

# Fort Edward Union Free School District

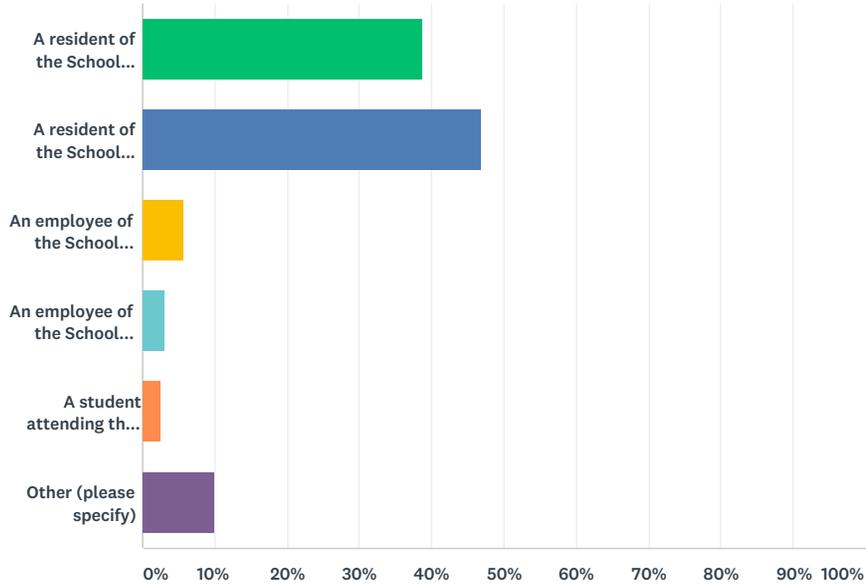
## Pre-Merger Study:

Community Survey Responses

Community Forum Comments

Q1 Tell us about yourself. Please check the appropriate box/boxes below that best describes your affiliation with the Fort Edward Union Free School District .

Answered: 158 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
A resident of the School District WITHOUT children currently in the district.	38.61% 61
A resident of the School District WITH children in the district.	46.84% 74
An employee of the School District.	5.70% 9
An employee of the School District with children in the district.	3.16% 5
A student attending the School District.	2.53% 4
Other (please specify)	10.13% 16
Total Respondents: 158	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	A resident of the school district with grandchildren currently in the district.	10/31/2019 7:35 AM
2	None of the Above	10/31/2019 4:18 AM
3	Alumni, Graduated 2010	10/31/2019 12:47 AM
4	A former student with siblings in the district	10/30/2019 11:57 PM
5	Resident with grandchildren in Fort Edward School	10/30/2019 7:20 PM
6	Property owner in Ft Edward and SGF.	10/30/2019 6:50 PM
7	Resident of another school district with children that graduated from Fort Edward	10/30/2019 6:44 PM
8	Fort Edward UFSD Alumni	10/30/2019 6:38 PM
9	A retired resident in this over taxed school district.	10/30/2019 4:09 PM
10	I am a resident, employee and have children in district	10/30/2019 2:58 PM
11	Work for boces in fort edward school	10/30/2019 10:48 AM
12	I have two children who grew up in Fort Edward, both graduates of FE high school	10/29/2019 9:15 PM
13	Fellow educator	10/29/2019 8:59 PM
14	Alumni 2008	10/29/2019 8:30 PM
15	I have 5 grandchildren attending this school	10/27/2019 5:27 PM



## **Pre-Merger Study Community Forum and Community Survey Summaries**

The following is a brief summary of the Community Forum regarding the Pre-Merger Study, as well as the Community Survey.

Regarding the first two questions about the information in the Pre-Merger Study and additional thoughts about the study, it did appear that many participants did not understand what the purpose of the Pre-Merger study was, as well as what a Pre-Merger study is. There appears to be a need for clarification of a Merger and an Annexation, including which one the Board is exploring. Many respondents asked questions about what the new tax rates will be, and how long any reductions in taxes will last. There were questions about the willingness or interest in Hudson Falls and South Glens Falls accepting Fort Edward in a merger or annexation. Several asked for more clarification about the timetable for a merger or annexation. Additionally, participants want more information about the arts and other areas impacted in addition to sports and athletics. Additional areas focused on what would happen to the school building and staff (Teachers and Support Staff). It would be beneficial for the district to clarify the purpose of the Pre-Merger Study, as well as the difference between a merger and annexation, and why the study spoke more of an annexation.

In answering the question, “What do you think of the possibility of Fort Edward merging with another school based upon the Pre-Merger Study?” respondents had many concerns, particularly around what will happen to the students. Class size, bullying, supports for students, and opportunities for students were mentioned many times throughout the responses. There appears to be a few respondents in favor of a merger or annexation, but there were many more responses against a merger. Most wanted to keep a small school/district for their children. There was also concern about property values if the town did not have its own district. Several respondents stated they moved to the district for the small school opportunities.

When respondents answered the question about the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is not pursued, there were still several who voiced their opinion in opposition of a merger. However, there were many who talked about how the taxes would continue to rise and students would have fewer opportunities. The general sense was that it would be a disservice to the students if a merger study did not happen. Many respondents stated that something will have to happen in the future as the financial situation is not going to get better. Having a merger study would explore some options and better help the community make a decision and would not mean a merger will automatically take place.

When respondents answered the question about the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is pursued, there were many of the same comments about not wanting to merge, and the difficult time students will have in a larger district. As one respondent stated, it will be emotional in the beginning. Many also feared that property values would drop if a full-merger

study was pursued, even without a decision to merge. In contrast, many respondents also stated there could be an increase in opportunities for students, both academic and athletic. In addition to the opportunities for students, many thought it would help relieve the tax burden on the community.

## Q2 What questions do you have about the information in the Pre-Merger Study?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 113

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Personally i dont beleve there is total information ....no info on tax bill bottom lines ...that is one of the many things	10/31/2019 9:46 PM
2	How does this effect the learning of these children.	10/31/2019 9:38 PM
3	It doesn't indicate if the school districts suggested in the merger are amenable to merging with Fort Edward.	10/31/2019 7:43 PM
4	Dont do it	10/31/2019 3:17 PM
5	Will it lower our taxes. They are out of control and the only reason we look at relocating	10/31/2019 1:29 PM
6	With the decline of enrollment apparent, and the merging of school sports teams to field teams, it is obvious that something needs to be done to keep some kind of normalcy. Has Centralization been discussed, and what were the results if they were. I have heard nothing of this avenue, though I admit to not being active in pursuit of this or other school information.	10/31/2019 12:28 PM
7	I don't have any questions about the study, I have a pretty good grasp on what my opinion is.	10/30/2019 11:53 PM
8	What will happen to school taxes? What will happen to to current school, still pay to maintain but be empty, wasteful.	10/30/2019 10:13 PM
9	It was biased and presented in manner that favored a merger/annexation.	10/30/2019 9:20 PM
10	Where are the funds Where will funds be derived in order to complete said process in light of current events	10/30/2019 9:12 PM
11	Is there more information regarding the overall learning culture and climate of HF and SGF? Do faculty and staff members feel safe at these schools? On average per school year, how many discipline referrals does each faculty and staff member write? How many faculty and staff members have been physically assaulted by students? How do the students' behavioral issues affect the teachers' abilities to educate their students? How do these schools compare to FE?	10/30/2019 7:54 PM
12	if We merge will our taxes go up and I am on a fixed income and can't afford for them to go up again	10/30/2019 6:24 PM
13	what is going to happen to the staff at the school? How are you going to ease students into this transition? Can you guarantee they will receive the same one on one at a different school vs what they got at Fort Edward?	10/30/2019 6:03 PM
14	Why is it not be accurately presented as an annexation? Why are the full effects of an annexation being undisclosed? Why it is so skewed toward an annexation without presenting all of the facts and potential implications of an annexation?	10/30/2019 4:49 PM
15	Nothing not to dislike by merging	10/30/2019 3:30 PM
16	It's a distraction.	10/30/2019 2:30 PM
17	If merger occurs, what is the proposed year to begin?	10/30/2019 2:06 PM
18	None. But it seemed like a sales pitch than just providing information.	10/30/2019 1:08 PM
19	What are the considerations for the current space if a merger happens? How would the building be used to help support the community?	10/30/2019 1:02 PM
20	How much money does the company doing the study receive? Is it more if the annexation happens?	10/30/2019 11:12 AM
21	how much will cost be to continue next step	10/30/2019 10:28 AM
22	Would the fort edward location close? Would transportation be provided for all grades?	10/30/2019 9:49 AM
23	Was any alternate solution thought about to save the school, the study lacked a ton of information	10/30/2019 8:43 AM
24	Do either of these schools want us? Do not think we will ever merge. Too many people against it.	10/30/2019 8:26 AM
25	It's pretty clear	10/30/2019 8:14 AM
26	At this point- most questions revolve around how will it affect our ever increasing taxes	10/30/2019 8:13 AM
27	Who was responsible for payment of this study? Our school district alone or shared cost with the districts we would possibly merge with?	10/30/2019 7:43 AM
28	HOw long will it take to get this study up and running?	10/29/2019 8:39 PM
29	I do not have any questions about the information in the Pre-Merger Study.	10/29/2019 8:35 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

30	What is the difference between centralization and annexation? Who decides if a full merger study is undertaken and when. Is it voted on by the board of education or the community members?	10/29/2019 8:02 PM
31	Why the schools that have been picked to merge with?	10/29/2019 7:33 PM
32	Why are there so many items that are either blank or inaccurate? Classes & sports numbers are wrong in several cases.	10/29/2019 2:59 PM
33	What advantages are there for residents of the school district?	10/29/2019 1:02 PM
34	How much will our taxes go down?	10/28/2019 1:54 PM
35	Where is the information about arts and music? There is mention of increased sports opportunities and competition for play time. Presumably the same could be said for music - orchestra instruments offered in HF and SGF, maybe more opportunities for smaller ensembles? Specialty art classes? Shop, home & careers? Would like to know. Also, what is the impact of having SUNY Adirondack so close? I see that FE does not offer AP classes but it looks like HF does not either. Do students eligible for those classes take some at SUNY ADK? Is it really a case of students not having those opportunities for advanced classes or simply a case of the high schools not being the ones to teach them?	10/28/2019 9:35 AM
36	There seems to be noise about the tax break being temporary and taxes skyrocketing within the next few years yet again. How are we going to manage, should a merger be "approved" with SGF, to not have a 6 yr old on the bus for long periods of time? Will there be separate bussing for HS vs elementary? Is tuition out HS still/ever been a viable option? What is the town/village doing to bring in business whose taxes will help to support the school and encourage families to want to come here again? Is it true that certain members of the administration will continue to receive a salary even if FEUFSD no longer exists?	10/28/2019 5:49 AM
37	Why is this called a merger when it is not a merger but an annexation! Misconstrued wording is unfair to those who feel Schools would merge.	10/27/2019 4:34 PM
38	Why is this being so actively pursued there isnt one parent that wants this to happen amd the surveys that were sent out were full of weighted questions. All seems very shady.	10/24/2019 5:26 PM
39	why has it taken so long to move forward?	10/24/2019 11:35 AM
40	Would our children stay in FE or be bussed to different district?	10/23/2019 6:04 AM
41	None. Report very clear	10/22/2019 7:59 PM
42	None	10/22/2019 7:47 PM
43	Dont want to merge schools	10/22/2019 7:26 PM
44	Why doesn't the information show what the taxes will look like when the money from the merger is gone?	10/22/2019 6:53 PM
45	Why is this being called a merger when it is actually an annexation?	10/22/2019 6:49 PM

Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

## Q3 What thoughts do you have about the information in the Pre-Merger Study?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 109

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	After the money spent on FE school building , there should be more focus on asking students their thoughts	10/31/2019 9:46 PM
2	How is this going effect fort Edward as a whole especially for families that have made it there home for generations	10/31/2019 9:38 PM
3	It was easy to follow.	10/31/2019 7:43 PM
4	Dont do it	10/31/2019 3:17 PM
5	If it lowers taxes great. The kids have better access to more education and sports.	10/31/2019 1:29 PM
6	The information was well presented and informative. I know this is a "confidential" survey, but I am happy to provide my contact information, and regret not being able to attend the meeting. Thanks. Tim Burton- Fort Edward-747-8357.	10/31/2019 12:28 PM
7	I think after reading the pre merger study, we need to go to a full merger study. There are too many unanswered questions that need to be answered before we can make an informed decision.	10/31/2019 10:41 AM
8	I don't like it at all.	10/31/2019 9:52 AM
9	I don't think Hudson Falls or South Glens Falls are getting enough benefits for what they will have to do. They are absorbing another school after all. We may be small, but I think there are challenges and money won't cover everything.	10/30/2019 11:53 PM
10	It's a waste of everybody's time and energy. Our school is doing great things	10/30/2019 10:13 PM
11	I love our Fort Edward school and we CANNOT loose our school.	10/30/2019 10:03 PM
12	The information presented was sparse and lacking on many topics.	10/30/2019 9:20 PM
13	None	10/30/2019 7:54 PM
14	We moved here to be in a smaller school and community and love the school for my grandchildren and love the community	10/30/2019 6:24 PM
15	There isn't a guarantee everyone will be rehired. Working at the school is some employees only source of income or has been their only job. How will you deal with the drug problems in Hudson Falls and South Glens Falls... their isn't a problem with it in Fort Edward currently. Also, you have to think about how bad bullying is in a bigger school. I graduated only a few years ago and can tell you bullying is not a big problem in Fort Edward. This merge will also give students less of an opportunity to join a sports team, for in Fort Edward almost everyone made a team. Fort Edward School is the heart of our community ,and without that I think the idea of us being a big "family" will soon no longer exist.	10/30/2019 6:03 PM
16	Biased and incomplete.	10/30/2019 4:49 PM
17	I think it is worth exploring. As a home owner, it's getting more and more difficult to pay for my house. If my child was receiving an education on par with teacher salaries, that would be easier to justify. But that's just not the case.	10/30/2019 3:32 PM
18	Brainless not to merge. It's inevitable, get the money while it's there. Plus the students will have more than Music, Band, Art and Shop to choose from. And many school clubs also.	10/30/2019 3:30 PM
19	Our taxes are out of control and people are leaving because of this. The school student body is decreasing. We cannot afford to continue to support a school just because people do not want to lose their identity or "Fort Edward Pride" . Last time I checked Fort Edward sports already merger with other schools, they are not blue and white and not called the Forts. You have current teachers at Fort Edward who work for the school but moved out of the district because they cannot afford the taxes.	10/30/2019 3:26 PM
20	Fort Edward residents can not afford to continue paying the school tax especially senior citizens and people that are retired. Merging seems like the answer. Should have been done a time ago. Bigger schools offer more for the students,	10/30/2019 2:48 PM
21	Total distraction from learning.	10/30/2019 2:30 PM
22	Good to merge if students get upgrades on available study tools. ( up to date literature, laptops for home study, possible higher paid teachers w/higher qualifications, extended programs for after school enrichment.)	10/30/2019 2:06 PM
23	That the teachers in FE are paid roughly the same as those that teach in South Glens Falls and that is absurd. We don't have the tax base like SGF has.	10/30/2019 1:08 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

24	I would be interested in knowing and maybe I missed this somewhere on what the concerns are for FE to even look into this merger and does this Pre-Merger study address the original reason why we are talking about it. I have heard community members discuss the information in the packet and I feel that either I am confused or they are on the options available regarding FE being annexed, merged, tuitioning some folks feel like that they are all the same I think they are not so clarification on this would be helpful.	10/30/2019 1:02 PM
25	I think it's EXTREMELY biased. And it's not a merger, it's an ANNEXATION. The district would cease to exist. That's not a merger.	10/30/2019 11:12 AM
26	more kid opportunity, less tax, sounds good	10/30/2019 10:28 AM
27	Too small to adequately read. Didn't understand the tax parts. Need a much further study done.	10/30/2019 8:26 AM
28	It really makes a merger look good for kids and future taxes	10/30/2019 8:14 AM
29	Why wasn't the idea of Fort Edward merging with Fort Edward explored? If the town and village of Fort Edward merged that would give us a better option altogether.	10/30/2019 7:43 AM
30	Eye opening. It is unfortunate that not everyone voicing opinions clearly haven't read it! Was surprised about the teacher salary comparison. Clearly driven by contracts but FE salaries was surprising!	10/30/2019 6:40 AM
31	I think this is a valid avenue we, as a community, need to pursue. With the continual rise in taxes, (school, village and town) we are one of the most expensive school districts to live in currently. If we continue down this road, my fear is that no one will be able to afford to live here and our school will be forced to close, sending our children to other districts. Some others have voiced the feeling that they feel our town will become a ghost town if the merger goes through. I see the opposite happening if we don't follow through with the merger.	10/29/2019 8:39 PM
32	Although the Pre-Merger Study was supposed to be educational and informative, I felt that the information presented from the Pre-Merger study was very persuasive and opinionated. They were selling their product which is the next step, a full Merge Study. The only thing that this Study confirmed/clarified for me is that the Merge would be an Annexation, not a Centralization.	10/29/2019 8:35 PM
33	I thing it presented a good opportunity for us to openly discuss the possibility of a merger and also made it evident that further information is required before we can make an informed decision about the options presented.	10/29/2019 8:02 PM
34	I don't know all of the information.	10/29/2019 7:33 PM
35	It seemed like a sales offering for a merger study. The glowing report does seem to push toward consolidation without telling the whole story. Very biased.	10/29/2019 2:59 PM
36	How will it effect our school taxes and property values?	10/29/2019 1:02 PM
37	Will our teachers lose their job?	10/28/2019 1:54 PM
38	The short term state money incentives are fine but this is not a short term decision. (We just had a short term economic incentive with the dredging facility. And here we are!) The long term academic and financial impacts are the most important factors.	10/28/2019 9:35 AM
39	Lots of people say "Merger means losing Identity" but aren't we already doing this with merging sports teams. What exactly is our identity these days?	10/28/2019 5:49 AM
40	Nothing is being shared as it would be in a merger. You lose this school, you lose s community!	10/27/2019 4:34 PM
41	No merger	10/24/2019 5:26 PM
42	none yet	10/24/2019 11:35 AM
43	I am not a fan! One of the main reasons I moved to FE is the small classes and intimate school setting. I came from SGF and the school is overcrowded and my daughter did not do well academically. There are so many kids the teachers don't have the time or ability to help!	10/23/2019 6:04 AM
44	Facts seem to speak for themselves	10/22/2019 7:59 PM
45	I think it was a much needed study and there was a lot of goof info found	10/22/2019 7:47 PM
46	Dont want to merge schools	10/22/2019 7:26 PM
47	It needs to be seriously looked at from every angle and I would hope that our local government would open their eyes and look around them. A stronger tax base has been needed for a long time!	10/22/2019 7:17 PM
48	I don't feel it is 100% correct.	10/22/2019 6:53 PM
49	I have several thoughts. The future of the current employees if the district. The loss of the identity of the Fort Edward School itself.	10/22/2019 6:49 PM

## Q4 What do you think of the possibility of Fort Edward merging with another school based upon the Pre-Merger Study?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 96

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I think it should not happen ....the bigger earners like superintendent should take pay cuts to help the school instead of this year putting up his salary by \$10,000	10/31/2019 9:46 PM
2	I think the drop out rate for kids transferring from a small school would go up	10/31/2019 9:38 PM
3	do it.	10/31/2019 7:44 PM
4	I believe it needs to happen. Our school taxes continually exceed the 2% cap. I see a merger as a way to keep up my property values.	10/31/2019 7:43 PM
5	DONT DO IT	10/31/2019 3:17 PM
6	Great	10/31/2019 1:29 PM
7	As a parent that had two very active children that spent their entire school years here in Fort Edward, I am strongly opposed to a merger with Hudson Falls or South Glens Falls. Those schools, in my opinion have a large school approach, which they need. Our current and short term future students would be lost in those schools. Animosity and prejudice would likely follow them for years as well. Centralization however, would take 3 or 4 schools and create one Central School as was done in Schuylerville and many others dozens of years ago. Argyle, Fort Edward, Hartford, and Fort Ann could possibly combine and in doing so, as uncomfortable as it may be, all would be facing the same struggles and triumphs, growing pains and create an identity of their own, sprung up from a new creation, not a forced integration of the big and the small. It would be new to all and it would grow as growth permits.	10/31/2019 12:28 PM
8	No. I moved to Fort Edward because of the small school, if we merge I will sell my house and leave. I went to Hudson Falls, I don't want my children going there or to South Glens Falls.	10/31/2019 12:20 PM
9	I think it would be a great idea. I understand what parents are concerned with about the children. I have wanted to look at this back when my children where in school. I think we owe it to the children to look at providing the best education possible.	10/31/2019 10:41 AM
10	I do not want my child going to south glens falls school or Hudson falls school. Fort Edward is a nice small school. You don't hear alot of bullying and the Teachers are great. Don't ruin a great thing.	10/31/2019 9:52 AM
11	I hope the chances are pretty high that Fort Edward will merge.	10/30/2019 11:53 PM
12	We moved our kids from Saratoga, to FE. A huge 180 improvement have a smaller school. He's was lost in a big school.	10/30/2019 10:13 PM
13	Absolutely not. We are an amazing district with amazing teachers - administrators - staff - coaches - students - parents - mothers - fathers - grandparents - etc. I have come from a large school district where my child struggled and was Lost. And once we came to Fort Edward... such amazing growth. He has become more confident, has overcome educational challenges.... and with a small district - everyone knows one another - the teachers care - you have more one to one - and my child has blossomed... and my littlest one started kindergarten here. I would absolutely be against a merging of schools!! I will not stand for loosing our school. The community will come together on this!	10/30/2019 10:03 PM
14	Foolish!	10/30/2019 9:20 PM
15	I believe the merger is inevitable if Fort Edward is to remain open.	10/30/2019 9:12 PM
16	IF our school should merge with another. I think it only make sense to stay within our own county.	10/30/2019 8:01 PM
17	The merger would allow average and above-average students to take more challenging classes and become part of a learning environment that focuses on high achievement, rather than simply "not failing." Average and above-average students would no longer be ignored. Also, fewer of these FE students would be forced to sit in classrooms with emotionally unstable and physically aggressive students. They would actually have an opportunity to learn in a stable, positive environment.	10/30/2019 7:54 PM
18	We do not want to see this happen as the smaller school is better for our grandchildren and we love all the teachers and school! If we have no choice but to merge would Rather merge with Hudson falls	10/30/2019 6:24 PM
19	Honestly, I think it is an awful idea. Money will fix things for some time, but you have to think about how the students will be affected in years to come.	10/30/2019 6:03 PM
20	Slim.	10/30/2019 4:49 PM
21	I'm all for giving our children better opportunities. For the amount of money FE teachers are paid, our kids should be getting a lot more.	10/30/2019 3:32 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

22	LONG OVER DUE ! GET THE MONEY WHILE IT'S THERE	10/30/2019 3:30 PM
23	I like the possibilities it will bring.	10/30/2019 3:26 PM
24	Don't have a problem with merging with another school district	10/30/2019 2:48 PM
25	Hate it.	10/30/2019 2:30 PM
26	Outlook good	10/30/2019 2:06 PM
27	If it is avoidable, I would prefer to remain as we are. The jump from the small population to 3000+ is a culture shock for some kids	10/30/2019 1:30 PM
28	That it needs to be explored to be able to fully understand the positive and negative impacts to ALL involved.	10/30/2019 1:08 PM
29	My overall thought if this does happen is to consider SGF over HF they have more to offer the FE students and less debt including Salaries. My concern around HF is the GE plant not clear on how that would impact the future school tax rates.	10/30/2019 1:02 PM
30	I think it would be devastating for the community.	10/30/2019 11:12 AM
31	I am ok with myriad getting more chances	10/30/2019 10:28 AM
32	I still don't think we should merge even based on the information from the study.	10/30/2019 9:50 AM
33	Don't like the idea.	10/30/2019 9:49 AM
34	DONT LIKE IT AT ALL	10/30/2019 8:43 AM
35	Sounds okay but need a lot more study done.	10/30/2019 8:26 AM
36	For it	10/30/2019 8:14 AM
37	For the kids, a merger would offer more opportunities for clubs, sports etc	10/30/2019 8:13 AM
38	I think it is a terrible idea. I have been a Fort Edward homeowner for 20 years and have 2 children that go to school in Fort Edward. I chose this area to buy a home mainly based on the school itself. I love have a k-12 small school district that my children fell safe in. My oldest child will graduate from Fort Edward this year and his Forts Pride runs deep. The teachers, faculty and community is very important to our children.	10/30/2019 7:43 AM
39	Based on the study things seem to point in favor of doing so. I am not in favor of a merger with either SGF or HF. However, it seems more and more likely that if things do not turn around that it will no longer be a choice. I think that a full merger study has to happen to really pin down options and maybe answer questions that the Pre-Merger study can't.	10/30/2019 6:40 AM
40	I think its a good idea. Unless the school board and administration can come up with a way to start saving the community money and not continue to raise taxes. But it would seem that they haven't been able to do that thus far.	10/29/2019 8:39 PM
41	I think that the possibility of Fort Edward merging through annexation with another school district is an awful concept/idea. I would beg of the FE BOE to wrap up the information from the community meeting and stop the discussion of annexation. Focus on rebuilding rapport, morale, and stability within our district and community. You have done your due diligence; wrap it up and move on.	10/29/2019 8:35 PM
42	The school board should vote to merge with another school. Hopefully Hudson Falls will take us. People of Fort Edward cant afford the taxes to run this school any longer	10/29/2019 8:11 PM
43	I think we need more thorough information before we can make a knowledgeable decision on any option.	10/29/2019 8:02 PM
44	I think that it would be great.	10/29/2019 7:37 PM
45	I'm not understanding the premise merger study.	10/29/2019 7:33 PM
46	Not good. It really didn't have anything that showed an up side to merger. A lot of maybe's and what if's.	10/29/2019 2:59 PM
47	I believe if it is in the best interest of the students and residents of the district then let it be completed.	10/29/2019 1:02 PM
48	I don't like it but I'm sure that doesn't matter.	10/28/2019 6:39 PM
49	Not sure	10/28/2019 1:54 PM

Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

50	There will always be some kids who thrive in small schools, some who thrive in large schools, and some who are fine either way. Neither option is inherently better or worse. This study is, of course, heavy on the numbers and statistics. Numbers should not be the only factor, but a reality to work within. Numbers wise, it seems like a merger with SGF is simplest. On the ground in practical life, an SGF merger does not make sense. We (FE residents) are already essentially part of the Hudson Falls community. Physically our towns bleed into each other. When I run to the pharmacy, or to grab some groceries, go to church, go to a diner, take a long walk and wave to my neighbors - that's all in the Hudson Falls district (and much of it Town of FE). Many of our children go to daycare in the HF district after school and vice versa. The biggest concern I have heard in any conversation about a potential merger is "community." Merging with HF would simply expand our community. Merging with SGF would mean more time with kids spent in the car or bus driving to and from school and activities and less kids and families interacting with their neighbors and generally being a part of daily life in the village. At this point, if there were a vote, I would be a hard no for merging with SGF and a yes to HF.	10/28/2019 9:35 AM
51	Based on the only "merger" vote I have followed (Abe Wing/Glens Falls) I don't think we should waste the money	10/28/2019 5:49 AM
52	I dont like the idea of the school merging with any other school. We moved to the village 3 years ago from out of state. Because my kids were doing so much better at Fort Edward school than they had done at any other school, we faught to find a place to rent in the village to keep them from having to go to another school. I will be extremely disappointed if the school merges and my kids are transferred. I feel like my kids, both having IEP's, will suffer if they are merged with either school. If I wanted my kids at Hudson falls or South Glens Falls, I would have moved to those area's. I think the village of Fort Edward will suffer if there merger takes place. People are going to move to be closer to the school leaving Fort Edward empty. I live walking distance from the school and my job. My kids are happy here and flourishing. A merger will impact them as well as other kids greatly. It is a great disappointment. Neither of my kids will attend either school that are options to merge with. I will move them to another small school that will give them what they need to do well. One of the big benefits of being part of a small school is that the student to teacher ratio allows for more one on one opportunities. Children with disabilities need that in order to succeed. I will not allow my children to be lost in the system. We worked toward for them to catch up for them to be dumped where their educational wellbeing is a second thought.	10/28/2019 5:47 AM
53	If it was an actual merger, and it is not, merging with South Glens Falls would be my first choice.	10/27/2019 4:34 PM
54	No absolutely not	10/24/2019 5:26 PM
55	do it. it's needed.	10/24/2019 11:35 AM
56	Not a fan! We need to come together as a community and figure out a payment plan to get back on track.	10/23/2019 6:04 AM
57	Seems like it is the best option for students and taxpayers as well.	10/22/2019 7:59 PM
58	I think at this point it is a necessity	10/22/2019 7:47 PM
59	I dont like it because then all my children will be in different schools as to being in one school and I have children in k-10th grade and my kids want to graduate in fort Edward	10/22/2019 7:26 PM
60	I think it's a strong possibility unless we see some revitalization in the village..more businesses	10/22/2019 7:17 PM
61	Absolutely horrible!	10/22/2019 6:53 PM
62	I am totally against this annexation.	10/22/2019 6:49 PM

## Q5 What do you feel are the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is not pursued?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 104

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Students would not survive either choice of schools due to fighting and bullying Hudson falls has 4 security officers and a police officer and still cant provide full safety for students or staff	10/31/2019 9:46 PM
2	They would still get the education planned even for a small school	10/31/2019 9:38 PM
3	Students are resilient and will adapt. I believe the school would continue to be used if merged with Hudson Falls, for the building suave snd good repair. I don't believe it would be cost effective for the SGF system to maintain use of the building. If merged with SGF, we will continue to have the divide of the Village vs. the Town, by perpetuating the separate schools. By merging with Hudson Falls, ALL Fort Edward students will finally be in 1 school district. I think it will lead to more cooperation and collaboration within the 2 blended communities. I also believe in the additional extra curricular activities and the additional course offerings a larger district can offer their students.	10/31/2019 7:43 PM
4	I think instead of a merger redraw district lines. Why are Whitehall busses coming through?	10/31/2019 3:17 PM
5	community is slowly shrinking and the kids will never know there full potential. A new school with more to offer is great !	10/31/2019 1:29 PM
6	I cannot see how we can survive alone, yet I would rather fail trying, than pursue a merger. As our population ages, myself included, and enrollment declines, we would be fools to think we can maintain status quo. Again, I prefer a centralization discussion.	10/31/2019 12:28 PM
7	I think we will survive if we don't merge	10/31/2019 12:20 PM
8	Short term continue as we are , as the enrollment goes down we will continue to have higher taxes and will need to cut more teachers and classes.	10/31/2019 10:41 AM
9	This town is out of money. In fact we owe people money. In the short term more athletics will be cut, we will have to merge with other teams. In the long term, the school will go under. There isn't enough that keeps it going. There aren't AP classes, students aren't challenged here, they need a bigger, better school.	10/30/2019 11:53 PM
10	The study starts rumors and some people are taking it the wrong way that FE is failing. We have hard working staff improving students everyday	10/30/2019 10:13 PM
11	I do not want a merging of schools. I would prefer to have the study STOPPED. Why? We have an amazing school!!! We live here... raise kids here... and so many people care. I am 100% confident in our small but mighty school... and would not want my children to attend anywhere else.	10/30/2019 10:03 PM
12	The students would feel a sense of relief knowing "their" school will remain. The community will be elated as a whole in the shot term and long term.	10/30/2019 9:20 PM
13	Less programs for students to participate, dwindling student population ,higher taxes,increased foreclosures and / longterm residents leaving the community and the potentiality of an empty building	10/30/2019 9:12 PM
14	On a personal level, perhaps fewer outsiders would bring up the term "merger" whenever I mention that I work at Fort Edward.	10/30/2019 7:54 PM
15	If the merger is not pursued a big long term affect would be the price of school taxes. If you want to live in Fort Edward I think one of the main reasons would be for the school. In your taxes you are getting what you pay for. Fort Edward is an awesome school will always put the students first, and all of the teachers make sure no one falls behind.	10/30/2019 6:03 PM
16	My child who attends Fort Edward will lose the individualized attention they currently receive. I chose to buy a house here for them to attend Fort Edward and not Hudson Falls based on the school rating. There is also more incidents of violence and crime at Hudson Falls school that are publicized that are not present, at least not at the level HF has it, at Fort Edward.	10/30/2019 4:50 PM
17	It goes away. With it's disappearance, the stress and uncertainty that it has generated vanishes.	10/30/2019 4:49 PM
18	Short term- taxes keep going up. Long term- we're forced by the state to merge with a school that doesn't want us or our kids.	10/30/2019 3:32 PM
19	Students will suffer, currently they have art, band, music and shop? Seriously, the students and tax payers get screwed. We go to Corinth to play football,really?? Shut it down and let the kids who want to play go to HF. Smart board members making intelligent decisions would be of great help. Retired tax payers are getting screwed. It's called a fixed income.	10/30/2019 3:30 PM
20	The class sizes will continue to decrease and taxes will continue to go up. Less and less will be offered to students in terms of classes and after school activities.	10/30/2019 3:26 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

21	I feel the students will have better opportunities merging with another school. There would be more to offer.	10/30/2019 2:48 PM
22	Taxes are fine the way they are.	10/30/2019 2:30 PM
23	Eventually, less population in fort Edward district, therefore less funding for quality education.	10/30/2019 2:06 PM
24	Taxes obviously are both a short and long term effect. We've got to find a way to afford to have our own school.	10/30/2019 1:30 PM
25	Potential cuts in student programs and activities to offset the reality of the large tax increases that are sure to happen. The cuts to programs can't happen.	10/30/2019 1:08 PM
26	Higher taxes, Student enrollment, ( I know that sports are a big part of this community and I understand how important it is for the students to be part of a team but honestly we have trouble providing enough students to support a team)	10/30/2019 1:02 PM
27	There is absolutely no way to know what harm this can do to the students, staff, and community as a whole. Both short tem and long term, this is ONLY about money, nothing else. That is a disgusting reason, and the ONLY reason this is even a discussion. You are telling people, students, a community that the most important thing is not their well-being, it is money.	10/30/2019 11:12 AM
28	my kid and me as taxpayer lose	10/30/2019 10:28 AM
29	I feel that there will be the higher taxes is we don't merge. I don't think there will be much effect on the children as they are used to a small school.	10/30/2019 9:50 AM
30	Taxes are skyrocketing! Enrollment will go down. Definitely need to extremely downsize, get rid of teachers, staff, classrooms, etc. other small schools do it.	10/30/2019 8:26 AM
31	Not fair to all parties	10/30/2019 8:14 AM
32	I think not doing a study leaves residents in the dark- people should have all the info before deciding for or against	10/30/2019 8:13 AM
33	Instead of a full merger study focusing on merging with another school I would much rather see Fort Edward come together and merge the town and village. The town and village was separated in the 1950's and we became a walking school district. I feel if we did a study on what it would look like to add buses to our district and bring back the people and businesses that are in the town of Fort Edward to our school district it would be better for our community.	10/30/2019 7:43 AM
34	There is no best solution to the current situation. My concern if a full study is not done and things continue to go south, that it is a missed opportunity and then the State will force some type of merger and the choice of with whom and when is taken out of the districts control. Morale is going to be an issue either way.	10/30/2019 6:40 AM
35	I see taxes continue to climb and I see a community that will become nonexistent because no one will be able to afford to live here.	10/29/2019 8:39 PM
36	A sense of security and stabilization will return to the school and community. Staff, students, and families will not feel like they have to "defend" their values/school. Everyone will be just fine. There will be people who are upset and will complain; you cannot please everybody.	10/29/2019 8:35 PM
37	if you dont merge, you will run this village into the ground. you cant get enough kids now to play football or baseball. you have to merge to play sports. kids make friends very easily and will have no problem merging with another school.	10/29/2019 8:11 PM
38	We do the community, students, and tax payers a disservice if we do not investigate our options further!	10/29/2019 8:02 PM
39	I'm not sure. Taxes would keep raising.	10/29/2019 7:33 PM
40	A bit of belt tightening for a couple of years. The administration must keep from wasting money on needless things including a second principal.	10/29/2019 2:59 PM
41	Nothing gained for anyone.	10/29/2019 1:02 PM
42	Not sure	10/28/2019 1:54 PM
43	Short term - All the work to get to the pre-merger study will be wasted. There will be grumbling. Long term - We will wonder what if? What if we should have merged and now it's too late? What if we want to do the study but now we have to start from scratch?	10/28/2019 9:35 AM
44	If we don't at least do the merger people will say we didn't do our due diligence. IT will just be another black mark on the already black marks that define the town	10/28/2019 5:49 AM
45	I believe going forward is a waste of money we don't have. Stop this nonsense!!	10/27/2019 4:34 PM
46	Taxes go up thats fine	10/24/2019 5:26 PM
47	higher taxes. students not getting a proper education.	10/24/2019 11:35 AM
48	Our children will stay strong and be raised in our small loving community.	10/23/2019 6:04 AM
49	Tax situation will get untenable soon for many home owners. WCC issue may never be resolved, local taxpayers will be stuck. May force many to Lea ave their hometown.	10/22/2019 7:59 PM
50	I think the community and students will both suffer financially and academically	10/22/2019 7:47 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

51	One of my children have already said if they have to switch schools they will not graduate	10/22/2019 7:26 PM
52	Taxes taxes and more taxes.	10/22/2019 7:17 PM
53	I feel the community will grow stronger if a full merger study is NOT persued!	10/22/2019 6:53 PM
54	As for the community I feel with the current tax situation will directly have a huge impact on community members.	10/22/2019 6:49 PM

## Q6 What do you feel are the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is pursued?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 101

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Fort Edward would suffer ...people move homes ..reduced chances for Fire Dept	10/31/2019 9:46 PM
2	More drop outs or people trying to home school	10/31/2019 9:38 PM
3	I believe the full study needs to happen! In the end it will be what is best for the community as a WHOLE. There may be teachers that seek out jobs elsewhere. But that is not necessarily a bad thing. Adults should not be talking about the merger in front of the children. Change is needed.	10/31/2019 7:43 PM
4	My child has had a major life shift and we just moved here, shes finally settling down and this will mess everything up again	10/31/2019 3:17 PM
5	Kids can experienced a more diverse education	10/31/2019 1:29 PM
6	If the merger study is pursued as opposed to other options, I feel that the environment surrounding the school, community and the surrounding communities may become quite hostile. The opposition from all sides will be very vocal in their resistance in my opinion.	10/31/2019 12:28 PM
7	Taxes increase, taxes are already high. If they keep climbing you will see people leave Fort Edward	10/31/2019 12:20 PM
8	I think looking at a merger doesn't hurt anything. I know it will cost money but it will be money well spent. I feel that we need to do this to look at everything. We can make a decision without all the information instead of all the gut reactions. Sometimes we need to make hard decisions. Our school is not in the job of providing a job for life to our teachers, we need to think about what is best for the children.	10/31/2019 10:41 AM
9	Short term, yes people will be mad because they love the town. They love the school. They love the teachers. BUT, the students will get a better quality school with a merger. Yes to the student to teacher ratio is worse, but there is better quality courses. There is better quality athletics. The school building themselves are so much nicer. The merger is a risk this town needs to take because this school cannot sustain!	10/30/2019 11:53 PM
10	Show that the size of the school doesn't make it better.	10/30/2019 10:13 PM
11	I would be absolutely opposed to a full merger study being pursued. I am 100% against the study and the thought of a merger. We are an amazing district, community, and place to live. Do not disrupt my children's childhood and livelihood... because some one "thinks" it's a good idea. Absolutely not. This is OUR home. Fort Edward all the way. Go FORTS.	10/30/2019 10:03 PM
12	Angry community members, loosing more residents, and staff the longer this is dragged on. This talk of a merger/annexation is a CANER to the school district and FE community.	10/30/2019 9:20 PM
13	Fear of the unknown. Until all logistics are put into place..some residents, I am ascertaining more so for teachers and students. The merger would provide students with a broader selection of academic programs,additional funding to the school and community. The school would continue to remain open for both students,faculty,and community. Note: children are very adaptable..I moved with my family 14 times prior to graduating (the last four years in highschool). I had 476 students in my graduating class and I was in the top 10%. I was able to take so many elective courses,had fabulous teachers ,made friends with a lot of wonderful people and it made me who I am today. Fabulous life experiences and memories. The residents of Fort Edward need to think longterm and outside the box.	10/30/2019 9:12 PM
14	Some students and faculty and staff members (myself included) would have hope for potentially joining a more rigorous academic program and a safer, more productive learning environment.	10/30/2019 7:54 PM
15	If the merger is pursued the long and short term affects would be everyone employed by the school will have to find new jobs which isn't always easy. Also, students will go through such a culture shock during this merge and there is a good chance they will get lost in the system.	10/30/2019 6:03 PM
16	Less opportunity for scholarships with a larger school, less help if a student needs help, I do not see how a merger would benefit the students from Fort Edward at all.	10/30/2019 4:50 PM
17	More stress. The potential loss of jobs. The potential loss of residents who don't want to risk an annexation.	10/30/2019 4:49 PM
18	The only effect of a merger study is gaining information.	10/30/2019 3:32 PM
19	More opportunities for the students. Tax payer relief. They'll never go down, but won't increase like a California fire?	10/30/2019 3:30 PM
20	The students will have more opportunities for classes and after school programs. Fort Edward does not offer as may opportunities.	10/30/2019 3:26 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

21	This merger will not only give more opportunities for students but it will also help with the taxes that people can't continue to pay.	10/30/2019 2:48 PM
22	Bad for kids. The parents in the other towns spew hate on social media about our town. We don't need that.	10/30/2019 2:30 PM
23	Continued better educational advancements and after school opportunities for enrichment.	10/30/2019 2:06 PM
24	A lack of community. From a elementary standpoint, those kids wont see the immediate effects, but the jump to middle and high school, I'd prefer to maintain that tight knit community.	10/30/2019 1:30 PM
25	Depends on the outcome of the study.	10/30/2019 1:08 PM
26	The loss of the school would create a hole in FE but if we replace it with something community-centered like a community center or something like that I think that would be a positive for the kids and their families we cannot just have another vacant space/building. Long term I think that with the offerings of the other districts our students will have more opportunities available to them that we simply cannot support now.	10/30/2019 1:02 PM
27	I feel like the climate of a school and community that is under duress is extremely unhealthy for all involved. By completing a study, it is saying this is an option-by making the annexation seem like an option, you are making every single person experience a HUGE amount of stress about their lives and the fate of the community.	10/30/2019 11:12 AM
28	nothing	10/30/2019 10:28 AM
29	I feel that it may upset people in the community that don't want to see the merge happen.	10/30/2019 9:50 AM
30	A small sense of community would be lost.	10/30/2019 9:49 AM
31	FE is a small family community, we are all one! Smaller classes are beneficial, we CHOSE to buy our home here for the smaller school/community. With a merger, FE will become NON EXISTANT and that breaks many hearts.	10/30/2019 8:43 AM
32	Of course, lose identity, long bus rides, children will feel like outsiders and will be treated as such. Morale will go down.	10/30/2019 8:26 AM
33	Nothing to lose	10/30/2019 8:14 AM
34	I'm not sure there's a downside	10/30/2019 8:13 AM
35	I feel if the merger with another school goes forward Fort Edward as a community will cease to exist. I feel many people are being mislead into thinking a merger will lower taxes when in fact taxes will raise. Our property values will go down if we no longer have our school. The sense of community and Forts Pride will disappear and that in itself is a tragedy. My youngest child has a learning disability and I feel in a larger school he will not get the help he needs and will get swept under the rug. The teachers here at Fort Edward all know me and my children and have always worked with me 100% to do what is best for my child and I feel like at another school we will not get that treatment.	10/30/2019 7:43 AM
36	Concern for how teachers are going to conduct themselves in the presence of the students. I understand their job is at risk but fear that negative will breed in the classroom. It would be something to consider putting out clear facts in newsletters, publications, whatever can be done so the community is basing their decisions on facts and not other peoples opinions. DO THE STUDY!	10/30/2019 6:40 AM
37	I think we will see a more affordable tax bill which in turn might actually attract a more diverse group of homeowners, small businesses and industry.	10/29/2019 8:39 PM
38	-Continued lack of security, stabilization, and morale among staff, students, families, and community members. -Continued stress and arguments among community members because everyone now feels that is necessary to voice their opinion on this topic. It is getting old, and the uncertainty about "what's next" creates angst and stress. -If the conversations continue, we will probably put our house on the market and attempt to sell because I feel like we are hamsters on a wheel. I want to get off the wheel. If things continue to progress even further than conversations, we will definitely put our house on the market because we REFUSE to have our child attend a large school district.	10/29/2019 8:35 PM
39	the kids will have more of a chance to grow with more opportunities with a bigger and better school.	10/29/2019 8:11 PM
40	Short term, we will be better able to make an informed decision about the future of the Fort Edward school. Long term, hopefully the students and community will benefit from whatever decision is made based on the outcome of the merger study. Students will be provided with the best educational opportunities at the most economical costs to the community.	10/29/2019 8:02 PM
41	I feel with the small community it would all be lost. If the school merges I feel everything else will follow with time. Then fort edward wont be a small town anymore. Or what it once was.	10/29/2019 7:33 PM
42	A loss of school community. Students will feel as though they are expendable. The community in general will lose heart and not support the school which is the village center.	10/29/2019 2:59 PM
43	Students I'm sure would have more advantages. As for the school and community I'm not sure.	10/29/2019 1:02 PM
44	I feel the FE students will be swallowed up by the other districts & they will always be considered second in all things.	10/28/2019 6:39 PM
45	I really don't want to lose our school	10/28/2019 1:54 PM

## Fort Edward Pre-Merger Study Survey

46	Short term - It's a step forward through this limbo. No matter what we learn, it can help the school focus on education instead of answering worried "what's this about a merger?" questions. There will be grumbling. Long term - It's the responsible thing to do. We need to look at all angles and see what the reality is for FE's future. It will help voters decide - is keeping a small school for the sake of a small school worth higher taxes? And maybe it is! But we can't make that decision based on the fact that we parents are comfortable with our little school, or used to it, or played an FE sport years ago, or are a little scared of figuring out drop off and pick up at a bigger school. If a merger DOES happen, we can go forward knowing we studied the options well and made a thoughtful decision. If a merger does NOT happen, we can go forward knowing we studied the options well and made a thoughtful decision.	10/28/2019 9:35 AM
47	At least doing the study makes it possible to make a fully informed decision on what is best for children of the district as well as our elderly tax payers.	10/28/2019 5:49 AM
48	Houses being sold and kids losing their identity of their own school.	10/27/2019 4:34 PM
49	Division in the community. Waste of money.	10/24/2019 5:26 PM
50	students will be better educated. we may finally rid the district of the stagnant mode we are in.	10/24/2019 11:35 AM
51	HORRIBLE... grades will drop students will get lost to the system and become just a number! I experienced SGF and it's horrible... we will leave FE and move to Argyle if this happens!!!	10/23/2019 6:04 AM
52	Increased program and athletic possibilities for students and much needed tax relief for homeowners.	10/22/2019 7:59 PM
53	I think the students will have better opportunities and the community will not be bogged down with a never ending tax increase	10/22/2019 7:47 PM
54	I would have to move to a place closer to the school my kids would attend and drive farther to get my children to different schools	10/22/2019 7:26 PM
55	Education cutbacks if the school has to cut jobs and a ghost town because people will leave. The school is the heart of the community	10/22/2019 7:17 PM
56	I feel we will lose our community! We will lose our identity and down the road we will lose more than our school! We will lose so much more!	10/22/2019 6:53 PM
57	I fear that is will be pushed upon the community as a good thing. Without knowing the full impact.	10/22/2019 6:49 PM

## FEUFSD Community Forum Question Summary

### 1. What questions do you have about the information in the Pre-Merger Study?

- Does the county matter? We are part of Washington County as is Hudson Falls. Why are we entertaining SGF?
- I think it would be nice to reunite the town kids. They have been separated.
- State could force a merger or closure and we would have an empty building. What would cause that?
- Didn't read
- Confusion between annex and merger.
- Confusion on how it works.
- Tuition?
- Absorption?
- Employees would lose their job; clarification?
- Not many details
- Didn't look at the tax base in Hudson Falls and GE torn down and the amount the property is assessed for
- Difference between merger and an annexation (what's the difference?)
- What is the equalization rate between Hudson Falls and Fort Edward employees (can Fort Edward take less than the Hudson Falls/split the difference so they can keep their jobs?)
- Why not merge with SG Falls instead (more opportunities)?
- What happens to the Fort Edward School if the districts merge?
- What services would be offered to students with special needs? How would they be accommodated?
- Concerned about the tax bill bottom line of what you have to pay the school.
- Worried about assessment and or have a re-assessment.
- Merger for sports and not for this, this is an annexation.
- What type of control will Fort Edward have over anything?
- Will Fort Edward residents be able to run for the school board?
- Can the district that takes us change their mind? What happens to us? Can we change our mind?
- If the district does a merger is it a true merger or an acquisition or an annexation? Do not want to see teachers lose jobs, etc.
- Have any of the schools we have done the study with shown an interest?
- Question is why does it have to be Hudson Falls or South Glens Falls? Why can't it be a different district?
- Why can't we get the town back beyond just the village?
- Was Moreau Elementary School considered as one of the highest ratings?
- What would this school and the campus be used as?
- Obviously an economic decision, want to see the statistics on the success of students in the districts we are looking at and what does it take to get there?
- Where did this originate? How did it come about?
- Pre-merger has been discussed for years. What is the pressing issue now?
- Why was transportation overlooked as an issue?
- Where is the student feedback? Particularly from the older students?
- How would a merger work with a school in a different county?
- What was the cost of the pre-merger?
- How much would the full merger study cost?
- Who makes the final decision to annex?

## FEUFSD Community Forum Question Summary

- How were the people who did the pre-merger study paid? Specifically, the people presenting, do they get any incentives?
- What happens to our teachers?
- Why aren't we taking this money and applying it to our debt?
- How does the one time lump sum payment affect taxes in subsequent years?
- Don't know what it said.
- Is it about a merger or annexation?
- What happens to our teachers if a merger happens?
- What happens to our buildings?
- Do we have a choice about which other district we'd merge with?
- If there's another study would it be a different company running it?

### 2. What thoughts do you have about the information in the Pre-Merger Study?

- I thought it was interesting to see the difference between the three districts. What particularly stood out is the salaries of the FE teachers compared to the two largest districts.
- I wasn't overly wowed by the information that was presented about the two other districts. I don't see a benefit.
- I remember seeing something about what sports would be offered. I think what would be forgotten is that they wouldn't have quality playing time.
- There could be modified programs.
- The students may not be included in the more competitive sport teams.
- Being involved with activities is good for the community. We're successful in sports because we have an inclusive program.
- Why couldn't the kids that live in the town have the choice between HF and FE?
- There needs to be definition on annex, merger and tutoring. There needs to be a full description of what each of those terms mean.
- What happens if we decide on none of those 3 options?
- How much time would kids be spending on the bus? How would transportation details impact kids?
- Lots of emphasis placed on the teachers, but there needs to be more conversations about the support staff. There are a lot of staff employed by the district that are not teachers. What about them?
- If merger happens, elementary school should remain here in town
- How will facility resources be allocated? Not clear from study.
- How will staff resources be allocated?
- Information seems too positive.
- If we stayed status quo what would the tax rate be over the course of the next few years?
- How is the state's money going to be divided up?
- What about 5 or 10 years down the road and what happens then when the money runs out?
- Has anyone done a study to have South Glens Falls coming here? Or, Hudson Falls?
- Enrollment continues to decline?
- Wanted district to look at merger in the 90's because there were so many classes not available to students.
- We need to get as much information as we can to make a decision.
- Felt the study focused more on athletics and not academic scores and success. Concern about below average ratings of schools for drawing new residents.

## FEUFSD Community Forum Question Summary

- Is there something we can do to develop the weaknesses so we do not have to merge?
- How are the tax rates going to be determined?
- Will the village of Fort Edward have seats on the Board of Education?
- It was presented in a manner that was pro-merger, not neutral.
- It seemed to be swayed toward merger.
- It seems to be less of a merger, more of a change toward Ft Edward not existing.
- There were no alternatives presented in the pre-merger study. No alternatives to the proposal.
- The presenter only presented a snippet of information, that would lead you toward doing a full merger study.
- The pre-merger study is incomplete and not helpful.
- What was the basis of the finding that Ft Edward students would benefit academically from a merger? Where did this information come from?
- Larger districts offer more sports? That is not necessarily true. Overall it's pretty much the same.
- Neglected to address the benefit of smaller class size.
- Two folks overstepped the boundary of educating and explaining the pre-merger study during the presentation.
- The word merge is extremely misleading, what we're talking about is an annexation. When we discuss, we need to call it what it is, a takeover of our district.
- Looks better if we go to SGF because the salaries are comparable.
- Very against merging with SGF.
- I don't see how it's going to benefit our students.
- Not a fan of the South Glens Falls School District; high suicide rate and bullying.
- Hudson Falls has a lot of incidents of bullying.
- Feel my kids will succeed everywhere, but drugs are rampant in other districts; I know everyone here and everyone knows my kids.
- High student/teacher ratio in other districts.
- Police presence in other districts indicates presence of violence.
- Will rate of tax default be less or more?
- Is there a way to find out how many taxpayers have defaulted on their payments? Is this a significant factor?
- If there is a merger, will taxes be consistently higher?
- Feel that town of Ft. Edward students should go to Ft. Edward School (not to Hudson Falls).
- How will teachers be affected if there is a merger?
- It was a one-sided sales pitch.
- It seemed biased.
- Only presented what the other schools had to offer, not the positives Ft Edward offers.

### 3. What do you think of the possibility of Fort Edward merging with another school based upon the Pre-Merger Study?

- Not every district can be big.
- The study indicates that we have to do something.
- We pay higher taxes.
- I can't afford to pay higher taxes for sentimentality. I love the school, but I can't afford it.
- I've been to big schools and little schools, for me, having a larger curriculum exposed me to more.

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- Hudson Falls would be good for transportation, but SG Falls has a lot more resources.
- How would the impact vary on staff retaining positions based on what school FE merges with?
- How much staff could be retained at HF vs. SGF
- How will seniority play into staff retention?
- Need to see numbers of class sizes based on the district we merge with.
- Hudson Falls originally refused to put up the money for a pre-merger study. Does that mean they don't want us there?
- How will our school taxes be influenced based on each merger option per district?
- How will we identify if the merging district will receive us kindly?
- Think it is going to have to happen.
- Think it is going to ghost the town.
- Other options should be looked at.
- Look at the student's lives in the other schools, pregnancy rates, suicide rate, bullying rate and violence.
- How are students receiving support they need, is it available to all students?
- Will class sizes increase? Will there be extra hiring to accommodate the students?
- Many did not read the study to be able to answer.
- Based on the pre-merger study, some would be in support of it, but the economic impact needs to be considered.
- Do not want students to miss out on opportunities. And, is Fort Edward School District providing the greatest opportunity for our students?
- We pay taxes for students to get a good education.
- It needs to be proven that sending our students elsewhere will be better for them.
- Bad idea to merge. The students will go into a huge culture shock.
- Not in agreement. This is home to many students and families. There is bullying and other issues that occur in bigger schools, that don't occur here. People will end up moving out of the district. Merging will destroy memories that families have built in the district. Lots of parents and students will be angry.
- The study focused on money and the benefits rather than taking the students into consideration. Fort Edward is always about the students.
- Ft Edward is much more personal. The special education program is a benefit.
- Strongly oppose. Generations have gone to school here. Moved here/specifically moved back here because of the school and community. The teachers know the kids and families. Students and families are not a number here.
- Other schools struggle with suicide, bullying.
- If the school closes, why would anyone move to Ft Edward?
- Students will have a longer bus ride.
- Students won't be able to walk home from school. Safety and a sense of security becomes an issue.
- We will lose a sense of security.
- Ft Edward is a family. We all know each other. If we move to S. Glens Falls, we will lose that.
- This merger will destroy a town that is a family.
- Some of our students will be miserable at a bigger school.
- Students knowing each other and going to school together for multiple years is a huge benefit. Everyone is nice to each other.
- Bullying is a huge concern.
- Students should have a say, should be able to be heard.
- Against the merger. Ft Edward has always been a small, blue collar, poor town. A lot of us moved back here because of that. We have provided a very sound education for all students, even on small budgets. It's not new that Ft Edward is poor. Why is this an issue all of a

## FEUFSD Community Forum Question Summary

sudden? We can still make budgets being poor, it's never been an issue, we've always made due by being creative.

- There will be an increase in tax assessments, our financial situation will be better.
- Concerns with SGF
- Like that we live in the same town as our teachers.
- We want our students to attend a small school, that's why we're here at FE.
- Our students have more opportunities in sports at FE than they would at a larger district.
- Would like our students to have more AP course opportunities as they get older.
- FE feels like a private school education and that's a plus.
- Children wouldn't make the sports teams at a larger school.
- Concerned with our students being treated badly at a larger school.
- Very highly concerned with bullying.
- Already hearing students in other districts saying "we don't want those FE scumbags coming here".
- Would be a culture shock for our students.
- Our children will be looked over.
- Everything in other districts is already instilled - very little chance of our students getting in.
- Competing with 300 students to be top of the class.
- Very unsettling to our lives - parents want stability for their children and their home values.
- Staff at FE are trusted.
- We want school and community first and we are willing to pay the taxes for it.
- FE is ranked pretty high in the state, so if we merge with another school, that school could be ranked lower than us, and we would take education away from our kids.
- Think a merger would be very stressful for students to go into a larger building, school, classroom, where existing students already have negative thoughts toward them.
- The Pre-merger study had a lot to do with sports and it shouldn't be a factor in education; sports should be secondary to academics
- I want my kids to graduate from the same school I attended.
- This is the only place my kids feel comfortable.
- Ask the question: How many people will sell their homes because of the merger?
- Concerns about properties being for sale or people just walking away from them if there is a merger. Many people like their small town and small town school.
- Proud of the opportunities this school provides.
- This school fights for students.
- Concern that another district won't have the classrooms or supports for children with special needs.
- Can they use the Ft. Edward school as an elementary school?
- Concern that Ft. Edward students wouldn't have the same sports opportunities if there is a merger; students might shut down and feel less connected to school overall.
- Students were told they couldn't attend tonight's meeting, that their opinion didn't count in this forum.
- What happens to our students? How will the other schools accommodate them? Fit them in?
- If a merger, we retain some identity as a district. However, if it's an "annexation", we cease to exist and are taken over.
- Will Ft Edward have seat(s) on the BOE of a merged district?

## FEUFSD Community Forum Question Summary

4. What do you feel are the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is not pursued?

- More funds to educating our children.
- We don't want an empty building.
- What happens to the kids who don't graduate?
- We have a huge rental population.
- In a bigger district there are more choices for classes. There aren't many opportunities for HS students here.
- Afraid we will lose good teachers. People feel unsettled. Some people could lose their jobs because we can't afford to not merge.
- Taxes will be insane. They are already crazy.
- Quality of education. We would have to cut classes and opportunities. They are already minimal. Can't afford to suffer anymore.
- Special Education students will be negatively impacted. Not enough resources to care for them.
- Watering site deficit- not merging will negatively impact us. We would be in a world of trouble beyond what we are facing right now.
- Not doing a service to ourselves and community if we do nothing about this. Something needs to be done. We can't keep doing the same thing and expecting different results.
- School will evaporate itself because the money will dry up based upon the population.
- Are there plans for more business to come into the town?
- Village is 3 square miles there is no room to have new business move in.
- Waiting list for Pre K in other districts, but, not here. Which is a positive.
- Does this become a forced merger if it is voted down? And, does the district gets 0 dollars at that point?
- Is this an all or nothing, or is there an option to keep the elementary school here?
- What will the transition for students look like?
- Currently have small class sizes that benefit students.
- Are we preparing students for experiences in larger world settings?
- It is very competitive in work, higher education, etc. Are we preparing students for that?
- Long-term: In a smaller school, students can get over-nurtured.
- The detailed study is needed to be better informed.
- What would be the cost of a full-merger study?
- Short-term: not much difference on any of the stakeholders.
- Long-term: potential economic changes.
- Students will drop out or fail, grades will suffer.
- It's easy to lose kids in a larger school, rather than here where there is a small community.
- Students will become just a number.
- Ft Edward is able to give extra attention to students who need it. Teachers work hard to make sure that students make it and graduate. A large part of that is the connection with the families and each individual student.
- Students feel comfortable opening up because we're so close knit.
- Concerned about this community if this school is not here.
- We know the teachers and the teachers know our students.
- Our children are afraid of the merger.
- We need to figure out a long-term resolution to grow our community instead of shutting it down.
- Taking the merger off the table would ease the anxiety of the students, community and staff.
- Taking the merger off the table would give everyone a sense of security.

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- Merger is creating the great divide.
- Looking for stabilization so we can find other ways of working together to make things better
- Long-term effect...what if taxes keep going up and up...brutal cuts will have to be made...students won't receive any extracurricular.
- Biggest long-term impact will be salaries and benefits of staff, especially if the state stops giving us money.
- A lot of financial things that won't end quickly.
- Bond to pay back the county.
- Can understand why the Board is looking at this, the Board is in a terrible position.
- Worried about Irving grieving their assessment in the future, an asset could become a liability.
- Financially it's not going to be easy, and it's already hard.
- We know it's going to be a struggle, but we know we're going to keep our town and our school.
- We could be spending our energy elsewhere, such as business development.
- If there is no full merger study, "Ft. Edward stays Ft. Edward"; the group supports things staying in the same school, as is.
- There are plenty of smaller schools that are able to stay K-12; Ft. Edward has more businesses coming in.
- This was not in the report as an option.
- Keep smaller classes so kids don't fall between the cracks.
- Keep sense of small community, good connections, personal relationships between students and teachers.
- Our teachers know our students' individual needs.
- We are a walking district and would get to stay that way, kids can easily get to school and are more likely to attend if it's close and they can walk.

5. What do you feel are the potential short and long-term effects on the students, school, and community if a full merger study is pursued?

- Both communities will have to vote on this.
- I don't know how it would work? Logistics. Would they accept us?
- What's going to be best for everyone long term?
- What are the additional offerings?
- What is the cost to Fort Edward and who will assume responsibility for payment?
- Has either district said they are willing to participate in a full merger study?
- What will the response be of the receiving district? How will that community be impacted (taxes, education, enrichment)?
- Residents will be asking themselves if this is more about opportunities for kids or if it's about reduced taxes.
- Families would be disappointed about losing the small community feel and intimacy of a small community.
- What will the transition for students look like?
- If this is not about the students, we should not be here.
- More opportunities for students who are going out into the world.
- Short term effect very emotional.
- There will always be positive and negatives.
- More competition for students.

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- Families who want a small district will move out and go to surrounding towns.
- Families will move out due to higher expense.
- Long-term: morale of students and teachers may decline.
- Long-term: need to have the detailed information from the study to make an informed decision.
- Consider how other districts are configured-neighborhood or centralized.
- Other schools don't have the community piece.
- Other schools don't have the same accessibility of teachers to the families.
- Communities will be left with increases in taxes over the long run.
- Huge debt that we would be taking on if we merged.
- Hudson Falls school is in fiscal stress. They have barely more money than we have in their reserve account. That is a very bad place to be.
- Stress on the kids. Unnecessary stress on the kids.
- We have similar problems to other schools (drugs, bullying, etc.), but our administrators can deal with it because we're such a small school. We can deal with those issues immediately, notice it faster, see the changes in students immediately so they don't slip through the cracks.
- The parents, students will lose the connection with the administrators. In Ft Edward we are able to make connections with the administrators.
- Bigger schools, bigger problems. Smaller schools, smaller problems.
- Continue the division and stress.
- Even if people were to try to sell their homes, who's going to buy it?
- It could make other village entities, like FE Police, easier to cut.
- Don't see a merger leading to growth in FE - no one is going to move into the district, no one is going to apply for jobs here.
- Lack of stabilization.
- We're worried as homeowners about the most basic, and biggest investment we make in the school district. The hit we would take as homeowners would be enormous. And to have to send their children to schools where they didn't sign up for them to go or want them to go or move into that community.
- There won't be a Ft. Edward community; it will disappear, become a ghost town.
- The students lose out.
- Fear we would lose sense of community
- The school is a hub for the community to gather. Losing it hurts the community.
- Fear our students would not get the same individualized attention.
- Concerned students would get lost in larger classes.
- As a property owner, concerned losing our school will negatively impact our property values. Good school helps our property values.
- Kids will need to ride busses, which means getting kids up and out much earlier. How long will our children be on busses?
- Concern about more kids dropping out if they have to ride busses/have a longer day/not feel the connection to their own school.
- May have more choices of activities, but will opportunities be limited by competition for spots? E.g. if kids get cut from teams, etc.
- Some parents don't have cars, so if their children are further away and need a ride it's a challenge.
- How late might students get home after extracurricular activities, plus then a bus ride?
- Concern about the size of the other 2 districts, feel there's a more "open" campus.
- Concern about bullying, suicide, depression issues that have been in the news regarding the other districts. There's a feeling that bullying is not addressed as quickly as it would be in Fort Edward's smaller environment.

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### 6. Other Comments or Questions

- I like the small school.
- I moved back to the district because of the schools.
- The other schools have a bullying problem.
- My child is known in the district.
- I will move if we merge with SGF.
- It was stated at the beginning that the tax benefit will only last for so long. How long?
- It is important to have schools of different sizes.
- We see the value of the school. Can we afford it?
- Is it even a reality that the state could close the school?
- How many schools have successfully merged?
- Having all the students from the village and town going to school together would be uniting and brought together.
- It didn't hurt me to have a community school and then go down the road to the high school.
- There are community wide things happening now that exclude students because they go to another high school.
- Hudson Falls makes more sense since they surround us already.
- Mailing addresses and school districts don't match.
- I think SGF would make more sense because they have the community elementary schools. They are already at full capacity in their buildings. SGF would let us keep our elementary. They have more resources for Jr. and Senior high.
- I can see Hudson Falls turning this building into their intermediate building.
- No one has anything positive to say about SGF except Marathon.
- I believe that for HS the additional program offerings is really important. The other two districts are similar in what they offer.
- What about the tuitioning out of our students? How would the aide go for that?
- Ultimately, I think we have to merge.
- I can tell you that the HF music programs are stronger than at SGF.
- Community aspect, fiscal aspect, student aspect....Three facets
- I would really like it stated in a way to kids that it is just a study. They don't get it and they're scared.
- Glad to go forward with a full study so that we can see the facts associated with a merger. People feel like they need more information to make an informed decision.
- How long would the full merger study take from start to finish?
- The feeling is that the districts have already made a decision and now they need to proceed with studies and supply information so that the residents will get on board.
- It's all about the kids and they need to be in the best school. That is number one.
- How will the community get the information from tonight? When can they expect to receive the information?
- Group thankful that the BOCES employees facilitated the meeting. Neutral participation.
- What happens to this building?
- How long will the whole process take from start to finish?
- How will this work if the schools are in two counties?
- What will the impact be to taxpayers?
- Concerns about the Transition for students if a merger is decided.
- What will happen to the property?
- Has anyone obtained feedback from the students? Where is their voice?

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- What is the difference between the education here and in So. Glens Falls? Will students be held back or impacted negatively?
- Residents should be told that they will still need to pay school taxes.
- Presentation in 2012 at Ithaca HS by the Central NY School Boards Association, Rick Tims, showed that mergers don't end well. You can't spend money to get better test scores. There are problems with all mergers.
- Has changing the school district lines been explored? The students in the south side of town used to attend Ft Edward, now they attend Hudson Falls. District map needs to be re-drawn.
- Can we stop talking about it? At what point can we just make a decision to not merge, and move on? The discussion has negative implications on the students.
- Can politicians in the town be forced to assist? The village and town planning boards, etc, need to focus on putting businesses in Ft Edward. They need to be pro-business to attract people to come here. Downtown area?
- As a community, we need to be more creative to drive more tax base.
- Number of kids coming out for youth sports is sad, wondering if the level of participation is result of talk of merger - are we still going to have a school to play for?
- Would like more transparency about the process - is this #2 of 10 steps??
- Can BOE Meetings be streamed or FB live?
- The biggest piece is the sense of connection and community in a small school that cannot be manufactured in a large school, and there is power and value in that.
- FE really is a wonderful place to live.
- How do the Board of Education and superintendent feel about this merger?
- What are the costs to tuition Ft. Edward students out; wouldn't it be easier to keep them here and pay that money here?
- There is no reason for us to merge except with our own town.
- The Post Star said that many parents whose children attended other school districts moved to Ft. Edwards because they didn't feel their students were safe (bullied daily).
- Concerned that children used to the smaller class sizes at Ft. Edward will slip through the cracks if they go to a larger district with bigger class sizes.
- I have the cell phone numbers of Ft. Edward teachers and administrators and I don't think I would have that connection in a larger school.
- Students won't have the same opportunities sports-wise if Ft. Edward merges.
- Other schools already send their special needs students to Ft. Edward because their districts don't have services for them.
- Is this a merger or an annexation?
- Would prefer my tax dollars to go to my local school, not a merged district.
- Our school budget passes every year, so there's support for the school, why merge?
- How much would a full merger study cost the district?
- Concerned about what they've heard about the other 2 districts Fort Edward has the choice to merge with.
- What is the timeline of next steps?