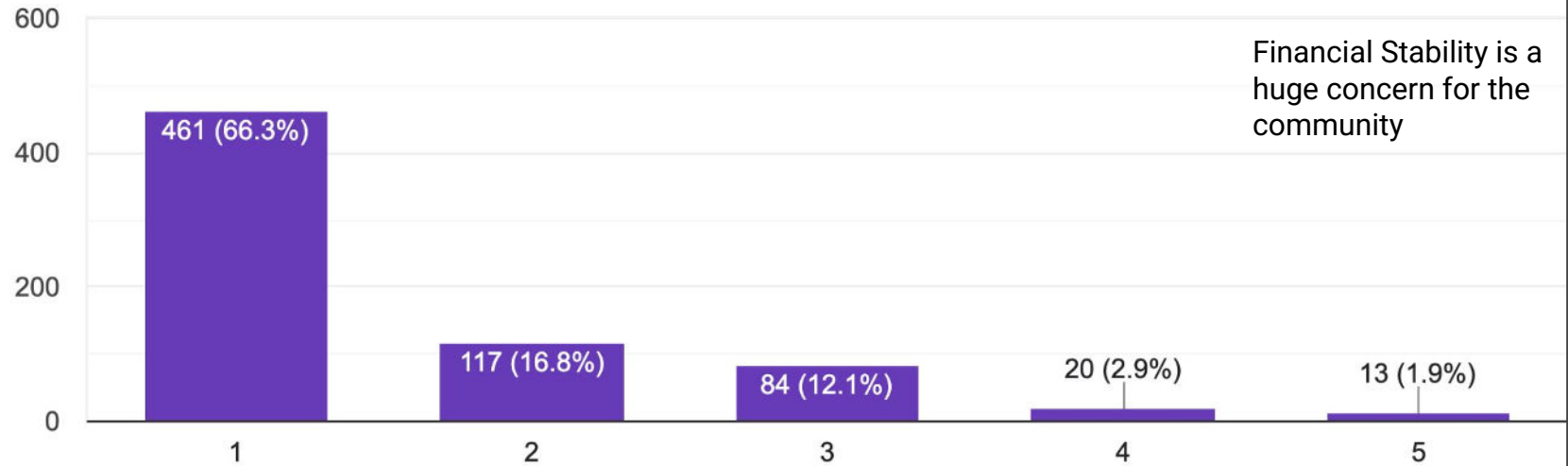
Which of the following options do you believe Georgetown should prioritize exploring? - **Choose 2 options**



This question did not allow for ranking individual choices

# How concerned are you about the financial sustainability of Georgetown Public Schools if no action is taken?

695 responses



Very Concerned      1      2      3      4      5      Not Concerned at all

☐      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐

## What questions, concerns, or suggestions would you like Georgetown leaders to consider for the future of Georgetown High School?

#	Category	% of Total	Description
1	Community & Transparency Concerns	38%	Asking for more communication, community involvement, and transparency in decision-making about GHS's future.
2	Support for Teachers, Students, and School Culture	16%	Focused on valuing teachers, supporting students, improving morale, and fostering a positive school environment.
3	Facilities & General School Issues	13%	Comments about physical space, school size, and general district concerns.
4	Academic & Extracurricular Quality	10%	Emphasis on maintaining or expanding academic programs, sports, and clubs despite enrollment challenges.
5	Regionalization & Cost Analysis	7%	Focused on understanding the financial and logistical implications of regionalization.
6	Regionalization / Tuition Options	6%	Questions or suggestions about regionalizing or entering tuition agreements.
7	Financial Accountability / Override	6%	Concern over financial management, taxes, and how overrides and funds are used.
8	Process, Timeline, and Long-Term Planning	4%	Requests for clarity on decision timelines and long-term planning.

# Current Potential Options

## Potential Option #1

# Remain Independent

## High School Redesign

A Destination:  
Experiential Learning Beyond Our Walls



# Georgetown High School Now and Into the Future

## NOW

- **Building the Infrastructure**
  - Director of Innovative Learning and Student Support hired this fall
  - Creative bell schedule allowing for flexible scheduling
  - Solving transportation needs
  - Guidance Department redesign
- **Building Partnerships**
  - With our students (Understanding what they want)
  - With Municipal departments (Internship pilots)
  - With Local businesses (internships pilots)
  - With Community College expansion

## What's Coming Next

- **Flexible scheduling for students and staff**
  - Advisory for Middle and High School students to build knowledge and skills
  - High School students could earn credits "in the world"
    - Deep internships
    - Early College expansion
  - Staffing model shifts
- **Strengthening and build in & out of schools opportunities**
  - Advanced Placement - Accessible
  - Advisory
  - Cooking
  - Sports?

## Potential Option #2

# Tuition Agreement

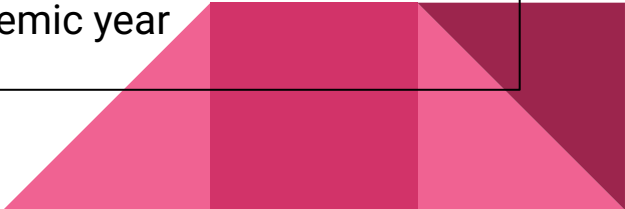
Masconomet  
Regional School District





# Tuition Agreement - MASCO

## How Does it Work?

- Identify a partner that could absorb our High School student population (9-12)
  - Financial model is developed and agreed upon by both districts with an eye to regionalization
  - MASCO obtains approval from regional School Committee and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the towns need to approve as part of the operating budget at the annual Town Meeting obtains approval from their School Committee
  - GPS develops an operational plan including Transportation, etc.
  - Decision making authority lies with the Georgetown School Committee with community input
  - Approval from the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
  - Time Frame - a partnership could be completed with in the academic year
- 

# Tuition Agreement - MASCO

## Pros

- Timeliness
- Peer Groups: Increased graduating class size
- Opportunities
  - Sports
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Academic Electives
- Sustainable over time even with declining enrollment
- Impact on students in grades 9 - 12 only

## Cons

- No Governance or authority (for Georgetown)
  - No guarantee of joining the regionalization
- Georgetown Community - loses the pride of independent varsity sports
- Impact on students who want/need small town feel - not a good fit for all students
  - Loss of familiar teachers and staff
- Location -
  - Loss of students connection to small town feel of Georgetown
  - Transported out of Georgetown

## Potential Option #3

# Regionalization

Amesbury - Georgetown  
Regional School District



# Regionalization - Amesbury/Georgetown

## How Does it Work

- Identify a partner(s) that are interested in creating a new regional school district
- Feasibility study (6-8 month timeline)
- Process is governed by regulations with a 3 phase process
  - Phase I: 3 person committee is formed in each town/city
  - Phase II: the committees form a board
  - Phase III: The board creates the structures and details of the new regional school district
- Decision making authority lies with the Town (Town meeting vote)
- Approval from the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Time Frame: 2 to 3 years

# Regionalization - Amesbury/Georgetown

## Pros

- Maintain Governance
- Approximately 75% of students continue to be educated in Georgetown
- Peer Groups: Increased graduating class size
- Opportunities
  - Sports
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Academic Electives
- Pride in sports and community involvement
- Sustainable over time even with declining enrollment

## Cons

- Lack of Timeliness
- Impact on the small town feel for secondary students
- Location for some students -
  - Transported out of Georgetown



**Summary:**

**What are our go forward options**

# Summary of Current Options that will be explored

## High School Redesign

We are continuing our efforts to redesign our high school



**Full Steam Ahead!**

## Tuition Agreement



MASCO

- School Committee Authority
- Expedited Process
- No GPS Voice in education options
- Possible future regionalization

## Regionalization

Georgetown / Amesbury



- Town Meeting Vote
- Multi-year Process
- Only the MS or HS will be housed in Amesbury
- New Combined School Committee oversight

# Submit Your Questions



# Go Forward Communication Plan

- The best place to stay up to date on relevant information will be the Superintendent's Blog.
- At this time, we do not know when the next community share out will be. It will depend on how the process evolves and how quickly the next steps in the exploration happen. But we are committed to delivering accurate and relevant information to the community in a timely manner.

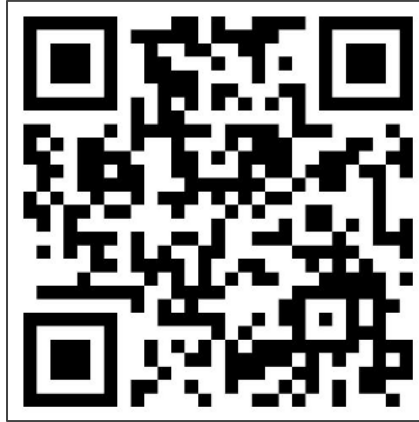




**strategic plan**



**This presentation will be  
linked on the District Website**



**Special Ed  
Action Plan**



**Resources**

