



Facilities Enhancement Project Frequently Asked Questions

Bond Election
December 10, 2019

1. What is this “special vote” all about?

The School District has experienced significant growth at the elementary level and steady growth at the secondary level. We have run out of classroom space at the Faber Elementary School and the current facilities will not meet the projected growth resulting from the construction of new residential units in Dunellen coupled with the turnover of housing. In addition, the core facilities and infrastructure at Dunellen High School have exceeded their useful life and need to be upgraded to meet the needs of the 21st century learner.

2. Why is the district looking to do these upgrades now?

For the first time in over 50 years, the School District has received an increased proportional share of State financial aid. The Board of Education has committed to appropriate \$2.5 million in the current budget and will continue to appropriate the same amount for the foreseeable future to fund the necessary capital projects. In addition, the State of New Jersey has accepted the District’s application for Debt Service Aid and the State will fund up to 57% of the principal and interest payments for the capital projects, if approved by the community.

3. What is debt service aid?

The State of New Jersey will reimburse the School District for up to 57% of the principal and interest payments for bonds that are issued for the renovations included the capital projects. We anticipate receiving \$15.2 million dollars from the State of New Jersey to offset the costs of the Bond.

4. What is the difference between a vote on debt service aid and a traditional vote on a bond?

When a traditional bond is voted on, 100% of the principal and interest is paid by the local taxpayers while the vote on Debt Service splits the payments between the State of New Jersey and the residents of Dunellen. The vote on Debt Service would save the taxpayers of Dunellen approximately \$7.7 million dollars.

5. If the vote is successful and the work comes in under budget, what happens to the difference? What if the work goes over budget?

Any excess bond proceeds will be utilized to make the required principal and interest payments after the Debt Service aid is applied. By statute we cannot go over budget for these projects without additional voter authorization.

6. What happens if the vote fails?

The Board of Education is committed to meet the needs of our students and all of the capital projects will be completed. The completion of all projects will last for approximately 10 additional years and the overall cost of the project will increase by approximately \$7.7 million.

7. What is covered by the cost of the project?

At Faber Elementary School, we will add a six classroom addition, the roof will be replaced and central heating/air conditioning will be added to the cafeteria and the entire second floor. At Dunellen High School, where the core facilities serve both the middle school and high school students, we will construct a new STEAM laboratory and a new TECHNO center along with complete renovations of the auditorium, art room, band room, choir room, cafeteria, gymnasium and other spaces utilized for support services. Without adding to the building’s footprint, we will gain 2 additional classrooms and 2 small-group instruction rooms.

8. What is the life expectancy of the Capital Projects?

The District is taking a “30-year” approach to planning and designing the renovations and additions. As new and renovated facilities come on-line, a comprehensive cleaning and maintenance plan is implemented on a room-by-room basis and the entire administrative team is committed to preserving the facilities. The wild-card that is hard to predict is the enrollment trend over the same 30-year period.

9. If the vote is successful, what is the impact on the average taxpayer?

In 2019, the School District budgeted \$2.5 million in the Capital Budget to fund the first phase of the projects. The Board of Education has committed to continue to include this capital appropriation in successive budgets resulting in a zero-impact to the Dunellen Taxpayers for the construction and renovations.