TACONIC HILLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Home of the TITANS

Proposed Capital Improvement Project

What You’ll Vote on
Proposition 3 - $11,542,917 Building & Site Improvements
- Security hardening.
- Tennis court reconstruction, parking, drives and site accessibility upgrades, building air conditioning, flooring replacement, mechanical and plumbing equipment upgrades, pool window and door replacement, and a greenhouse teaching space addition.
- Zero local tax impact after NYS building aid and utilization of capital and cash reserves.

Proposition 4 - $6,652,315 North Sports Complex
- Multi-sport synthetic turf field for softball, football, soccer and field hockey, and synthetic turf baseball field.
- New access drive and parking for north fields.

If Proposition 4 passes, it will go forward only if Proposition 3 also passes - both Propositions combined will cost taxpayers approximately +/- $11.00 per year (depending on town) for 15 years (this is per average $100,000 of assessed value based on current market conditions with Basic STAR).

On Tuesday, May 15, voters in the Taconic Hills Central School District will decide on two Capital Project Propositions. Proposition 3, as it will appear on the ballot, includes alterations to the existing buildings and grounds as well as a new greenhouse addition. Alterations include concentrating on safety, accessibility concerns at paved areas and sports fields, addressing equipment and building materials at the end of their useful life, reconstructing tennis courts, and adding air conditioning to teaching spaces. Proposition 4, as it will appear on the ballot, includes the development of District property for use as athletic fields. The north sports complex would include a synthetic turf, multi-sport field and a new synthetic baseball field. Voting will take place from Noon to 9:00 p.m. in the Veterans Community Room.

If approved, the proposed projects would address a variety of needs and enhancements that will improve the educational experience of our students, while contributing to the safety, accessibility, and longevity of the facilities.

The main capital project, Proposition 3, has a proposed overall cost of $11,542,917. Through a combined use of state building aid, retiring debt service, capital reserve funds, cash reserve funds, and bond financing, this portion of the project would not come with a tax increase.

The contingent capital project, Proposition 4, for sports fields to be developed on land donated to the District for this purpose, has an overall cost of $6,652,315. When combined with the cost of the main capital project the average ANNUAL cost to taxpayers is estimated at $11 per $100,000 of assessed property value, based on current market conditions, for 15 years. See chart inside this brochure for breakdown of annual cost by town. Please note that the Capital Project has no impact on the 2018-2019 budget.

Residents are encouraged to review the information provided in this brochure and to attend the information session on May 3rd at 6:30 p.m. If you have specific questions or comments, please contact the District Office at 518-325-2890. Information is available on the website at http://www.taconichills.k12.ny.us/capital-project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Neil L. Howard, Jr., Superintendent of Schools

Qualified Voters
- A citizen of the United States
- At least eighteen (18) years of age
- A resident of the District for a period of at least thirty(30) days prior to the day of the vote

Absentee ballots
Qualified voters may obtain applications for absentee ballots from the office of the School District Clerk. Completed applications for absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than May 8, 2018 if the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or until May 14, 2018 if the ballot is to be personally delivered to the voter. A listing of all persons to whom an absentee ballot is issued will be available for inspection by any qualified voter during regular business hours in the Office of the Clerk of the School District through 5:00 p.m., May 15, 2018.

For more information go to https://www.taconichills.k12.ny.us and click on CAPITAL-PROJECT LINK

Tuesday, May 15, 2018, Noon - 9:00 p.m.
Taconic Hills Veterans Community Room

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

Residents will have an opportunity to learn about the Capital Improvement Project on:

Thursday, May 3, 2018
6:30 p.m.
Taconic Hills CSD Board of Education Room

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Newburgh, NY
Permit No. 473
Questions and Answers

Q. What is a Capital Project? A. It is like home improvements for schools. By NYS Law, the school district inspects its property regularly, working with an architect to maintain a five-year, capital improvement plan. Some issues require immediate attention, while other repairs and upgrades can be spread out over time. This is done in much the same way a homeowner utilizes savings or obtains an improvement loan to fund major repairs, such as a roof. For school districts, this is called a “Capital Project”, in our case we would enter into a 15-year bond in order to pay for the project over time, to coincide with expected State Building Aid payments.

Q. Why capital project versus operations and maintenance? A. The State Education Department (SED) encourages schools district to undertake a routine schedule of capital improvements to maintain their facilities and grounds. To further encourage enhancing schools, SED reimburses districts through “Building Aid” for capital projects (different from “Operating Aid”). SED pays a percentage of capital project costs. Millions like exterior pavement and interior flooring, which have not been addressed since the original building construction, are showing typical signs of degradation. The tennis courts have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair, and require complete reconstruction. Mechanical and plumbing equipment, like hot water heaters and chillers, also original, have become costly to maintain, and replacement is needed.

Q. Why doesn’t the District just include these items in the annual budget? A. By creating a Capital Project from the work that needs to be done, the District will receive 41.6¢ back on every dollar spent. Without that reimbursement from NY State, the entire cost would rest with the tax-payers.

Major construction cannot be absorbed into the annual budget and is best funded and paid over several years.

Q. Why is voter approval needed? A. Voter approval is required whenever it is necessary to maintain currently levied tax amounts, increase the tax levy, and expend fund from capital reserves. Money placed into capital reserves must be earmarked for specific projects, and can only be spent on those projects for which it was intended, via a voter referendum.

Q. What is included and why is the project needed? A. The project includes improvements to security, aging materials and equipment, a greenhouse addition to support curriculum, as well as upgrades for increased building cooling capacity and athletics programs. Materials like exterior pavement and interior flooring, which have not been addressed since the original building construction, are showing typical signs of degradation. The tennis courts have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair, and require complete reconstruction. Mechanical and plumbing equipment, like hot water heaters and chillers, also original, have become costly to maintain, and replacement is needed. Building cooling is important for staff and student comfort, while the greenhouse addition would allow for classes to be conducted in the space to supplement several programs.

The Board of Education prioritized the scope of work included in the project based on the current needs of the building, our student occupants and the possibility of resolving athletic field usage conflicts.

Q. Why now? A. The District has worked over several years to establish capital reserves for the purposes of using them to harness state aid and minimize local share tax increases, in order to execute capital construction that is outside the means of the annual operations budget.

Q. Over time, our facility needs will continue to grow, not diminish or go away. We don’t expect SED’s contribution to capital project costs to get any better than it is right now.

We also know that construction costs continue to escalate with each passing year. If we choose to wait and pursue the same project in the future, we would expect the cost to the taxpayers to be higher.

Q. What happens if the Capital Project is NOT Approved? A. Costs could go up. The financing for this project will allow the Taconic Hills Central School District to spread payments for the work over several years to correspond with the building aid that we receive from the State. If voters choose to vote down the project, several of the items will need to be spent on those projects for which it was intended, via a voter referendum.

Q. Isn’t State Aid just my tax dollars too? A. Yes, it is. The New York State Legislature has given all Districts in the state an opportunity to use tax dollars to enhance their communities through school building improvements and renovations. This is an opportunity to keep some of those tax dollars in our own community and improve the educational setting for our children.

Q. Will there be any surprise costs after the voting? A. No. We are asking the voters to approve the maximum borrowing that is needed for this project. The cost can only be lowered after the vote.
Questions and Answers

Q. What is a Capital Project?
A. It is like home improvements for schools. By NYS Law, the school district inspects its property regularly, working with an architect to maintain a five-year, capital improvement plan. Some issues require immediate attention, while other repairs and upgrades can be spread out over time. This is done in much the same way a homeowner utilizes savings or obtains an improvement loan to fund major repairs, such as a roof. For school districts, this is called a “Capital Project,” in our case we would enter into a 15-year bond in order to pay for the project over time, to coincide with expected State Building Aid payments.

Q. Why capital project versus operations and maintenance?
A. The State Education Department (SED) encourages school districts to undertake a routine schedule of capital improvements to maintain their facilities and grounds. To further encourage schools, SED reimburses districts through “Building Aid” for capital projects (different from “Operating Aid”). SED pays a percentage of capital project costs, in our case 41.6%, and the district pays the balance known as “Local Share.” SED allows districts to undertake major improvements and take advantage of Building Aid every five years.

Q. What is the District just include these items in the annual budget?
A. By creating a Capital Project from the work that needs to be done, the District will receive 41.6% back on every dollar spent. Without that reimbursement from NY State, the entire cost would rest with the tax-payers.

Q. What is included and what is the project needed?
A. The project includes improvements to security, aging materials and equipment, a greenhouse addition to support curriculum, as well as upgrades for increased building cooling capacity and athletics programs. Materials like exterior pavement and interior flooring, which have not been addressed since the original building construction, are showing typical signs of degradation. The tennis courts have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair, and require complete reconstruction. Mechanical and plumbing equipment, like hot water heaters and chillers, also original, have become costly to maintain, and replacement is needed. Building cooling is important for staff and student comfort, while the greenhouse addition would allow for classes to be conducted in the space to supplement several programs.

The Board of Education prioritized the scope of work included in the project based on the current needs of the building, our student occupancy and the possibility of resolving athletic field usage conflicts.

Q. Why now?
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Q. Why is voter approval needed?
A. Voter approval is required whenever it is necessary to maintain currently levied tax amounts, increase the tax levy, and expend or expand funds from capital reserves. Money placed into capital reserves must be earmarked for specific projects, and can only be spent on those projects for which it was intended, via a voter referendum.

Q. Why doesn’t the District just include these items in the annual budget?
A. Costs could go up. The financing for this project will allow the Taconic Hills Central School District to spread payments for the work over several years to correspond with the building aid that we receive from the State. If voted down, several of the items will need to be addressed in the annual operating budget thus taking funds away from our academic programs and overall operations. Other items such as the flooring, paving, and mechanical systems, will continue to deteriorate leading to continued high maintenance costs and unsatisfactory energy savings.

Q. Over time, our facility needs will continue to grow, not diminish or go away. We don’t expect SED’s contribution to capital project costs to get any better than it is right now.
A. We also know that construction costs continue to escalate with each passing year.

Q. If we choose to wait and pursue the same project in the future, we would expect the cost to the taxpayers to be higher.
A. If facility construction work were to be completed out of the Operations and Maintenance budget, there would be NO STATE AID (100% Local Share).

Q. What happens if the Capital Project is NOT Approved?
A. If voted down, several of the items will need to be addressed in the annual operating budget thus taking funds away from our academic programs and overall operations. Other items such as the flooring, paving, and mechanical systems, will continue to deteriorate leading to continued high maintenance costs and unsatisfactory energy savings.

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A. No. We are asking the voters to approve the maximum borrowing that is needed for this project. The cost can only be lowered after the vote.
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**Meeting**

Thursday, May 3, 2018
6:30 p.m.

Taconic Hills CSD
Board of Education Room

**ABSENTEE BALLOTS**

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Sincerely,

Dr. Neil L. Howard, Jr., Superintendent of Schools

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**VOTING MATTERS**

Tuesday, May 15, 2018, Noon - 9:00 p.m.
Taconic Hills Veterans Community Room

**QUALIFIED VOTERS**

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**What You’ll Vote on**

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