

Questions and Answers about the October 17 Capital Project Vote

Q: Why is this project necessary?

A: This project seeks to upgrade and renovate our physical infrastructure in order to provide an educational environment that meets the needs of our students in a time of changing educational demands.

Many of our buildings' critical systems have reached or passed the end of their lifespan. This project would replace or upgrade these systems, including boilers, lighting, roofs, and mechanical systems. Many of these systems and equipment are original to the buildings. Currently, more efficient and cost-saving products are available.

The project would also bring district buildings to local and state codes as well as state education department recommendations for classroom size and other requirements.

The Horseheads district has long been recognized as providing the best education in the region. The district at one time possessed the best facilities as well, but this is no longer the case. Area districts have completed many capital projects on a greater scale than Horseheads. The district facilities staff have always worked hard to maintain buildings and grounds, but over time, wear and tear on the physical infrastructure must be remedied.

We want our students to be able to meet and exceed their potential and be contributing members of a global community. Our facilities must be able to support initiatives such as experiential and inquiry-based learning, STEM/STEAM/STREAM (science, technology, research, engineering, arts, and math), and 21st century skills.

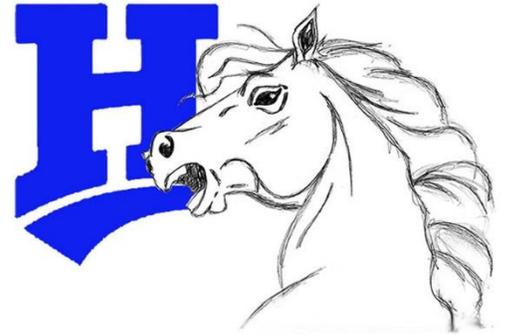
A quality school district is necessary to maintain property values and to attract businesses and families to our community.

Q: If approved, when would the project begin and when would it be complete?

A: If the project is approved, the first step is to finalize design plans and submit them to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for approval. Once the project is approved, the project would be submitted for the bid process. We would expect to begin construction in Spring/Summer 2018. We expect the project to be completed by the summer of 2022.

Q: What is state aid?

A: New York State Aid is the major source of funding provided by the state to school districts and municipalities. It comes from taxes everyone pays to the state. State building aid goes to all districts with approved capital projects. Horseheads has not utilized a significant portion of this aid in many years, yet Horseheads taxpayers pay into funding state building aid, thus helping to improve other districts rather than our own. Horseheads 2030 seeks to secure Horseheads' share of vital building funds for our school district.



Building Our Future Now

Q: If this project is approved, will students be displaced as classrooms are renovated?

A: Classroom upgrades would occur at the High School and Middle School, but we do not expect that students would be displaced. Construction would take place during the summer months. There may be some classes reassigned to other classrooms while work is finalized, but we will work to keep that to a minimum.

Q: What is the BCS and what does it have to do with the project?

A: BCS stands for Building Condition Survey. The New York State Education Department requires schools districts to submit a BCS every five years, describing the state of the infrastructure and building needs. In 2015, Horseheads' BCS identified \$159 million in necessary repairs, replacements, and/or upgrades plus construction fees and incidental costs.

The BCS has served as a guideline for discussions about the infrastructure of the district. Using this guideline and state funding formulas, the district, along with our architect and financial advisors, have come up with this plan as a first step toward the upgrading of the entire district.

View the district's 2015 BCS here:

<http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/uploadeddocs/2015BCS.pdf>.

Q: Why is most of the work at the High School? What about the other schools?

A: The bulk of this project is at the High School because the building has the most needs, as identified through the district's Building Condition Survey. The High School is also the building where all of our students will complete their public education leading to the beginning of their adult life, whether it be through college, work, or other post-secondary plans.

Our Middle/Intermediate complex will see a great deal of work as well, upgrading science, technology, and art classrooms as well as enlarging the cafeteria.

Elementary schools will see some work, upgrading critical mechanical systems, playgrounds, parking lots, and other items. Future projects will focus on these schools to upgrade classrooms and other areas. Any future project will be brought to voters as well.

Q: Have there been capital projects like this in the past?

A: Not to this extent. This would be one of the most comprehensive projects in our district since buildings were built in the 1950s and 60s. Much smaller project have been implemented in various parts of the district. For the past several years, the district has spent funds from the educational budget on small capital expenditures, with amounts ranging from \$300,000 to \$1 million annually.

Q: What happened to the building study a couple of years ago?

A: The building consolidation study, or facilities use/grade configuration study, came to a conclusion last year, when the Board of Education chose the "green option," which meant that no schools would be closed at this time. This study also used the Building Consolidation Study (BCS) to determine what costs would be necessary to upgrade/repair the buildings. The board's decision to keep all of our schools open at this time also included the need to improve our district's buildings and grounds.

Horseheads Central School District: Building Our Future Now

Q: What about the merger study with Elmira Heights - is that subject closed?

A: In December of 2015, after many months of public meetings and discussion, 83% of the voters in Horseheads voted down the idea of merging with our neighboring district. This told our Board of Education and administration that the community wishes to keep our district the Horseheads Central School District, closing this subject and moving forward.

Q: What is VOIP?

A: Voice over Internet Protocol, or VOIP, is technology that uses a broadband Internet connection to make calls instead of a regular phone line. VOIP improves safety and security. If a 911 call is made, VOIP will tell the call center exactly where the caller is. Currently, our system only shows the building location. Additionally, VOIP is more efficient and cost-effective than our current system, and many of the costs are eligible for state aid.

Q: If passed, how will we know the project is successful?

A: A successful construction project comes in on time and within budget. However, this project is much more than a construction project. This project would create clearly marked secure main entrances and improve traffic flow at our schools, enhancing safety, security, and efficiency.

It would eliminate the use of educational funds in our annual budget to repair and improve the quality of district facilities and classroom for students, staff, and community.

The project would result in a centralized High School library with updated educational resources and technology, along with better flow for students. District-wide improvements in mechanical systems would increase energy efficiency. We would complete the technology upgrades and update our phone system district-wide, providing better products, safety/security, and services for our students and community.

Overall, we will know that this project has succeeded when we see improved morale, efficiency, productivity, achievement, and success for our students, staff, and community in our global society.

For more information, visit <http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/hh2030.cfm>, or email us at hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.