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High school plan merits support

Impressive.

In a word, that describes the plan for the new Bloomfield Hills High School, which was laid out by the Fielding Nair International consulting firm Tuesday at the special school board meeting.

The new building incorporates many innovative concepts and designs that reflect the most progressive educational concepts while providing the right place and way to preserve the fundamentals.

It's evident that a great deal of thought has gone into this design, not only on the part of Fielding Nair, but also from the community. Dozens of meetings have been held in the past year to gather input from the community on what the people want and expect in the new high school.

The price presented — \$65 million — is reasonable, in fact, notable considering the elements this building will incorporate.

Fielding Nair, the school board and administration and the people of the district all deserve to be commended for progressing this far and accomplishing this much.

These words, of course, are pure heresy to some district residents who adamantly oppose the new high school plan. They have made their case and even have gone so far as to call for the recall of the entire school board for supporting the one high school plan.

The best we can say is that they are wrong. There is a stark reality that the Bloomfield Hills School District can no longer support two high schools. Yes, there has been a slight spike in enrollment, but that is a temporary blip caused by declining property values, which are making houses more affordable in the district and luring some people from neighboring communities to move in. But that won't last, and the trend of young families moving out of the state continues.

The district is quite right in recognizing that it must align itself for the future in a realistic manner. This building is realistic — and it is exactly what the district needs to educate students in the 21st century.

For years Andover and Lahser high schools have served the district well but that time has passed. Go to neighboring school districts and see what outstanding facilities they have.

The Bloomfield Hills Schools need to be on that level. This high school proposal is a worthy plan that deserves support across the community.