

WHAT PART OF “NO” DOESN’T SCARBOROUGH TOWN GOVERNMENT UNDERSTAND?

In recent years, Scarborough voters have said “NO” again and again: **NO** TO THE OVERSIZED LIBRARY EXPANSION, **NO** TO PROFLIGATE SPENDING, **NO** TO RUNAWAY GROWTH

And yet, instead of engaging in self-reflection, rethinking its approach, and looking for ways to achieve both savings and a better result for a skeptical public, **Town government doubles down and comes back for more**—in this case, with a \$160 million school proposal that’s more than 4 times the cost of any taxpayer-funded project in Town history.

When challenged, **Town leaders go right to scare tactics**, threatening that you’ll pay up now or you’ll pay more later.

It’s time to start paying less attention to **high-priced, out-of-town bureaucrats and consultants who make a living spending other peoples’ money**, and more attention to the people whose money it is that’s being spent—the people who know and love Scarborough.

It’s time to push back on the premise that bigger and more expensive is always better, and to brainstorm possible alternatives to which voters might be able to say “YES,” such as:

1. Building a new consolidated grade 2-3 school (half the size of the current proposal) somewhere on the Town’s existing educational campus, moving grade 2 from the neighborhood schools, moving grade 3 from (and grade 6 to) Wentworth, renovating the existing neighborhood schools for grades K-1, and (similar to the current proposal) renovating the Middle School for grades 7-8;
2. Building a new consolidated grade 5-6 school (again, half the size of the current proposal) somewhere on the Town’s existing educational campus, moving grade 5 from (and grade 2 to) Wentworth, moving grade 6 from the Middle School, renovating the existing neighborhood schools for grades K-1, and (similar to the current proposal) renovating the Middle School for grades 7-8; or
3. Renovating the existing neighborhood schools for grades K-1, moving grade 2 to an expanded Wentworth (which was designed for easy expansion), and renovating the Middle School for grades 6-8.

Maybe one of the above options is just right for Scarborough; maybe none of them is. The point is that, **if Scarborough families can be creative to make ends meet, Town leaders can, too**. Those leaders like to say that their one alternative would cost even more, but, if the options above (none of which requires the Town to overpay for land at The Downs, as currently proposed) suggest anything, it’s that **Town government is presenting voters with a false dichotomy**.

It’s time to send a loud message that Town government can’t ignore. And, to do that, Scarborough voters need to:

- Defeat the school bond by such a big margin that Town government realizes **just dusting off the same bad plan next year and working to ‘get out the vote’ won’t cut it anymore**; and
- Make Town Councilors and other elected officials pay a price for continuing to subvert the will of their constituents **by voting those officials out of office**.

Make no mistake: this is a fight for the soul of Scarborough. If Town leaders won’t listen, it’s time to make it clear: NO means NO!

THIS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, VOTE “NO” ON THE SCHOOL BOND!