

September/October 2018 Online Survey Results

Introduction

In July 2018, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage) invited stakeholders to attend Public Information Sessions to review 7 theme-based scenarios addressing BCPS high school utilization and capacity relief over the next 10 years. Public comment, e-mails, and an online survey gathered feedback regarding these scenarios and strategies to address growing enrollment at high schools in Baltimore County as part of a systemwide high school capacity study. Based on this feedback, Scenarios A, B, and C were developed to reflect the sentiments and priorities expressed. Also, at the direction of the BCPS Interim Superintendent, the new scenarios included consideration of facility condition. These new scenarios were presented at a second round of Public Information Sessions in September/October 2018 for further comment and a second online survey was conducted.

Scenarios A, B, and C are relatively similar in terms of cost (ranging from \$590 million to \$628 million), the amount of new capacity added, and the number of students who would potentially and prospectively be relocated. Respondents were asked about their favorable or negative views regarding each of these three scenarios. What follows is an assessment of stakeholder feedback captured by the study team and innumerable volunteers who helped to record stakeholder impressions.

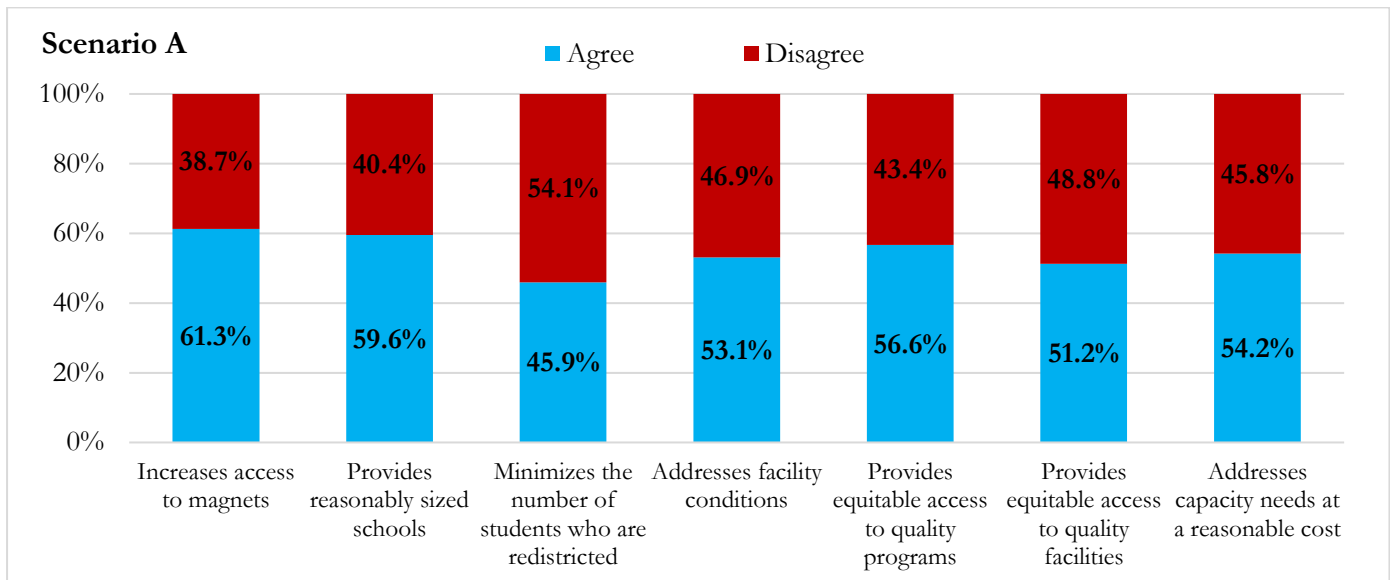
Findings

The exhibit below provides summary detail regarding the volume of (second) survey responses. In total, approximately 6,291 people responded to the latter survey, or nearly double the number responding to a similarly-structured July 2018 survey (3,352). The exhibit below reflects the fact that the Central region was responsible for nearly half of (second) survey responses.

Region	Responses	% of Total
Central	2,927	46.5%
Northeast	929	14.8%
Northwest	399	6.3%
Southeast	359	5.7%
Southwest	1,647	26.2%
Other	30	0.5%
Total	6,291	100.0%

Opinions Regarding Scenario A

Scenario A prioritizes magnet programs by increasing capacity at magnet schools and improving the conditions of magnet facilities. This scenario is associated with both the lowest capital costs and the most capital projects. Most stakeholders found this proposed set of solutions to be appealing with one glaring exception – it fails to minimize the number of students who are susceptible to relocation.



Agree = “Agree” + “Strongly Agree”

Disagree = “Disagree” + “Strongly Disagree”

Regional Variations

Views regarding Scenario A differ widely by region. Only one in three respondents from the Northeast felt that this Scenario expands access to magnets. By contrast, nearly 84 percent of respondents from the Southwest felt that Scenario A expands access to magnets.

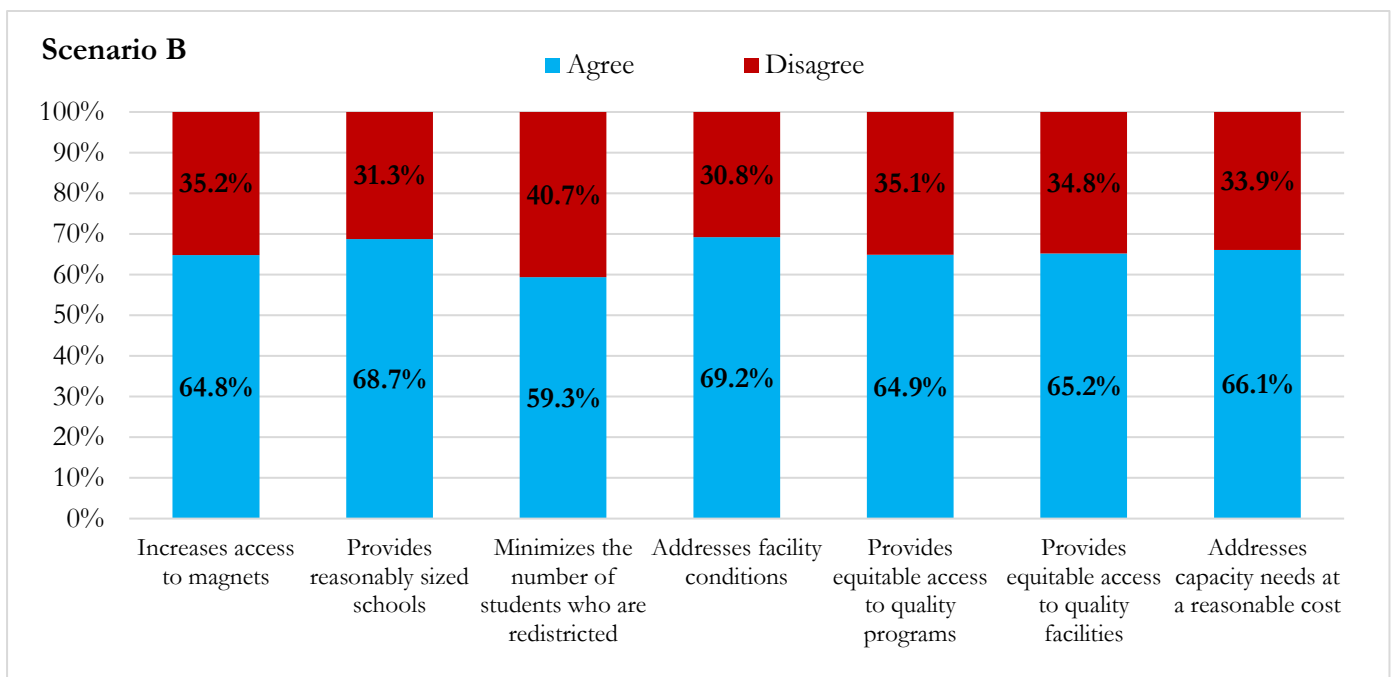
Only 38 percent of respondents from the Central region indicated that Scenario A does a good job minimizing the number of redistricted students. Moreover, fewer than half of Central region stakeholders (46.5%) feel that Scenario A does a good job addressing facility conditions, but nearly three in four Southeast respondents believe that Scenario A does a good job along this dimension.

A bit less than one in two Central region respondents agreed that Scenario A supplies equitable access to quality programs. But in the Southeast, more than three in four agreed. Only 43 percent of Central region stakeholders agree that Scenario A provides equitable access to high quality facilities. In the Southeast, the corresponding proportion approached 72 percent. Finally, fewer than half of survey respondents from the Central region (47%) agree that Scenario A addresses capacity needs at a reasonable cost. In short, Scenario A is rather unpopular among those in the Central region but was quite popular among others.

Opinions Regarding Scenario B

Scenario B prioritizes the FY2019 capital plan and is the most expensive option. The scenario increases capacity significantly, including at magnet schools, and has the least impact on schools in terms of boundary changes.

Respondents overwhelmingly indicate that this scenario improves conditions for students along all dimensions they were asked about. Despite being the most expensive option, 66.1 percent of respondents believe that scenario B addresses the county’s capacity needs at a reasonable cost. This represents a higher share than for the other scenarios, reiterating the conclusion reached during Phase I of the public engagement process that many BCPS stakeholders would be perfectly content to invest significant resources in addressing BCPS’s capacity and school condition needs.



Agree = “Agree” + “Strongly Agree”

Disagree = “Disagree” + “Strongly Disagree”

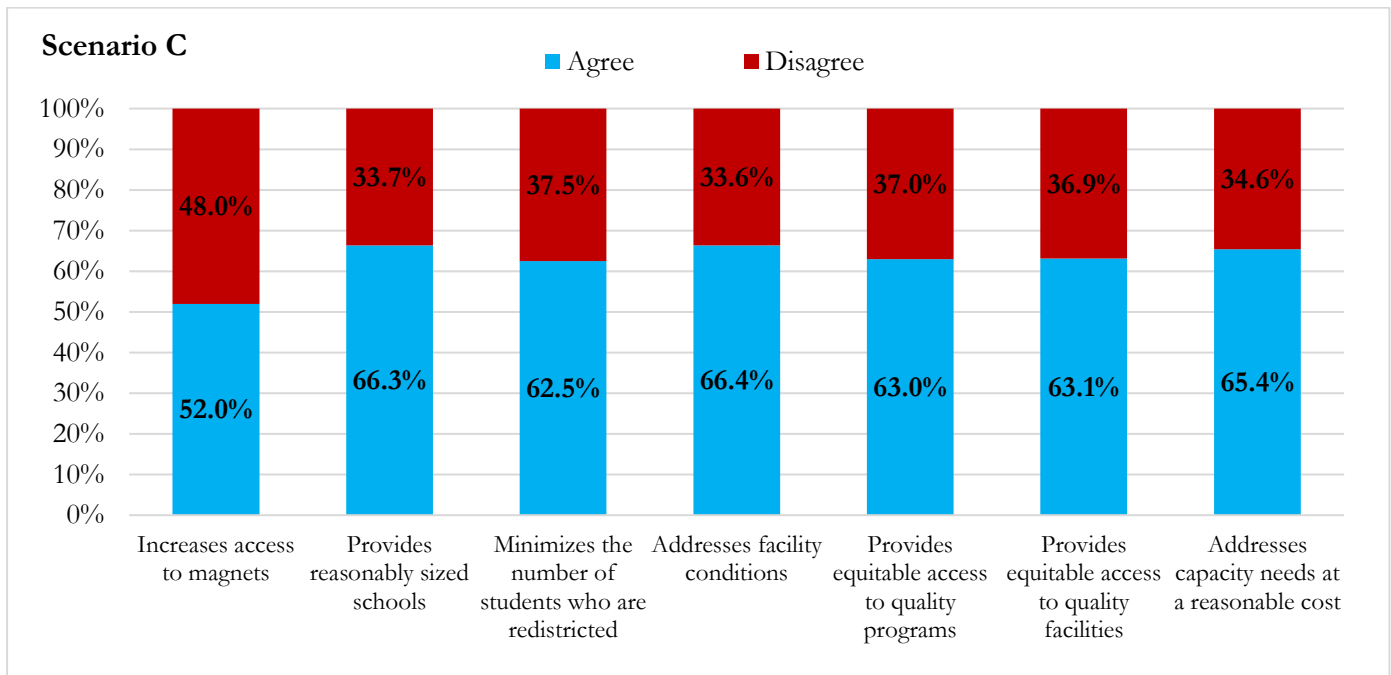
Regional Variations

In each region, more than half of respondents agree that Scenario B does a good job addressing facility conditions. The respondent share in the Southeast is lower (50.7%) than in other regions. Fewer than half of respondents from the Southeast (49.7%) agree that this scenario supplies equitable access to quality facilities. This compares to a range of 54 -72 percent in other regions.

Opinions Regarding Scenario C

Like Scenario B, Scenario C also prioritizes the FY2019 capital plan. It is the second most expensive option. Scenario C impacts the fewest number of students through boundary changes. It creates no new magnet program seats and is also associated with the fewest number of capital projects. Capital projects in this scenario are high cost on average.

The majority of respondents believe Scenario C improves conditions for students and addresses the county’s capacity challenges at a reasonable cost. Interestingly, even though Scenario C does not increase capacity at magnet schools, 52 percent of respondents still think it increases access to magnet programs (magnet programs can still shift locations under this scenario).



Agree = “Agree” + “Strongly Agree”

Disagree = “Disagree” + “Strongly Disagree”

Regional Variations

For all questions, a much larger share of respondents in the Central region agree that Scenario C improves circumstances (increases access to magnets, minimizes the number of students redistricted, etc.) compared to other regions. However, as reflected below, this scenario is viewed as least favorable in four of five regions. It is the second least favored Scenario in the Central region.

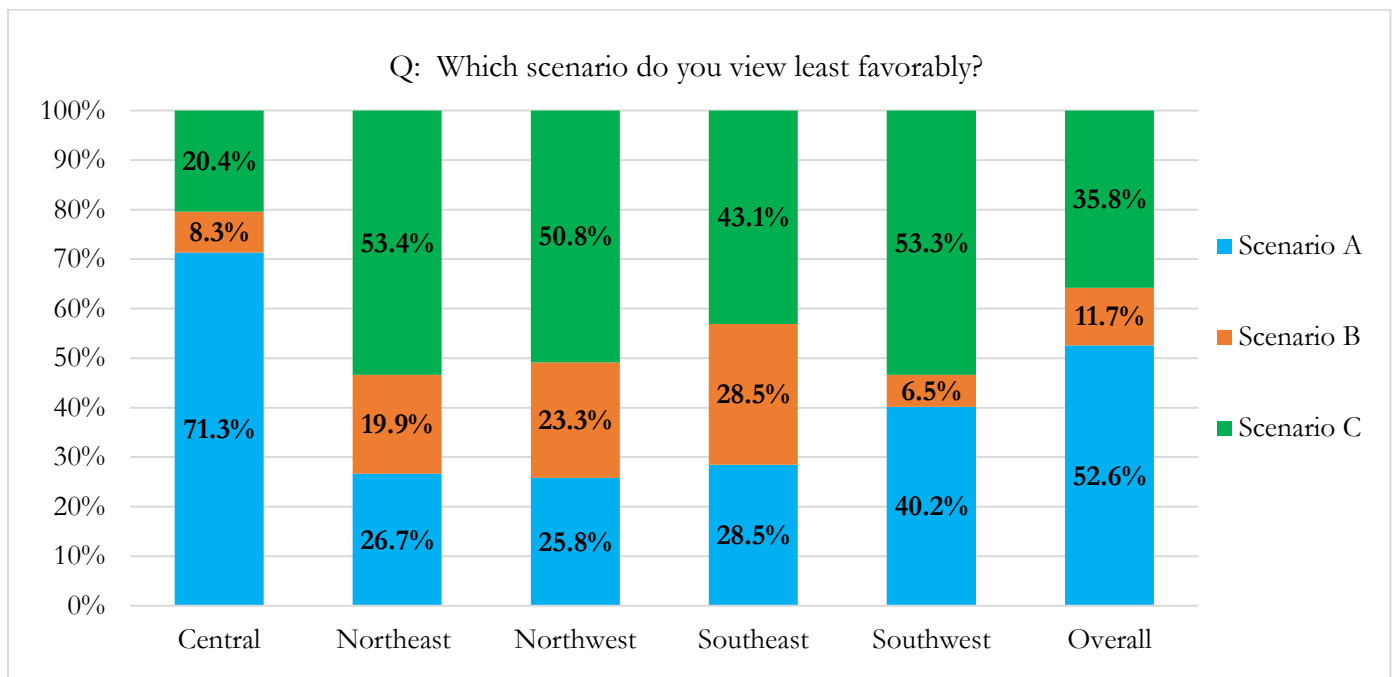
Responses to Key Individual Questions

Question: Which scenario do you view **least** favorably?

Across all regions, 52.6 percent of respondents view Scenario A as the least favorable option to address school capacity needs. This is heavily influenced by respondents in the Central region, where more than 71 percent identify Scenario A as the least favorable option among the three.

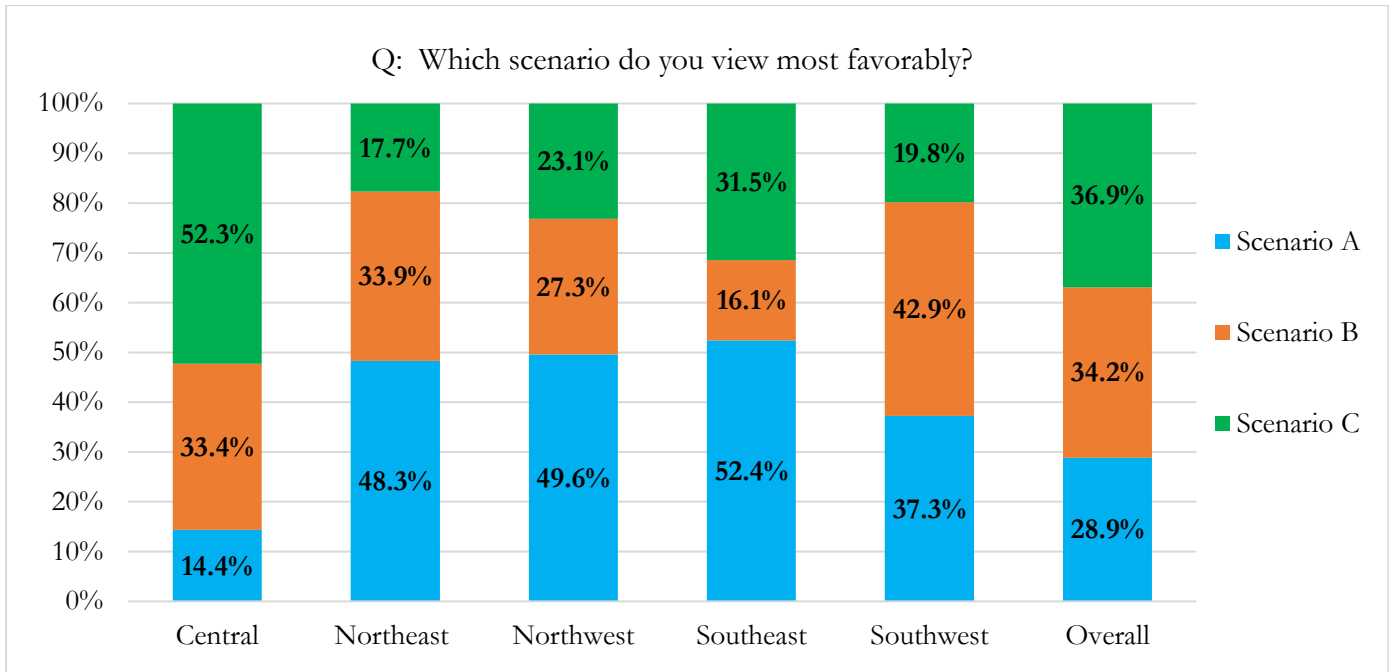
Excluding respondents in the Central region, most respondents appear to find Scenario C to be the least favorable option. For other regions, the share of respondents identifying Scenario C as the least favorable option ranges from 43.1 percent in the Southeast to 53.4 percent in the Northeast.

As the Exhibit below indicates, Scenario B was rarely considered the least favorable scenario across all geographies. Among all regions, the Southeast was most likely to find Scenario B objectionable.



Question: Which scenario do you view **most** favorably?

Across all regions, 36.9 percent of respondents view Scenario C as the most favorable option, with Scenario B a close second at 34.2 percent. While Scenario A was the least favored (28.9%), these results largely prevail because of preferences expressed by the Central region, where more than 52 percent prefer Scenario C. In all other regions, Scenario C garners no more than a 31.5 percent share in terms of most favored option. Excluding the Central region, respondents appear to favor Scenario A. The Southwest region was the only region for which Scenario B was favored most among the three options.



Conclusion

The results for this question largely reflect responses among three primary respondent groups:

- Central Region respondents favoring scenarios that support replacement schools in that region
- Southwest Region respondents favoring scenarios that limit redistricting in that region
- Southeast Region respondents favoring scenarios that support facility improvement in that region

For purposes of this analysis, Scenario B is the least objectionable to BCPS high school stakeholders, despite having the highest cost. It is with relative rarity that this is viewed as least favored option among stakeholders. However, in the Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast Regions, Scenario A is preferable.