

Insight



Bond Issue 2014

The Scarsdale Public Schools

DECEMBER 11, 2014, BOND REFERENDUM

Dear Scarsdale Community Members:

As past generations have built today's Scarsdale, the Board of Education recognizes our responsibility to our students and their future.

Our schools seek to develop young people to their fullest, to help them to become self-reliant and lifelong learners. This school district distinguishes itself by teaching of unusual quality and a community united in providing an exemplary liberal arts education for its children.

Although the fundamental relationship between teacher and student continues to be the cornerstone of our education platform in Scarsdale, it is also important to recognize that the world is evolving.

21st century learning skills, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving must be infused among and across disciplines. Technology proliferation and use within schools require both operational and educational supports in order to prepare our students for future learning and life.

Coupled with the changing educational milieu, the brick- and mortar aspects of our aging facilities require our time and attention. All of our buildings are more than 50 years old, and many are nearly

a century old. To address this issue, we have commissioned a master plan for the High School, which lays out a 15-year plan. We have also commissioned a feasibility study for the Greenacres School to

determine whether to renovate and expand the current building or to build a new facility. The culmination of this work will result in a District-wide Master Plan, which will outline short- and long-term work, projected costs, and appropriate timelines.

The projects included in the proposed bond referendum reflect the highest-priority projects for each of the schools as determined through the collaborative work of building and steering committees, administrative recommendations, Board of Education study and analysis, and community feedback.

On December 11, 2014, we will hold a voter referendum that proposes borrowing \$18,120,000.

Voters will be asked to authorize the issuance of debt to finance this work. Because existing debt will mature next year, the new debt service payments will not impose additional burden on taxpayers.

We are also very fortunate that the Scarsdale Schools Education Foun-

Please see page 2

VOTE *Thursday, December 11, 2014* *7 a.m. to 9 p.m.* **MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM**

INCLUDED IN BOND

- Reconstruction of the Edgewood School library and relocation of the school office
- A new multipurpose room and additional small group instruction rooms in Heathcote School
- A new roof at Quaker Ridge School (older section of the school)
- A new orchestra classroom and a renovated music room at the Middle School
- Renovation of the High School Gym B and existing Fitness Center into a Learning Commons, Innovation Lab and collaborative meeting spaces, along with additional food preparation, serving, and dining areas. Gym A will be equipped with new mechanical ventilation and lighting
- Relocation and renovation of storage and offices for High School physical education and athletics program to facilitate creation of the Design Lab
- Repairs and renovations to the High School auditorium (drainage, seating, equipment)
- Upgrade of the District's technology infrastructure



Bond , from page 1

dation has generously offered to support two additional projects at Scarsdale High School: a new Design Lab (\$1,800,000) and new Fitness Center (\$800,000). *Note:* the District will use \$500,000 of capital funds previously approved by voters for these projects to complete the necessary funding. This support from the Foundation will be further enhanced by the donation of state-of-the-art exercise equipment for the new Fitness Center in the amount of \$300,000 by the Madoff family, in memory of their son Tyler, a Scarsdale High School student. We are very grateful for these wonderful, generous gifts.

SUMMARY:

For all of the reasons outlined above, the Board of Education will be asking the Scarsdale community to vote on a \$18,120,000 bond. The projects will:

- Help to fulfill our mission of educating each child in a safe, appropriate, and stimulating environment;
- Alleviate overcrowding in many of our schools;
- Allow the District to further implement 21st century teaching and learning;
- Provide the tools that students will use, both now and in future learning and life;
- Improve security in our schools; and
- Address the most pressing maintenance issues.

The proposal before voters makes good financial sense:

- Interest rates and borrowing costs remain at historically low levels;
- Maturing debt will allow us to complete this work without increasing taxpayer burden; and



- Failure to take advantage of this opportunity could well lead to higher costs for this work in the future.

The proposed bond is timely:

- It was a process that involved many stakeholders across the schools and the broader community;
- Consensus was developed in terms of short- and long- term priorities; and
- This work is a first step in a much broader plan to address both major educational and facility needs over the next 15 years.

The Scarsdale Board of Education,
 Mary Beth Gose, President
 Leila Maude, Vice President
 Lewis Leone, Jr.
 William Natbony
 Christopher Morin
 Suzanne Seiden
 Scott E. Silberfein



PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE BOND

EDGEWOOD SCHOOL

Reconstruction of the library and relocation of the school office \$3,560,000

HEATHCOTE SCHOOL

A new multipurpose room and additional small group instruction rooms \$3,387,000

QUAKER RIDGE SCHOOL

A new roof (older section of the school) \$908,000

MIDDLE SCHOOL

A new orchestra classroom and a renovated music room \$2,097,000

HIGH SCHOOL

Renovation of Gym B and existing Fitness Center into a Learning Commons, Innovation Lab and collaborative spaces, along with food preparation, serving, and dining areas. Gym A will have new mechanical ventilation and lighting \$5,091,000

Relocation and renovation of storage and offices to facilitate creation of the Design Lab \$677,000

Repairs and renovations to the auditorium (drainage, seating, equipment) \$1,000,000

TECHNOLOGY

Upgrade of the District's technology infrastructure \$1,400,000

PROJECTS NOT FUNDED BY THE BOND

DESIGN LAB

A Design Lab (akin to a "Maker Space") is a space where students can design and build things. It will be located in the old auto shop and will be a technology-rich space equipped with tools such as 3-D printers, laser cutters, and circuit boards. Such "hands on" learning had nearly disappeared, but educators and students are now rediscovering the power of the "making" experience. In response to emerging trends and student demand, the High School faculty is developing an integrated STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) curriculum that will take advantage of this space. The District strongly believes in the value of the Design Lab, and is very grateful to the Scarsdale Schools Education Foun-

dation for providing the \$1.8 million necessary to construct the facility. Taxpayers are *not* being asked to fund this project.

FITNESS CENTER

Funds needed to create a new Fitness Center are being donated by the Scarsdale Schools Education Foundation. This gift will supplement funds already approved by voters. An additional donation from the family of High School student Tyler Madoff will purchase all the new equipment for the Center in his memory.

The District is very grateful for these extraordinarily generous gestures.

VOTE

Thursday, December 11, 2014

7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

BOND PROPOSAL REFERENDUM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, FALL 2014

Q. What is a bond referendum?

A. A bond referendum is an opportunity for a community's voters to decide if the school district may borrow money to renovate its facilities.

In this case, the ballot measure will ask voters to borrow money to renovate the schools and upgrade technology infrastructure.

Q. Why is the District going out for a bond vote?

A. The District's facilities, like people's homes, require consistent upkeep and occasional renovation. These may be in response to enrollment growth or cultural changes such as heightened community concerns about security. The District certainly has brick-and-mortar issues that merit attention, but our students also would benefit from buildings that will support efforts to prepare them for 21st century learning.

An exhaustive process of review and deliberation by the Board of Education, District personnel, and community members identified a list of important capital projects. Now the District requests community approval to borrow money to pay for those projects.

Q. What is the total amount to be borrowed?

A. The proposed borrowing is \$18.12 million. These funds will cover architectural and engineering fees, construction, and other related costs, and will be repaid over a period of 15-18 years.

Q. Why borrow money for facilities improvements as opposed to paying for them through the annual budget?

A. When there is a need for major investment in facilities, several factors should be considered. What is the current interest rate environment? How long will the improvements reasonably last? Will new debt service add to taxpayer burden? In this case, the work proposed will benefit students for many years to come. By paying back the money over an extended period, both current and future residents will assume their fair share of the cost. Interest rates are low, and maturing debt in 2015-16 means that taxpayer burden will not have to increase to absorb the repayment of the new debt.

Q. Why now?

A. The Board believes it is prudent to finance the current proposed renovations to the facilities at this time for the following reasons:

- Many projects will address building concerns that already impact students. Among these are overcrowding in the cafeteria and library and a lack of large group instructional space in the High School, an aging technology infrastructure, and crowded lunch and library spaces at Heathcote and Edgewood, respectively.
- Interest rates, and thus the cost of borrowing, remain at historically low levels.
- Because of maturing debt, repayment of the new debt can be absorbed into the budget without placing additional burden on taxpayers.
- New York State is currently providing financial assistance at 9.5 percent of eligible project costs, paid to the District over the life of the borrowing.
- Major donations from the Scarsdale Schools Education Foundation and the Madoff family will leverage District dollars to do more.
- As the District contemplates and begins to plan for necessary building improvements over the next 20-30 years, these current projects represent the first five years of that plan.

Q. Why is the bond vote being held in December? Don't we vote on the school budget in May?

A. The school budget vote in May is a date set by New York State. The bond referendum is a separate vote, and must be held by December so that new debt payments can be absorbed into the budget in a way that will be tax-neutral to residents, and to enable work to begin next summer. If the vote didn't occur until the spring, the summer opportunity would be lost.

Q. How were the specific projects chosen?

A. The projects were initially identified by building-level committees and District staff. These committees included teachers, parents, principals, and Central Office staff with responsibility for the facilities. They met with the architect to discuss building issues and develop appropriate responses. Their recommendations were then forwarded to a District Facilities Steering Committee, which included broad repre-



sentation from the Scarsdale community, including several members with construction expertise. This group recommended the Board of Education consider funding these items.

Q. A new library is proposed for Edgewood School. How will it be different from the existing library?

A. The library at Edgewood is by far the smallest in the District, based on square footage per student. The renovated library will be comparable in size and features to the other elementary libraries, and will be designed as a Media and Research Center. The larger library will be laid out for a 21st century educational program. There will be room for technology, shelving that is properly sized for elementary grades, and better sight lines from the librarian's desk. Structural problems that cause freezing and flooding will be remedied.

Q. What work is proposed at Heathcote School?

A. Heathcote School has a meeting room that is used for lunch, but can only lawfully be occupied by 163 students. Two lunch periods cannot accommodate the school's enrollment of approximately 400 students, so many children eat lunch in the gym. A new multipurpose room will provide lunch space

for all students. New small instructional spaces will house various special education services that are now delivered on the auditorium stage. A new canopy at the rear will shelter children as they wait to board school buses and alleviate overcrowding in the hallways, making exiting and student pick-up and drop-off safer.

Q. Why is new music space being added at the Middle School?

A. Enrollment in the Middle School's music program has expanded greatly in recent years. At present, there are 853 students enrolled in Performing Ensembles. The other approximately 274 other students are enrolled in Exploring Music. There is only one rehearsal space, which is occupied by the band, while the orchestra rehearses on the stage. When the auditorium is needed for another program, orchestra classes are cancelled.

In discussions leading up to the 2000 bond referendum, the issue of orchestra space was identified, but ultimately not funded. The new room will provide consistent rehearsal space for the orchestra and storage for instruments, and will also serve as a large multipurpose room. Existing closet spaces will be combined to create a classroom for the "Exploring Music" program.

Q. What issues are addressed by the High School Learning Commons?

A. First, the way students learn in the 21st century has changed. We no longer have to teach them facts in isolation. Rather, they must learn to collaborate, explore, and think critically. Sometimes this occurs in large groups, sometimes in groups of a few students. The Learning Commons will provide a flexible environment. Second, there is a shortage of cafeteria space for the current student population. Third, the school lacks large instructional spaces that can hold two or more classes at once for interdisciplinary work. Examples include the "Civ Ed" program, the Freshman Seminar, and the American Studies program. And last but not least, additional seating arrangements that support collaborative work will free up the library and allow it to return to its original purpose as a place of quiet study.

DISTRICT-WIDE TECHNOLOGY

The bond will provide us with funding to modernize the District's technology infrastructure that supports student and teacher technology use. It will include new cabling that will increase wireless speed and expand capacity at the Middle School and the High School, as well as replace network infrastructure in all buildings. This work will allow us to support the ever-increasing use of technology to support teaching, learning, and assessment at all levels.

Upgrade of the District's technology infrastructure **\$1,400,000**

Jerry Crisci, Director of Technology/Co-Director,
The Center for Innovation



QUAKER RIDGE SCHOOL

The flat rubber roof on the 1950's wing of Quaker Ridge School, installed in 1992 with an original warranty span of 10-15 years, has outlived its useful lifespan and will be replaced with an EPDM (ethylene propylene diene terpolymer) material. We have been able to extend its life with a proactive approach to maintenance, including re-sealing of all of the seams, but the continued roof failures and frequency of repairs warrant a replacement at this time.

"Green" roof features will be studied to see if they can be incorporated into this work. While the existing building structure probably cannot support a true "green roof" (i.e., one that incorporates planted surfaces) we will be examining items like white, heat-reflective materials, improved insulating

A new roof at Quaker Ridge School (older section of the school) **\$908,000**

materials, and solar panels. The progress and upkeep of the new roof can be incorporated into the sustainability curriculum.

This project is critical, as the roof has begun to fail. If this project is not approved, the Board will be asked to appropriate funding (probably over two years) in the annual budget for this purpose.



EDGEWOOD SCHOOL

The current Edgewood library serves the needs of our students and staff, but with many drawbacks. There are many structural issues, and it is undersized for Edgewood's population. Most of the bookcases are more than six feet high making them inaccessible to elementary students, and frequent issues with the heating system affect the usefulness of the space throughout the school year. Edgewood students will benefit from a thorough renovation to the space that will bring it in line with the District's other libraries.

The plan, developed with the input of the Edgewood Facilities Committee, would make our school library more of a Media and Research Center, which would integrate the resources of the computer lab and develop skills and dispositions consistent with 21st Century learning as detailed in Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow. This space would be the centerpiece for developing the skillset and mindset of young people as they prepare for the global challenges of this century.

The current office location is at some distance from the main door, making it difficult to ensure that visitors go first to the office to check in with the building. The Edgewood Facilities Committee, in consultation with KG & D, also addressed this issue by relocating the office to the front center of the school, where a new portico will create a more prominent

Reconstruction of the Edgewood School library and relocation of the school office

\$3,560,000

main entrance. It would also provide school security measures that are consistent with current standards. By creating small group instructional space in the current office area, along with the relocation of the computer lab to the Media center in the new library, Edgewood will gain an additional space that could be used as a classroom.

Our committee is very supportive of the Board of Education's commitment to move forward with these projects.

Scott Houseknecht
Edgewood School Principal

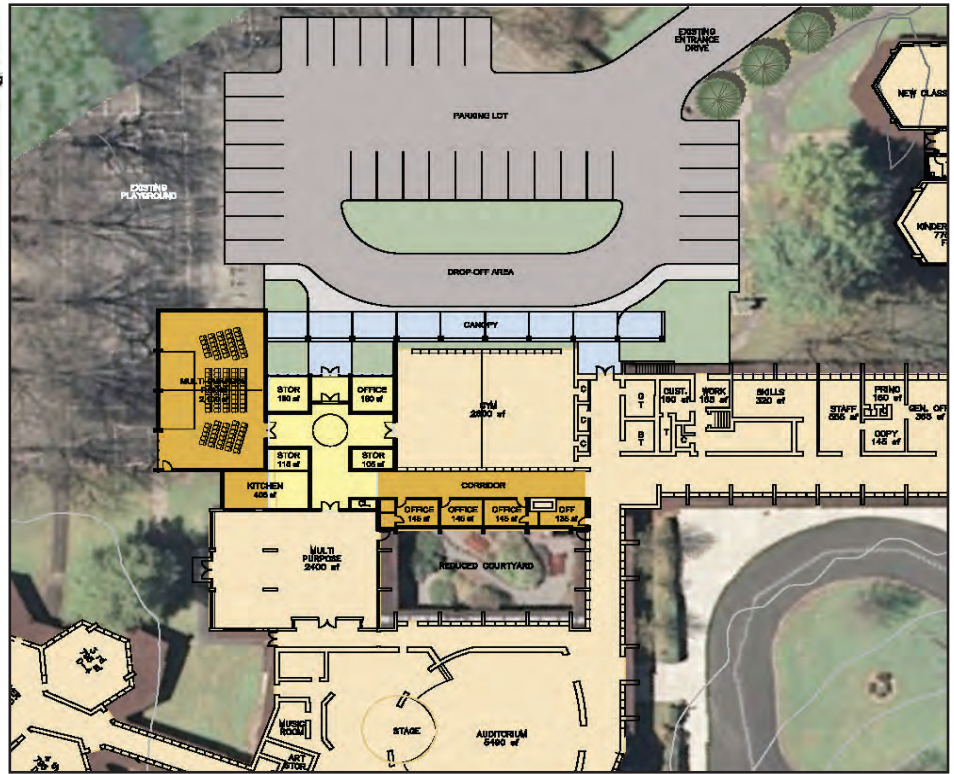
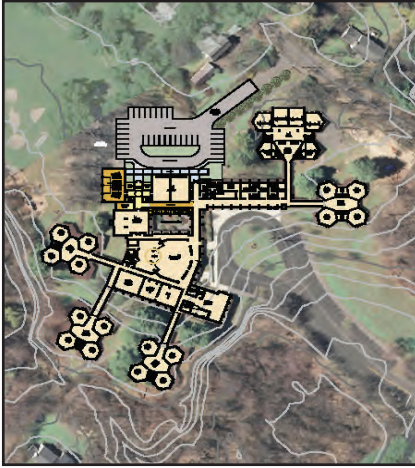
VOTE
Thursday, December 11, 2014
7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

HEATHCOTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPTION B

Construct a new Multipurpose Room on the rear of the building and renovate the existing ESL and Psychology Areas to a building. Additionally, connect the Multipurpose Room area and entry to the rest of the building with a new Corridor and Office Space.

Additional Program Space:	
Multi-Purpose Room	2,100 nsf
Kitchen Addition	225 nsf
Storage	400 nsf
Office	750 nsf

Estimated Total Cost (Approx): \$3,387,000



HEATHCOTE SCHOOL

"An environment is a living, changing system. More than a physical space, it includes the way time is structured. It conditions how we feel, think, behave, and affects the quality of our lives" (Greenman, 1988).

The Heathcote Building Committee appreciates the Board of Education's thorough review and support of our recommendations for addressing the pressing challenges of overcrowding, scheduling, and safety at Heathcote School.

It is essential that we regain full use of the gym for physical instruction and add a multipurpose space that complies with fire codes. In addition, by having safe, flexible learning spaces for small and large group interdisciplinary instruction and special education services, we can achieve our pedagogical goals and ideals.

Our proposal includes:

- A flexible multipurpose space (for lunch, band, orchestra, professional development, community meetings, etc.),
- Private therapy rooms for special education services,
- Replacement of the original 1950s kitchen (\$25,000 gifted from PTA), and
- An upgrade to the K-2 entrance and exit.

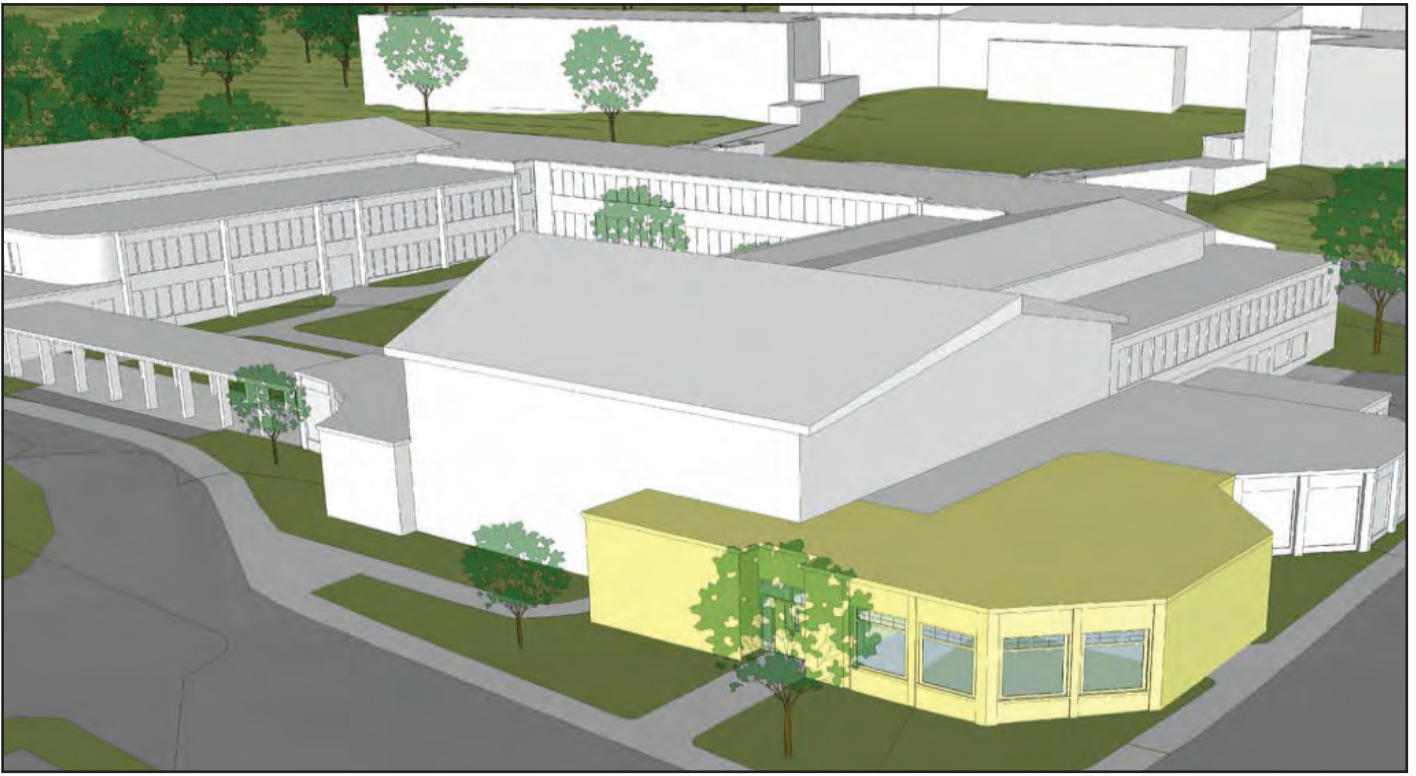
**A new multipurpose room and additional
small group instruction rooms in
Heathcote School**

\$3,387,000

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process. We appreciate your consideration and believe that the renovations will allow us to meet the basic standards of a 21st century learning environment that will adequately support a K-12 continuum of learning.

The Heathcote Building Committee
September 12, 2014

VOTE
Thursday, December 11, 2014
7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM



MIDDLE SCHOOL

We strongly support the proposed facilities plan for Scarsdale Middle School. The plan includes an instrumental music space, which has been a long-standing goal. Participation in the music program, and, in particular, the orchestra program, has grown significantly over time; the proposed space will address the issues posed by this enrollment growth. This year, more than 200 students are members of the orchestra. That represents a 45 percent-increase over the last eight years. The new space will be used up to six periods per day out of an eight-period day.

We would also support a design for the orchestra room that would provide air conditioning in order to prevent damage to expensive instruments due to excess humidity, which is an ongoing problem in the current space.

Building the orchestra/instrumental space will impact the entire school. If the orchestra has a dedicated space in which to rehearse, the stage and auditorium will be available to accommodate small, medium, and large size classes, as well as regularly occurring special events, guest speakers, collaborative projects, and service learning projects, which usually exceed the capacity of a standard classroom.

A new orchestra classroom and a renovated music room at the Middle School **\$2,097,000**

The Exploring Music program at the school has also expanded. The department has creatively cobbled together closets, former custodial areas, and storage rooms to support the program expansion. The proposed renovation of these spaces recognizes the limits of these areas as instructional spaces, and will enable the department to deliver instruction in a much more coherent manner.

The Middle School Facilities Committee
September, 2014



SCARSDALE
school bond.2014



HIGH SCHOOL

The undersigned members of the Scarsdale High School Building-Level Facilities Committee wish to offer our strong support for the projects that have been approved to move forward at the High School, namely the Learning Commons, the Fitness Center, the I-Lab, and the Maker Space/D-Lab. We are confident that these spaces will benefit students and teachers. They offer students a hybrid studying and dining space, and they offer students and teachers new areas for teaching and learning that reflect the latest innovations in curriculum and instruction--design thinking, "making," and STEAM, as well as flexible furnishings and configurations. We thank the board for listening to the recommendations of the High School committee, and we are committed to assisting the Board as we move forward.

Kenneth Bonamo, Principal

Amy Cooper, PTA President

Thomas Maguire, Teacher and STA Representative

Matthew Mandel, Student Representative



AUDITORIUM REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS

The auditorium in Scarsdale High School is as much a resource of the community as it is of the school. It is used for a variety of community activities, including presentations, meetings, lectures and concerts. The High School also uses this space extensively for all the items listed above, along with five major student theatrical productions, and concerts, recitals, and assemblies.

REPAIR OF COURTYARD DRAINAGE BEHIND THE AUDITORIUM

Water infiltration in the backstage area of the auditorium has been a problem for many years. During periods of heavy rainfall, water enters the backstage area through the walls. As a result, the area is frequently damp. On occasion, the auditorium itself floods, damaging equipment and surfaces. Given the adjacency to the stream and the high water table on this property, this repair will not eliminate the problem entirely, but it will significantly improve conditions and reduce the severity of flooding.

AUDITORIUM SEATING AND OTHER RENOVATIONS

The seats in the High School auditorium are more than 30 years old and many are in disrepair. This item has been proposed for inclusion in the annual budget for several years, but it has not been approved. House lights and aisle lighting would be replaced. Parts of the sound system (the sound board, processor and wireless microphones) would also be replaced under the bond. Funding for significant electrical work in connection with these renovations is also included.

Renovation of the High School Gym B and existing Fitness Center into a Learning Commons, Innovation Lab and collaborative meeting spaces, along with additional food preparation, serving and dining areas. Gym A will be equipped with new mechanical ventilation and lighting

\$5,091,000

Relocation and renovation of storage and offices for High School physical education and athletics program to facilitate creation of the Design Lab

\$677,000

Repairs and renovations to the High School auditorium (drainage, seating, equipment)

\$1,000,000



VOTER ELIGIBILITY FOR THE THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 11, 2014, BOND REFERENDUM

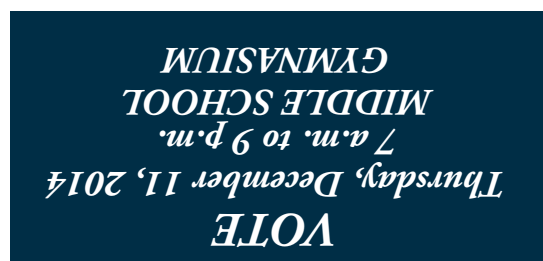
To be eligible to vote in a school bond referendum you must:

- Be registered with the Westchester County Board of Elections to vote in general elections OR
- Be registered with the School District's Board of Registration, or have voted in a school election within the past four years.

For those not already registered, registration for the Bond Referendum will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 3 from 4-9 p.m., and Friday, Dec. 5 from 1-5 p.m., in the Board of Education offices (Brewster Road side of the High School).

Voter Qualifications for Registration:

- Must be a United States citizen;
- Must be a resident of the School District for at least 30 days preceding the vote; and
- Must be at least 18 years old by Dec. 11, 2014.



No discrimination on the basis of race, gender, or religion is
exercised in connection with the educational programs or activi-
ties of the District.

SCARSDALE HIGH SCHOOL
SCARSDALE MIDDLE SCHOOL
EDGEWOOD SCHOOL
FOX MEADOW SCHOOL
GREENACRES SCHOOL
HEATHCOTE SCHOOL
QUAKER RIDGE SCHOOL

Non-Profit
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Permit No. 1022

ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR THE THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 11, 2014, BOND REFERENDUM

This is a two-step process: You must first obtain an application for your absentee ballot; after it is received and processed by the District Clerk, you will be issued an absentee ballot.

Anyone who is registered and will **not be in Scarsdale** for the vote on Dec. 11, 2014, may request an application for an absentee ballot by e-mail, regular mail, or in person. Applications are available from the District Clerk, in the Board of Education offices (914-721-2416 or anunes@scarsdaleschools.org).

If the voter wants to receive the absentee ballot by mail, the completed application must be returned to the District Clerk seven days before the vote (Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014).

If the completed application is delivered in person, it must be received no later than 5 p.m. the day before the vote (Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2014).

All absentee ballots must be delivered to the District Clerk's office no later than 5 p.m. on the day of the vote (Thursday, Dec. 11, 2014).

Insight

Scarsdale Public Schools
2 Brewster Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583

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