



STRAIGHT TALK

FALL 2013 | COMMUNITY UPDATE | BOND ISSUE

Bond Vote on Tuesday, October 29: An Opportunity to Fund \$26.4M on Infrastructure, Health/Safety and Educational Projects at NO Additional Cost to Taxpayers

FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD:

The School Board has scheduled a public bond referendum on October 29 on a plan to renovate and make upgrades to District facilities. Following a recommendation by a volunteer, community-led Citizens Advisory Committee, the Board approved this bond proposal to address many District health and safety challenges, technology and school security enhancements, the aging buildings' infrastructure and upgrades of the athletic and fine arts facilities.

This plan, which involves all of our school buildings, is designed to benefit every child in our District, from the high school senior developing technology proficiencies needed to succeed in college to students with special needs who currently attend out-of-district schools due to our facilities.

Although our schools are well maintained, our architects have advised that many of our systems are reaching the end of their life cycle and it is no longer financially responsible to continue making repairs to the aging systems.

This is where the District is at the present time and why the School Board has adopted what they believe to be financially prudent bond funded projects. This bond referendum proposal will have no impact on the tax levy by maximizing the current state building aid (37.6%), appropriating \$5 million from Nyack's capital reserve fund, and releasing a series of bonds over the next several years to align with the retirement of existing bonds.

The Board encourages all voters to become informed about this important proposal by reviewing this newsletter and details on the District's website and exercising their right to vote on Tuesday, October 29.

Claudette Jimerson

Board of Education, President

How the projects will be funded...

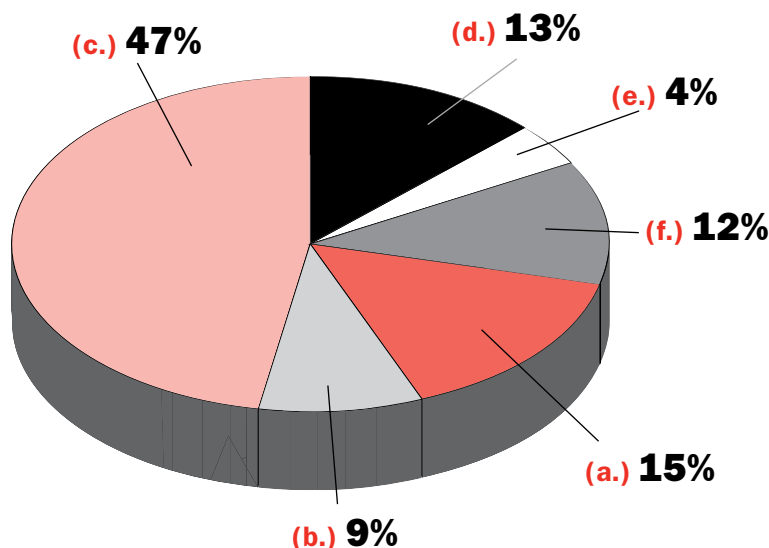
- Debt will be offset by old Bond Debt retiring
- \$5M from the District's Capital Reserve Fund
- 37.6% in State Aid (\$9,926,400 estimated)

THE RESULT...

- NO Budget to Budget Increase
- NO Tax Levy Increase for Taxpayers

Bond Information Forum, Wednesday, October 16, High School, 7:30 pm

Projects funded by the Bond Issue



- (a.) Health, Safety & Security
- (b.) Education & Technology
- (c.) Infrastructure
- (d.) Turf Fields
- (e.) Grass Softball Field
- (f.) Scoreboard, Bleachers, Lighting, etc.

For further information
contact the
Public Information Office
353-7013

gffleur@nyackschools.com

Details of the Bond Issue
are on the District's website:
www.nyackschools.org.

A Closer Look..... Bond

BACKGROUND

Why is the District having a bond referendum?

A bond referendum is an opportunity for voters to decide if a school district will be authorized to raise funds to upgrade and renovate the District's facilities. A bond issue will enable the District to address areas that are too large to be funded through annual budgets, such as aging roofs, boilers, electrical systems, technology infrastructure and overused fields.

How were the projects selected?

An architectural firm was hired last year to do an in depth inspection of the condition of our facilities, in combination with a review of the District's State mandated Five year Capital Plan. An outreach to the community last November recruited forty volunteers to form a Citizens Advisory Committee to work with the architects and sports site professionals to identify and prioritize projects in the areas of infrastructure, technology, and athletics. After six months of deliberation, recommendations were presented to the Board in a public meeting in June. A bond referendum was approved by the Board in September.

PROJECTS

What PROJECTS are included in the Bond Referendum?

There are projects proposed for each of the District's buildings, as well as for the fields at the "new" High School (now 24 years old).

- **AGING SYSTEMS:** Just like in our homes aging systems need replacement as they become too old to be maintained cost effectively.
 - Replacement of roofs, boilers, windows and doors are proposed
- **SAFETY AND SECURITY:** The District's highest priority is a safe, secure environment for its students, staff and visitors.
 - Replacement of outdated fire alarm systems that need constant repair and parts becoming difficult to secure. Utilizing the newest technology, emergency responders will get immediate information about the location of the alarm.
 - Additional security cameras at the schools: The number and location of cameras were determined in consultation with school officials and consultants. They will be connected to the local police departments to assist during emergency situations.
 - Installation of security safety film to reinforce glass covered areas to control the possibility of glass shattering during storms, vandalism or terrorism.
 - Installation of access card readers on exterior doors and essential interior doors to improve security. This will allow monitoring of all doors and control of who enters the buildings.
 - Replacement of emergency lighting at two elementary schools.

■ EDUCATION:

- **Technology:** Technology infrastructure will be upgraded to enhance student instruction and support the new NYS assessment program for online testing. This will include wireless, and server/ switch upgrades in all schools and new cabling to improve speed.
- **Special Education:** Retrofitting of classroom space at the Middle and High Schools will allow construction of a life skills program for students with moderate to severe learning disabilities. Classrooms will include mock living areas, and academic centers. This will serve students now being educated outside of the District, allowing them to be prepared in the District to meet the new eligibility requirements for a Career Preparation and Skills Credential replacing the former IEP diploma.
- **Fine and Performing Arts:** Improvement of these spaces includes air conditioning for the High School music room, which houses instruments that are getting ruined from the heat/ humidity during the summer, the High School auditorium, a year round performance venue, and the DaVinci computer center.

■ ATHLETIC FIELDS INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **Three artificial turf fields and a grass field at the "new" High School.** Although the District has made strong efforts to maintain the condition of the fields, they are unable to withstand the current levels of usage. Their chronically poor condition has led to cancelled practices, rescheduling of home events and limited availability for youth programs. Grass fields suffer a lot of damage when they are used during or after rain storms. Resting a field to allow for rejuvenation of root systems is an essential component of maintaining grass surfaces. Due to the limited District land available, the fields are used continuously. The compacted dirt on the fields creates a harder playing surface and contributes to a higher possibility of concussion injuries than a softer surface would.
- **Installation of bleachers, lighting, track/concessions stand and eight lane track** reconstruction on the "new" High School field.

ARTIFICIAL TURF

Why is artificial turf being used for three of the fields?

Turf fields are more durable, require less maintenance than sod and are more weather resistant. Since Nyack's fields are not able to be taken out of use to be replenished because the District is "land poor," artificial turf will allow fields to be used continuously.

What about the concerns regarding artificial turf?

The School Board and experts working on Nyack's fields are well aware of turf studies and the commentary that continues about its safety. There is no scientific, conclusive evidence that has been found on environmental or health concerns about artificial turf. Turf quality has greatly improved in recent years both in texture and construction characteristics and is widely used locally

Issue Projects and Costs

and across the country for playgrounds, and high school, college and professional fields. Nyack teams often play competitively on other schools' turf fields.

The State Education Department continues to approve of artificial turf installation, as does the Environmental Protection Agency. The District is committed to monitoring any potential environmental and health and safety impact of the fields and will work to customize construction with the safest materials available.

FINANCES

How will the project be financed?

The Board of Education is asking voters to consider the use of \$5 million from our Capital Reserve Fund and \$21.4 million in bonds to be issued in increments over the next several years as existing debt retires. Bonds will be repaid over a 15 year period, by making annual principal and interest payments, similar to a mortgage.

What is a Capital Reserve Fund?

A Capital reserve Fund, approved by Nyack voters in 2010, allows the District to place funds leftover from the operating budget in a "savings" account for future renovations or reconstruction. Voter authorization is needed to create the fund for specific purposes, as well as to spend money from the fund.

How will State Aid help finance these projects?

The state will pay 37.6% of allowable costs associated with the improvements to the District's buildings and grounds. State Aid is available for upgrades to the athletic fields and other site

work as long as this work is combined with adjacent building improvements. Currently once a project is approved by the voters, the state will continue to pay State Building Aid on the project over a 15 year period. We cannot be sure that the state will continue to provide the same level of Aid on projects approved in the future.

Will there be an annual tax increase on my school tax bill for this referendum?

Given the fact that the debt will be phased in over several years to replace retiring debt, any year-to-year increase to annual school tax bills as a result of issuing the new debt will be alleviated or actually decline in some years.

What would my school tax bill be without the new debt from the proposed projects?

After the final payment on outstanding bonds is made on the new high school in 2016-17 an average assessed home would have a decrease in about \$95 in their annual school tax bill. However, this decrease will be offset by increases to the annual budget when the infrastructure needs deteriorate to the point where they can no longer be delayed.

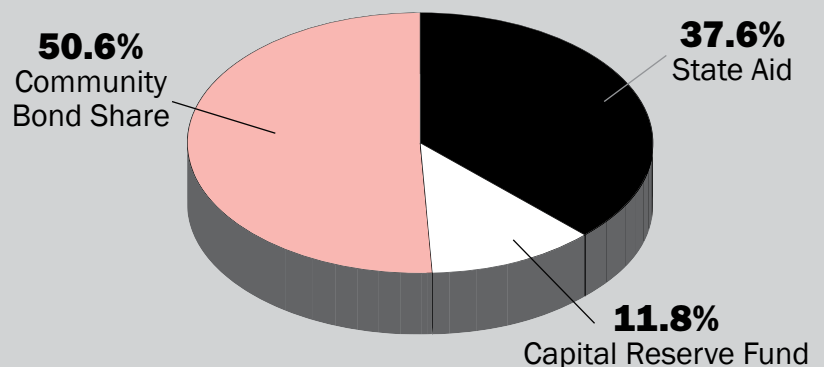
What is the anticipated interest rate on the bonds?

Currently the rate that applies to the issuance of school district debt is historically low (3.5%). The School Board's fiscal advisors used a conservative interest rate of 4.5% to calculate the projected debt service payments. Thus, a financing plan could be predicted that they believe will be the worst case scenario, especially given the fact that the borrowings will be phased in over several years.

WHY is the School Board considering a Bond Issue now?

- Facilities' projects **EXCEED** what can be funded in annual budgets
- **FAVORABLE** interest rates
- State Aid currently available—now at **37.6% OF ALLOWABLE COSTS**
- District's **STRONG** bond rating
- Old Bond debt will be paid off in several years—thus **NO TAX LEVY INCREASE** for the community
- \$5M will be used from the **DISTRICT'S CAPITAL RESERVE FUND**

WHERE the dollars come from:



Community Bond Share = \$21.4M

Capital Reserve Fund = \$5M

State Aid "Allowable Costs" up to 37.6%

The Tax Levy impact of the bond is to be offset by the retiring debt.

VOTING

VOTING FACTS: Tuesday, October 29, 2013

PROPOSITION

Yes []

No []

RESOLVED:

a) That the Board of Education of the Nyack Union Free School District, in the County of Rockland, New York (the "District"), is hereby authorized to construct improvements and alterations to all District buildings and/or the sites thereof (the "Project"), and to expend therefor an amount not to exceed \$26,400,000; (b) that the amount of not to exceed \$5,000,000 from the District's "Capital Reserve Fund-2010" is hereby authorized to be expended to pay for a portion of the cost of the Project; and (c) that a tax is hereby voted in the amount of not to exceed \$21,400,000 to pay the balance of the cost of the Project, such tax to be levied and collected in installments in such years and in such amounts as shall be determined by said Board of Education; and that in anticipation of said tax, bonds of the District are hereby authorized to be issued in the aggregate principal amount of not to exceed \$21,400,000 and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said bonds as the same shall become due and payable.

VOTER ELIGIBILITY

A citizen, 18 or older, who has lived in the District for at least 30 days, having voted in a school or general election in the past four years or having newly registered.

REGISTERING

You can register at the Board of Elections (in New City, 638-5172) through the day of the vote, or in the Hilltop Building until Thursday, October 24 (8am - 4pm).

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

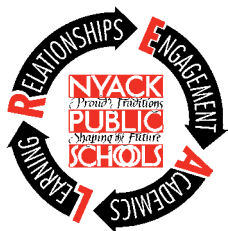
This is for those eligible to vote who cannot vote in person on October 29, 2013. Applications, that must be first filled out, are available from the District Clerk (353-7013) at the Hilltop Building.

**For further information contact the Public Information Office, 353-7013, gffleur@nyackschools.com
Details of the Bond Issue are on the District's website www.nyackschools.org.**

Si ou bezwen enfòmasyon tradui an kreyòl, rele Jocelyne Abraham nan 353-7044.

Si le hace falta información traducida en español, llame a Yesenia Polanco al 353-7247

Straight Talk is produced by the Nyack School District Public Information Office in cooperation with the Rockland BOCES Communications Department.



13A Dickinson Avenue
Nyack, New York 10960

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VOTE:
Tuesday, October 29, 2013
For voting information,
call the District Clerk at 353-7013

Poll 1: Depew Manor: 60 Depew Ave.
Poll 2: Hilltop Building: 13A Dickinson Ave.
Poll 3: Valley Cottage School: 26 Lake Rd.
Poll 4: Upper Nyack School: 336 No. Broadway

To: POSTAL CUSTOMER