



Please  **January 28th**
VOTE



REPAIR

**Priority
Projects!**

RENEW

Washington Township Schools SCHOOL BOND REFERENDUM ELECTION

*F*requently *A*sked *Q*uestions



- Q:** What are the *priority* school-building infrastructure improvement projects associated with the Washington Township Schools' School Bond Referendum Election?
- A:**
 - *Heating and ventilation improvements (including air-conditioning and humidity control measures) are planned for Old Farmers Road School. In addition, Old Farmers Road School would realize an electrical service upgrade and partial roof replacement. This is a priority project as OFRS, as a whole, has experienced higher levels of relative humidity during periods of humid weather. The District will explore similar HVAC upgrades for the Flocktown Road-Kossmann and Long Valley Middle schools as part of its future planning process.*
 - *A partial roof replacement is planned for Long Valley Middle School.*
- Q:** Why is the school district planning a School Bond Referendum Election and when will the special election take place?
- A:** *By holding a School Bond Referendum Election the District becomes immediately eligible for a State Debt Service Aid Grant Award which would significantly offset the project costs. The grant award will be awarded to WTS only if the vote is successful. The vote will take place on Tuesday, January 28th. This is one of the five special election calendar dates permitted by the State.*
- Q:** What is Debt Service Aid?
- A:** *Debt Service Aid is grant monies given to school districts by the State of New Jersey that incur debt to finance school-based construction or improvement projects. WTS' debt will be short-term (approximately 1-year, short-term notes) as the District will use its existing Capital Reserve Account Monies and the Debt Service Aid received from the State to satisfy the debt.*
- Q:** How much money would a Debt Service Aid Grant Award mean for our Washington Township Schools?
- A:** *The Debt Service Aid Grant Award would be **\$1,670,000** which is approximately 40% of the projected \$4,174,248 total project cost.*
- Q:** If the State Debt Service Aid Grant Award is \$1,670,000 and the total project cost is \$4,174,248, where is the remainder of the money coming from to finance the proposed projects?
- A:** *The remaining funds will come from the school district's current Capital Reserve Account balance. Monies in a District's Capital Reserve Account can only be used for building-related projects. The District has been using Capital Reserve monies for various building improvements through the years and the Board has made it a priority to replenish funds as they are used.*
- Q:** The District has shared that the projected Tax Impact for the proposed projects is \$0. Can you explain how that is possible?
- (A: ... SEE NEXT PAGE!)**

A: *By combining the \$1,670,000 grant award with the District's existing Capital Reserve Account funds, WTS would satisfy the debt incurred as a result of the School Bond Referendum. The District would then work with the State to time the debt payment without the need to raise any additional tax dollars.*

Q: *Why has the District stated that the "anticipated" tax impact would be \$0? Why not just say it "will" be \$0?*

A: *According to the Board of Education's bonding attorney, the District must use the word "anticipated" in the event some highly unlikely circumstance arises that results in the District using its Capital Reserve Account monies for other than the identified priority projects. The District is totally committed to using the funding associated with the projects as planned!*

Q: *I understand that WTS would receive a \$1,670,000 Debt Service Aid Grant Award from the State if the referendum vote is successful. What happens to that award if the vote is unsuccessful?*

A: *If the vote is unsuccessful the District would not receive the \$1,670,000 award from the State.*

Q: *Is the Board of Education considering future capital projects?*

A: *As part of its ongoing long-range facilities planning process, the Board has begun identifying future priority projects to ensure that the children's schools are well-maintained. This process includes outdoor surfaces such as sidewalks, parking lots, playgrounds, and rooftops as well as indoor entities such as instructional spaces, lavatories, and heating/ventilation/cooling systems.*

Q: *I am concerned that the Board will not be able to complete its identified priority projects in a timely manner should the January 28th vote be unsuccessful? Should I be?*

A: *If the vote is unsuccessful the Board will not be able to complete the identified projects as originally planned since the District would not receive the \$1,670,000 State grant award it needs to complete all of the work.*

Q: *If I have questions about the January 28th School Bond Referendum Election, how can I get the answers I need?*

A: *In addition to sending out information bulletins via the District's Blackboard Communication System and using social and local media sources to share information, the District has planned a series of evening Info Sessions and daytime Coffees. Further information can be found on all school and district homepages ... look under the Quick Links section along the left side of each homepage. You can also contact Liz George (School Business Administrator) and Jeff Mohre (Superintendent) either via email (lgeorge@wtschools.org or jmohre@wtschools.org) or by phone at 908.876.4172.*

Q: *I understand that the School Bond Referendum Election is set for Tuesday, January 28th. What hours will the polls be open?*

A: *The Board of Education has established the maximum polling hours for this special election. As a result, polls will be open from 6:00am to 8:00pm. Watch for ballot/polling information in your regular US Mail.*



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Thank You and Happy New Year!

Jeff Mohre

Superintendent of Schools

1.13.20

