

**Structured for**  
***SUCCESS!***



27 Sept 2021

# *Understanding Structured for Success!*

On September 20, we presented a visual progress report on the renovation of Bear Road Elementary School and introduced you to the next chapter in our District's ongoing effort to responsibly renovate and upgrade our school building assets.

We call this chapter *Structured for Success!* because that's how we like to think of the project. It has been carefully assembled to respond to the most pressing infrastructure and learning environment challenges, while maximizing the state's contribution to the cost, thereby eliminating a tax increase for \$64.95 million worth of improvements.

Let's take a closer look:

Background

# Generations of Support

Generations of District residents have invested in our school facilities for the good of the educational program, our students, and their intrinsic value to the community.

- School buildings are a community asset and must be regularly invested in to preserve their value and effectiveness as teaching/learning environments.
- This regular investment through community-approved bonds is strongly supported by our state with financial aid, ensuring that local costs are low.
- Critical areas of concern like building safety, modern learning resources for students, and basic building system upgrades (for example, roof systems) are addressed in these capital projects.



*In short, the need for building improvements never goes away; it only becomes more expensive over time!*

Justification

# *How This Project Was Assembled*

The District is mandated by the NYS Education Department to create a Building Conditions Survey every five years.

- This written survey analyzes all buildings, estimates upgrade and replacement needs, and prioritizes school projects based on immediacy and impact.
- Aside from building system upgrades, we are keenly focused on modernizing environments for effectiveness, safety, and contemporary teaching and learning methods.
- Maximizing state aid is a critical part of the structure for success. The scope of work will balance the needs of our school community with the maximum contribution from NYS in order to minimize our local taxpayers' share.



How?

# *The Components of Structured for Success!*

1

CNS High School Renovations  
Lakeshore and Cicero Renovations  
Minor Smith Rd. Improvements

2

Construction of a Community Pool  
Facility at CNS High School

3

Creation of a Capital Reserve Fund

The Projects

# *School Building Renovations and Improvements*

1

## **CNS High School Renovations**

- HVAC systems are in critical condition
- PA, fire alarm and certain electrical panels require upgrades
- A minor amount of roofing beyond useful life
- Gym/locker room, and auditorium renovations to address safety/ program needs
- Re-pave majority of roads and develop connector property

## **Lakeshore and Cicero Renovations**

- Renovations to 50s/60s portion of CE (about half of the building)
- Complete renovation of LRE, which is >60 years old
- Both similar in extent to Bear Road and Smith Road

## **Smith Road Elementary School**

- Paving/playgrounds not part of last project now in poor condition. PTO has raised local share to cover playground
- PA and fire alarm improvements

SPECIFICS

This work, totaling \$64.95 million, **will not increase local taxes** for our North Syracuse Central School District residents.

# *Examples of Conditions That Would be Addressed*



## SPECIFICS

The Heating and Ventilation system at the **High School** is a critical infrastructure need of the building, so much so that the District will attempt to expedite approval from the State Education Department for July '22 construction.

# *Examples of Conditions That Would be Addressed*



## SPECIFICS

The wooden bleachers at the HS gym are no longer manufactured or utilized, as they pose safety concerns (e.g. no handrails).

# *Examples of Conditions That Would be Addressed*



## SPECIFICS

Two examples pictured above are of learning/assembly spaces at **Cicero Elementary**. These spaces, which have served the district well over the years, are now targeted for renovation to provide greatly improved utility, technology integration, and safety for students and staff.

# *Examples of Conditions That Would be Addressed*



## SPECIFICS

The first photo above is a learning space at **Lakeshore Elementary**. Just like the current Bear Road renovation, we are modernizing our teaching/learning spaces to greatly improve their utility.

The second photo at right demonstrates the extent to which basic building systems at both elementary schools requires upgrade or replacement.

## *Examples of Finished Renovations*



### SPECIFICS

Pictured above are examples of how a high school auditorium can be renovated. These are from two different Central New York school districts, and both projects were designed by our District's architect, King + King.

# *Examples of Finished Renovations*



## SPECIFICS

Pictured above and right are renovated athletic facilities from three different area school districts, all designed by King + King.

# *Examples of Finished Renovations*



## SPECIFICS

Pictured above is an example of a renovated classroom. This demonstrates the contemporary approach to flexible furniture and layout, incorporation of technology, and easy access storage.

# Community Pool Facility

## 2

- NSCSD has successful men's and women's swim teams who have practiced and competed in area pools. This has resulted in inconvenient practice times and excessive transportation. They have lobbied for the construction of a pool for many years.
- All large suburban schools in CNY have a swimming pool and most of these communities have access to a relatively new YMCA facility.
- Using a consultant facilitator, the BOE Pool Study Committee (c. 2017) issued a formal report to the Board of Education recommending the construction of a pool.
- Assemblyman Al Stirpe is supportive of a pool project and has made \$2M in SAM grant funds available to the district.
- The District has available district fund balance to support the construction of a pool, should the voters desire us to move forward.

This work, totaling \$16.95 million, **will increase taxes by about \$1.50 per month** for a \$100,000 home in the district.



Example of a community pool facility.

# Capital Reserve Fund

3

- Voters must approve its creation and funding.
- Is funded with net fund balance at end of each year. (If the district manages its budget well, excess funds can be placed into the Capital Reserve).
- Can only be used for future capital projects to improve district facilities. Use of the funds requires voter approval.
- Because improvements to the remaining district facilities is fully anticipated in the coming years – and because we want to perform this work with a minimal impact on the local taxpayer– we are recommending the creation and funding of a \$30 MM capital reserve over a 15-year lifespan.

A Capital Reserve Fund **helps the district mitigate or avoid future tax increases** based on capital projects.

# Proposition #1

**What it Says:** “Shall the Board of Education of the North Syracuse Central School District be authorized to undertake a project consisting of reconstruction, renovation and improvements to the Lakeshore Elementary School, Cicero Elementary School, Smith Road Elementary School and High School including, for each, related site improvements, original furnishings, fixtures and equipment, architectural fees, and all other costs incidental to such work (the “Project”) at a total estimated cost not to exceed \$64,950,000 and obtain the necessary funds by using \$3,000,000 from the District’s debt service fund, \$4,000,000 of available fund balance and, for the balance of the Project costs, by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the School District to be collected in annual installments in the years and in the amounts as the Board of Education shall determine and in anticipation of such tax bonds and notes of the District are hereby authorized to be issued at one time, or from time to time, in the principal amount not to exceed \$57,950,000, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said obligations when due.”

**What it Means:** Can we have your approval to do \$64.95 million of school improvements at LES, CES, Smith Road and the High School, which will be funded with reserves and money generated from the tax base, which will ultimately be offset by significant state aid, thereby not increasing the District’s tax rate.

## *Proposition #2*

**What it Says:** “If Proposition 1 is approved, shall the Board of Education of the North Syracuse Central School District be authorized to undertake a project consisting of the construction of an approximately 14,500 square foot addition to the High School to house indoor pool and related facilities, including related building renovations, site improvements, original furnishings, fixtures and equipment, architectural fees, and all other costs incidental to such work. at a total estimated cost not to exceed \$16,950,000 and obtain the necessary funds by using \$2,000,000 of available fund balance, a \$2,000,000 State and Municipal Facilities Program **(SAM) Grant (available when construction completed)** and, for the balance of the costs, the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the School District to be collected in annual installments in the years and in the amounts as the Board of Education shall determine and in anticipation of such tax bonds and notes of the District are hereby authorized to be issued at one time, or from time to time, in the principal amount not to exceed \$14,950,000, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said obligations when due.”

**What it Means:** If, and only if, Proposition #1 is approved, can we also have your approval to construct a \$16.95 million addition at the High School to house a new community pool facility, which will be funded with reserve funds, a State and Municipal grant, and money generated from the tax base, which is projected to result in a small tax increase?

## *Proposition #3*

**What it Says:** “Shall the Board of Education of the North Syracuse School District, be authorized to create a new fifteen-year capital reserve fund pursuant to Section 3651 of the Education Law and fund such fund in an amount not to exceed \$30,000,000, inclusive of accrued interest and other investment earnings, to be used for reconstruction, renovations and additions to all District facilities, including purchase of equipment, technology upgrades, classroom equipment and/or school infrastructure equipment, site development, athletic fields, storm and sanitary sewer, driveways, and parking lots, such reserve fund to be funded from (i) year-end budget surplus funds known as unassigned fund balance, as available, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022 and each fiscal year thereafter for the term of the reserve fund, (ii) transfers of excess monies from Board of Education designated reserves, (iii) amounts from budgetary appropriations from time to time, and (iv) New York State Aid received and made available by the Board of Education from time to time, all as permitted by law.”

**What it Means:** Can we have your approval to create a Capital Reserve Fund over a 15-year period which will be used, only with your approval, to fund future school building projects to minimize or avoid local tax rate increases? This Reserve would be funded with excess budget monies in any given year and would not result in any tax rate impact.

# Timeline

## TIMELINE

Board of Education Approval	October 4, 2021
Community Communications*	October 5 – December 7, 2021
Public Hearing	December 1, 2021
Public Referendum	December 8, 2021
NYSED Submission**	December 2022
Estimated start of construction	July 2023

\*We want to be sure that our community is fully aware of what it is being asked to consider. A calendar of small group discussions, direct mail, and extensive website information will be made available in the coming weeks!

\*\*The project will be subdivided into a series of smaller projects to align with the district's ability to provide swing space and the availability of the construction labor pool. **It is anticipated that expedited HVAC work at the high school will begin construction in July 2022.**

# *Capital Project Referendum*

**December 8, 2021**

**6 a.m. - 9 p.m.**

**Polling Places:**

*For residents living SOUTH of 481*

Administrative Office Building

5355 West Taft Road North Syracuse, NY

*For residents living NORTH of 481*

Cicero Elementary School Route 31 Cicero, NY

VOTE!

Your Turn

Questions & Answers