Dear Hastings Residents:

On Thursday, February 28, 2019, the community will have the opportunity to vote on a proposal that aims to alleviate current and foreseeable future space issues at Hillside, renovate the auditorium at Farragut Middle School, update the music suite at Hastings High School, and repair/replace items such as roofs and boilers where needed. This newsletter contains the details on the scope of the bond, an explanation of how and why the Board arrived at this final proposal, and the estimated financial and tax implications for members of the community.

The proposal we are laying out today is the result of much time, thought, exploration and careful consideration. For over one year, the District has been engaged with architecture and engineering firm H2M, as well as a committee made up of BOE Trustees along with community members. We started with a list of items totaling over $35M. Through a series of public conversations at Board meetings throughout the fall of 2018, the Board of Education considered what items to address in the current proposal.

The fact is, in addition to our schools needing necessary maintenance from years of underinvestment, our schools have space issues that are beginning to impact the quality of learning for our students. For example, at Hillside, there is currently a lack of space for music programming in addition to special education and general support services. We are at full capacity and at risk of needing to cut programs or use trailers to open up space. Without addressing these space issues now, these cuts and use of trailers could become the new normal.

Our proposal includes the addition of four classrooms plus a multi-use space that will function as a cafeteria, an auditorium, and any other use that Hillside may have for it. This multi-use room will also open up space at Hillside, allowing for the creation of a 21st Century Learning Commons to be built in the current cafeteria location.

At Farragut Middle School, the auditorium has been in disrepair for quite some time including broken chairs, a water damaged ceiling, dilapidated and damaged walls and an outdated stage. In addition, there is a need to do an abatement for asbestos, mold and lead paint. While it is currently in limited use for classes and rehearsals, in its current state it’s in no condition to be used for its original purpose as a Middle School gathering spot for large groups and special events.

At Hastings High School the HS/MS Music Rooms that are used to support our instrumental music programs have also fallen into disrepair. Hastings has always placed a high value on our Arts programs and the current condition and functioning of these spaces is being addressed through the proposed bond.

Continued on page 2
This proposed investment is an important decision for the community as a whole. To address questions and concerns, the board held a series of Community Forums. From questions raised at these forums the board created an FAQ which is in this newsletter. Additionally, you may contact us at 914-295-3099 or via email at boe@hohschools.org. You can access the full presentation as well as the FAQ document on the district website (www.hohschools.org/domain/494).

We have been working diligently to listen to all feedback, weigh the realities of the current economic environment against the need to invest in our schools, and come up with a plan that we hope will move the district forward responsibly while protecting our home values. We look forward to answering your questions and moving ahead with our proposal so we can maintain the educational environment we expect for the children of Hastings.

Sincerely,

Members of the Board of Education

Questions & Answers

Why is it so important to raise funds through a bond rather than through taxes?
What are the advantages?

By raising the funds for a capital project through a bond, it allows for the District to budget the expense over a 15-year payback period. In addition, the district receives 42.4 cents on every dollar back from the State. The bond borrowing rate is currently at a historically low rate and makes doing work now less costly.

How often do we tend to do bonds in Hastings? Is this similar to other districts?

Prior to the last bond vote in March of 2014 we hadn’t done a bond referendum since 2000. Schools typically will issue bonds every 5-7 years to address various capital needs. They range from general building repairs and upgrades to new facilities. Because of the downturn in the economy the District put off issuing a bond in 2007. In order to make sure our buildings are being properly maintained we feel it is important to do a bond proposal this winter.

Hastings actually has one of the lowest bond debts in Westchester County. Most Districts of our size have done large scale projects in the last decade. In the Rivertowns, our neighbors have all done a good amount of bond work within the last decade and like Hastings are considering doing additional work because of the favorable bond rates as well as need to keep up older facilities.

How much will this bond cost taxpayers?

The proposed bond amount of $18,383,614 will result in an increase to individual taxpayers who have a home valued at an average of $825,200 of approximately $453 per year. The increase percentage in tax rate is about 2.55%. We believe that doing the bond now will help keep the cost of maintenance and repairs lower in future budgets, resulting in some savings in our operational budget.

What were the last few bonds we did? What were their size and what did they cover?

The last bond we voted on was in 2014 for $8.1 million dollars. That bond covered the renovation of Reynolds field track and tennis courts as well as the renovation and creation of new playing fields at Burke. We also renovated our High School Auditorium, fixed various roofs, upgraded electrical services at both buildings as well as performed other building repairs. Prior to that we hadn’t done work since 2001.
WHY IS THE VOTE SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 28, INSTEAD OF LATER IN THE SPRING?
In order to maximize our ability to commence work in the summer of 2020, the Board of Education decided to have the vote a few months prior to our annual budget vote. If we put it off three months we do not believe we will receive approval of the plans and specifications from the State in time to be able to bid and award the work for the summer of 2020. Much of the work being considered has to be done when there aren’t students in the building making it necessary to have the work performed in the summer.

WHO DECIDED THAT THE MUST DO ITEMS ARE ACTUALLY MUST DO?
The list of must dos are items that are identified by our architects and engineers working along with our Director of Facilities as they annually complete the required facilities report card. As items are identified they are prioritized based on useful life and condition.

IF THE BOND DOESN’T PASS AND THE ROOF NEEDS TO BE FIXED, DOESN’T THE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAVE A FUND TO TAP INTO TO COVER THOSE COSTS?
The only rainy day fund the District has to cover this type of emergency expense is the unreserved fund balance. The current balance in the fund is approximately 1.6 million. This type of emergency repair would likely wipe out the balance. This could also cause the District to have to cut back on programs in order to have unreserved fund balance to cover any other emergencies or unanticipated expenses. Also, if the bond doesn't pass, the Board will discuss putting forth a second bond.

WHY IS THE DISTRICT RECOMMENDING AN ADDITION AT HILLSIDE?
The District is currently experiencing a lack of needed space at Hillside. With the growth of programs and additional support staff at Hillside we are maxed out on classroom space. As we project our enrollment for the next five years we see a trend of consistent growth. In order to keep class size at the community’s expectations we see a potential need to add classroom space at Hillside to ensure the ability to support small class sizes as well as grow special education programs as needed.

WHY IS DISTRICT CONSIDERING A RENOVATION AND REPURPOSE OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM? DIDN’T WE JUST RENOVATE OUR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM IN THE LAST BOND?
The MS auditorium has fallen into great disrepair and has not been functional for more than 20 plus years. The reason the District is considering this work is twofold. The area needs to be abated of asbestos and is currently a huge wasted space in our buildings. The auditorium has also had a considerable amount of water damage over the years that needs to be addressed. Renovated, this needed space will allow for school-wide assemblies and arts programming.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT WE ADD SPACE AT HILLSIDE?
If additional space is not added to Hillside Elementary School, we may either have to cut programs, put more programs “on carts,” increase class size, or add trailers for the foreseeable future. Below are a few relevant data points.

Over the past decade, the five-year rolling average enrollment at Hillside has increased by approximately 50 students and it is currently at an enrollment level not seen in 20 years. A few illustrative data points over the past decade showing growth in enrollment:

• 2008-2009 school year = 528 students
• 2013-2014 school year = 588 students
• 2018-2019 school year = 643 students

For context, here is how sq ft/child compares to other local elementary schools:

Square foot numbers below represent spaces for elementary activities only. If a portion of an elementary building is being used for central office or other purposes it was not included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018-2019</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Sq ft per child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irvington</td>
<td>83,180</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobbs Ferry</td>
<td>100,530</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardsley</td>
<td>120,609</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings on Hudson (after addition)</td>
<td>85,535</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings on Hudson (currently)</td>
<td>73,000</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q & A Continued on page 4
DO WE NEED A KITCHEN?

First, it’s helpful to put the kitchen at Hillside or “hot meals” portion of this bond into perspective. Of the $8.1M proposed addition at Hillside, the kitchen is ~$500K. That’s ~6% of the total addition at Hillside. The other ~94% of the money is a plan to create flexible and highly-usable space. To put the kitchen at Hillside further into perspective, it represents ~3% of the overall bond.

As it pertains to choosing to include the kitchen, here are some factors we considered:

• No operating cost / revenue positive – We will contract for services, which will not be an additional expense for the district. Lunch fees cover costs and generate positive revenue

• Convenience – Provides another option for working parents

• Equity - Easier to provide free and reduced lunch without stigmatization, which can increase the participation of eligible students

• Use in afterschool programs – A full kitchen for use in popular after school cooking classes

• Low risk – Plans entail turning an existing classroom into the kitchen. It can always be turned back if needed and the kitchen equipment used elsewhere in the district or sold

• Ability to provide healthy choices – We can control food choices ensuring healthy ones and limiting unhealthy ones

WHY ADD A CAFETERIA/AUDITORIUM/MULTI-USE SPACE? COULD WE HAVE CHOSEN OTHER PROGRAMMATIC SPACE?

We thought about a variety of different options for the Hillside addition. After many months of discussion and deliberation our current proposal is to add four classrooms and a multi-use space. It was approved unanimously by the Board. Here are several reasons why we chose this option:

• Creates an efficient use of space – This project was never about adding a “cafeteria”– framing it as such misses our broader space-planning objectives. Our objective has always been to create an efficient use of space. Adding a multi-use space to the south end of the building: (1) Gives a crowded and noisy lunchroom more space and moves it away from K-2 classrooms, (2) Centralizes a bigger library/learning commons in the current café, making it a hub for the K-2 classrooms and (3) Opens up the current library for two classrooms.

• Creates flexibility for the future – One question that board members kept coming back to as we considered different plans was, what type of space will help “future-proof” us—i.e. put us in a position to flex and adapt as our needs change in the future. Right now the entire multi-use space will be used as a cafeteria and auditorium. In the future, with the addition of a wall, part of the space can be used as a classroom. An open space gives us options in an uncertain future.

• Affords us a variety of additional benefits – The multi-use space also affords us additional benefits, which further increase its value. It provides: (1) Flexibility in scheduling because more students could be accommodated at lunch at one time, reducing the need to stagger so many lunch periods. (2) Additional space for small group instruction, assemblies, afterschool programs, and music rehearsals. (3) An auditorium with a viewable stage. (4) A modern, air-conditioned, community-wide resource within which to host events, fairs, and other large group gatherings.

DO THE BOARD BREAK UP THE BOND INTO A TWO-PART VOTE: REQUIRED MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONS/RENOVATIONS?

Two-part votes are often useful to break up items that are perceived as essential vs. non-essential. The premise of the above question implies there was a way to break up this bond along those lines.

Several items that we could have broken into separate votes have already been cut from the bond. Early in the bond consideration process we reduced the list of items to $25M. Through community feedback we heard concerns about this size. The BOE took a closer look at all items to determine what could be cut or pushed off and we removed $6.7M. For example, we removed parking lot renovations and full-replacement of energy inefficient windows at Hillside. For the latter, we agreed we’d replace them slowly over time in the years to come. At the High School we removed locker room renovations. We agreed we’d figure out how to get those done in other ways at a later date as it didn’t directly impact learning or programs.

If we don’t add space at Hillside we may have to cut programs or add trailers. Each of these decisions will have costs of their own.
WHAT HAPPENS IF THE REFERENDUM DOESN’T PASS?
We will be conducting an exit poll on Feb. 28 to better understand next steps, including potentially putting forth a revised bond.

At a bare minimum, if the current referendum does not pass it will push work off by a full year, to the summer of 2021 (provided we’re able to pass a different bond). The reason we chose the Feb. 28, 2019 vote date was because it’s the latest timeframe within which to get New York State approvals so that we could get into contractor bidding cycles so that work could start in the summer of 2020.

What Will the BOND PROVIDE?

FARRAGUT MIDDLE SCHOOL / HASTINGS HIGH SCHOOL
- Repoint Exterior $633,040
- Classroom Flooring $262,400
- Roofs and Skylights $1,968,000
- Public Address System $131,200
- Chimney $32,800
- Parapets $196,800
- Elevator $524,800
- Boiler Replacement $1,049,600
- Music Suite Renovation $721,600
- Auditorium Renovation $2,669,520
TOTAL FMS/HHS $8,189,760

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- Repoint Exterior $98,400
- Classroom Flooring $317,504
- Roofs and Skylights $1,180,800
- Public Address System $65,600
- Windows $262,400
- Building Addition $8,137,950
- Learning Commons $131,200
TOTAL HILLSIDE $10,193,854

Hastings-on-Hudson UFSD
BOND / DEBT COMPARISON
In the past 20 years, Hastings-on-Hudson has invested $18.15M into our physical plant via two bond issues—a 2000 bond for $10M and a 2014 bond for $8.15M.
This compares to an average of $57.9M invested by the neighboring towns of Dobbs Ferry, Irvington and Ardsley over the same period (all of which invested over $50M during this time). The effect can be seen in our annual debt service per student below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>ANNUAL DEBT SERVICE/STUDENT (2017)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irvington</td>
<td>$2742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardsley</td>
<td>$2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobbs Ferry</td>
<td>$1483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings (Post Bond)</td>
<td>$1266 (projected in 2020 if $18M bond passes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FEBRUARY 28, 2019    BOND REFERENDUM
HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
TOWN OF GREENBURGH, WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

BOND PROPOSITION

RESOLVED:
(a) That the Board of Education of the Hastings-on-Hudson Union Free School District, Westchester County, New York (the "District"), is hereby authorized to construct improvements to Hillside Elementary School, Farragut Middle School and Hastings High School and to construct an addition to Hillside Elementary School; and to expend $18,383,614 therefor; (b) that a tax in the amount of not to exceed $18,383,614 is hereby voted to pay such cost, 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 (c) that in anticipation of said tax, bonds of the District are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount of not to exceed $18,383,614, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on said bonds as the same shall become due and payable.

WHAT WILL YOU SEE ON THE BALLOT

YES | NO
---|---

Middle School Auditorium | Ceiling/Wall Damage
Building Cornices | Floor Replacement
Images below are inspiration photos ONLY to reflect what space can be. Actual design will occur after the bond is approved.

Hillside Addition that can accommodate potential solar panels

Hillside Centralized Learning Hub / Library

Hillside Multi-Purpose Room/Cafeteria
INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOTING WITH AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

There are several steps one must take to vote with an Absentee Ballot:

1. An application for an Absentee Ballot must be filled out and returned to the District Clerk’s Office.

2. The District Clerk will mail an Absentee Ballot packet to the applicant. The packet contains instructions for filling out and returning the Ballot.

3. The applicant will mail the Absentee Ballot back to the District Clerk.

4. Absentee Ballots will be kept unopened, in a locked cabinet until voting day.

The application for an Absentee Ballot must be received at least 7 days prior to voting day. The Hastings-On-Hudson UFSD Capital Bond Referendum vote will take place on Thursday, February 28, 2019. If the completed application is mailed to the District Clerk, it must be received by Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 11 a.m. This will allow ample time for an Absentee Ballot packet to be mailed back to the applicant.

If the application is hand-delivered to the District Clerk: A completed application may be returned to the District Clerk on the last day before the Hastings-On-Hudson UFSD Bond Referendum Vote, which would be Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. Upon delivering the completed application, the applicant may take, fill-out and return the Absentee Ballot to the District Clerk on the same day.*

* NOTE: if the District Clerk is not available, an alternative pick-up and drop off for Absentee Ballots will be located in the Central Office.