

Vote

Horseheads Central School District Capital Project Referendum Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Dear Community Members:

On Tuesday, December 7, the Horseheads Board of Education will ask district residents to vote on the next major district-wide capital improvement plan called *Horseheads 2030: Continuing Our Build*.

Voters approved the first project of our plan in October 2017 with 82% voting yes. That project has resulted in major improvements at the High School and Middle/Intermediate complex, with some improvements at the elementary schools. This second of three projects would continue the build, upgrading more areas to current standards.

This project brings more focus to our elementary schools, adding classrooms, renovating cafeterias and gyms, and improving the environment for our elementary students. There would also be additional work at the High School, including additional classroom renovations, a multi-purpose gym facility, and the addition of locker rooms, physical therapy spaces, and music storage at the new district stadium. There will be gym/locker room improvements, roofing, and parking lot redesign at the Middle/Intermediate schools. More information on the proposed project is on the pages of this newsletter.


This project would also enable the district to regulate the temperatures in our classrooms/buildings through the continued installation and upgrade of heating/ventilating and cooling systems. Nearly all stores, businesses, and government buildings provide temperature controlled spaces, with air conditioning as the weather determines. We believe our schools should too so that our students can be in an environment that is more conducive to learning. The upgraded mechanical systems of this project would address both heating and cooling in our schools.

Like the first project, this project would utilize the maximum state aid available to the district so that the impact to our local taxpayer would be as minimal as possible. We know that taxes fund state aid, but we also are aware that these state funds would go to school districts elsewhere in the state if we do not secure them for our district.

We are proud that our first project is coming in within budget, and since the project began, the district's full value tax rate has decreased. This first project has brought some great improvements to our schools, including our new multi-purpose stadium, where football and soccer games have brought our community together and increased school spirit. Use of this facility will include spring sports and other school and community events and performances.

The current and proposed improvements will enable us to provide the best educational atmosphere for our children. It is not just our mission to educate our children; it is our responsibility. Up-to-date schools and facilities also contribute to maintaining property values, helping to attract businesses and families to our district and region.

We ask all residents to vote on Tuesday, December 7. Voting will take place from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the Horseheads High School South Gym. Thank you.



H **Vote**
December 7
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
High School South Gym
Safety protocols will be followed
Masks required

Sincerely,



Kristine Dale, Board of Education President



Dr. Thomas J. Douglas, Superintendent of Schools

Horseheads 2030: Continuing Our Build

The project to be offered to voters on December 7 includes upgrades and improvements to district schools and totals \$122,254,993. It is the second of a three-phase project to bring needed improvements to all district facilities.

In October of 2017, voters approved a \$94 million capital improvement project to begin updating our district schools and facilities. We called the project *Horseheads 2030: Building Our Future Now* because the students entering PreK at the time would be graduating in 2030. The first project, which focused on spaces at the High School and Middle/Intermediate complex and operational systems at the elementary schools, is nearing completion.

This new project would bring additions and improvements to Big Flats, Gardner Road, and Ridge Road elementary schools as the district phases out the use of Center Street for students. Through this project, the district would redraw attendance zones so that enrollment across elementary schools is more balanced, and improve boundary lines so that students attend the elementary school closest to their home when possible.

As one of the district's oldest buildings, Center Street would require extensive mitigation work to continue to be up to state standards for students to be in the building. The school is safe in its current state, but once any part of it goes under construction, full asbestos and lead abatement must occur. The cost for this work would require a significant local taxpayer share even with state funding. Center Street would be phased out as a student-use building with as minimal impact on students as possible and transitioned to an adult-use building.

This project also includes the renovation of gymnasiums across the district and the addition of locker rooms, physical therapy space, and music storage at the multi-purpose stadium at the High School. Additionally, this project would address the environmental climate at all schools, preparing them for updated heating, ventilating, and cooling controls.

The scope of work for our capital projects was developed through planning and study with the assistance of the district's architect, construction manager, and financial advisors. The district also used the state-required Building Condition Survey and worked with students, staff, and community members to develop the scope of the district's capital projects in 2016.

Vote Tuesday, December 7
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Horseheads High School South Gym
Safety protocols will be followed • Masks required



Mr. Folsbee's English class meets outside the new library at the High School on a sunny October day this fall.

Elementary Schools

Ridge Road, Gardner Road, and Big Flats would see cafeteria and kitchen renovations, gymnasium/stage renovations/additions, and classroom additions. The additions would allow the district to redraw and improve attendance zones as we phase out the use of Center Street for students. The libraries at Big Flats and Ridge Road would also be relocated and renovated, and the library at Gardner Road would be renovated. HVAC upgrades and replacements, playground improvements, and parking lot and sidewalk improvements would take place at all three schools.

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Middle/Intermediate Schools

The Middle/Intermediate complex on Sing Sing Road would see gymnasium and locker room renovations, roof replacement, upgrades and replacements for HVAC, and a redesign of the main parking lot for better traffic flow.

High School

At the High School, there would be renovations of several classrooms adjacent to a new multi-purpose physical education and athletics facility in the south wing. This space would include a large gym with several partitioned physical education spaces, indoor track, wrestling room, flexible training/exercise space, and weight room. The High School complex would also see upgrades and replacements for HVAC and site improvements including sidewalks, traffic flow, and parking lots.

Multi-Purpose Stadium

The multi-purpose stadium at the High School would be completed with locker rooms, physical therapy/trainer spaces, and a music storage room adjacent to the main entrance.



Q&A

Q: Why is this project needed?

A: Capital improvement projects like this one improve the educational environment for our current and future students. This project is an investment in our community, continuing the improvements to our district. A quality school district with up to date facilities



helps to maintain property values and brings families and businesses to our community.

The first project included a portion of the upgrades and improvements identified by the district in the 2015 Building Condition Survey, a state-required document surveying the district's infrastructure. The main focus of the first project was the High School and Middle/Intermediate School, with basic operational and safety systems in our elementary schools.

This project would bring improvements and upgrades to elementary school cafeterias, kitchens, and gymnasiums. It will add classrooms to the three elementary schools to allow the district to redraw and improve attendance zones. The project also includes additional improvements at the High School and Middle/Intermediate school complex.

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

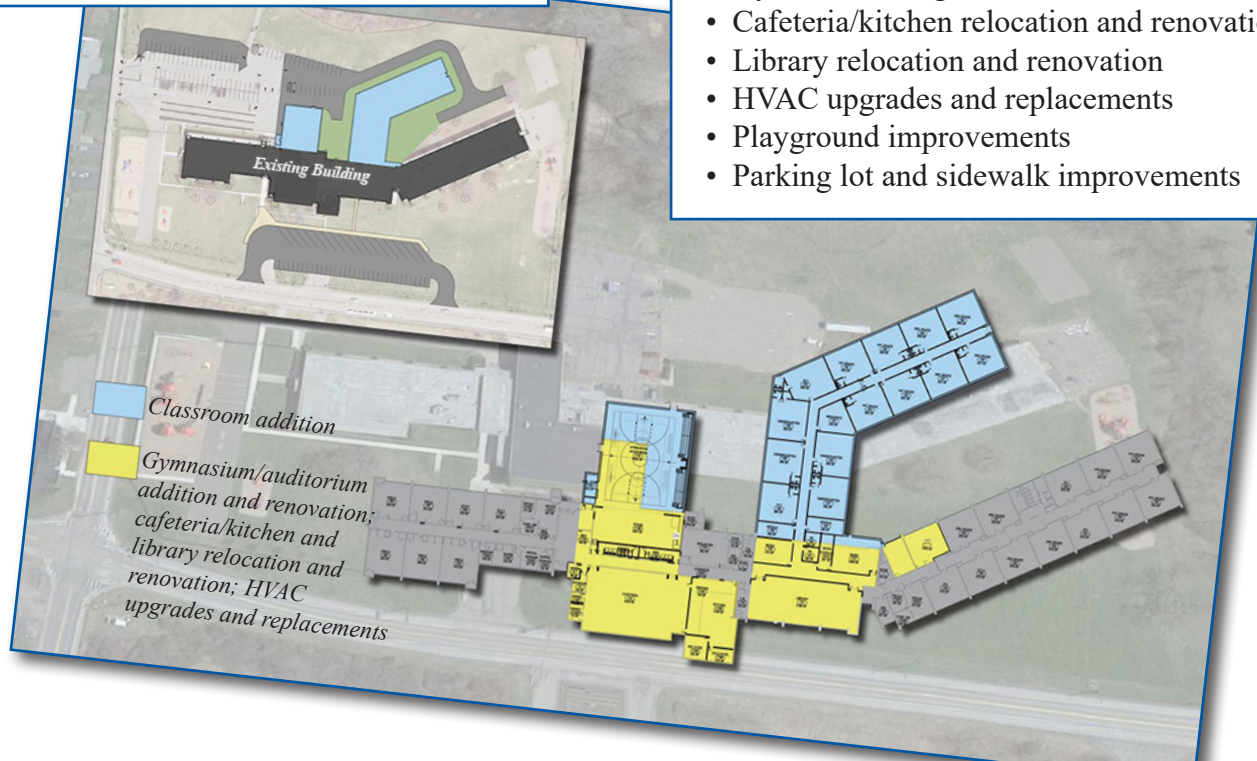
A: If the project is approved, the district would work with its architect and financial advisor to finalize the design plans to be submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for approval. Once the state approves the plans, the project will be publicly bid. We expect some bids to be awarded as early as the spring of 2023, with phased construction beginning in the summer of 2023. We anticipate the scope of this second major project to be completed Fall 2026 to Summer 2027.

Vote
Tuesday, December 7
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
High School South Gym
Safety protocols will be followed • Masks required
Questions? Call 607-739-5601 x4260 or email
hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

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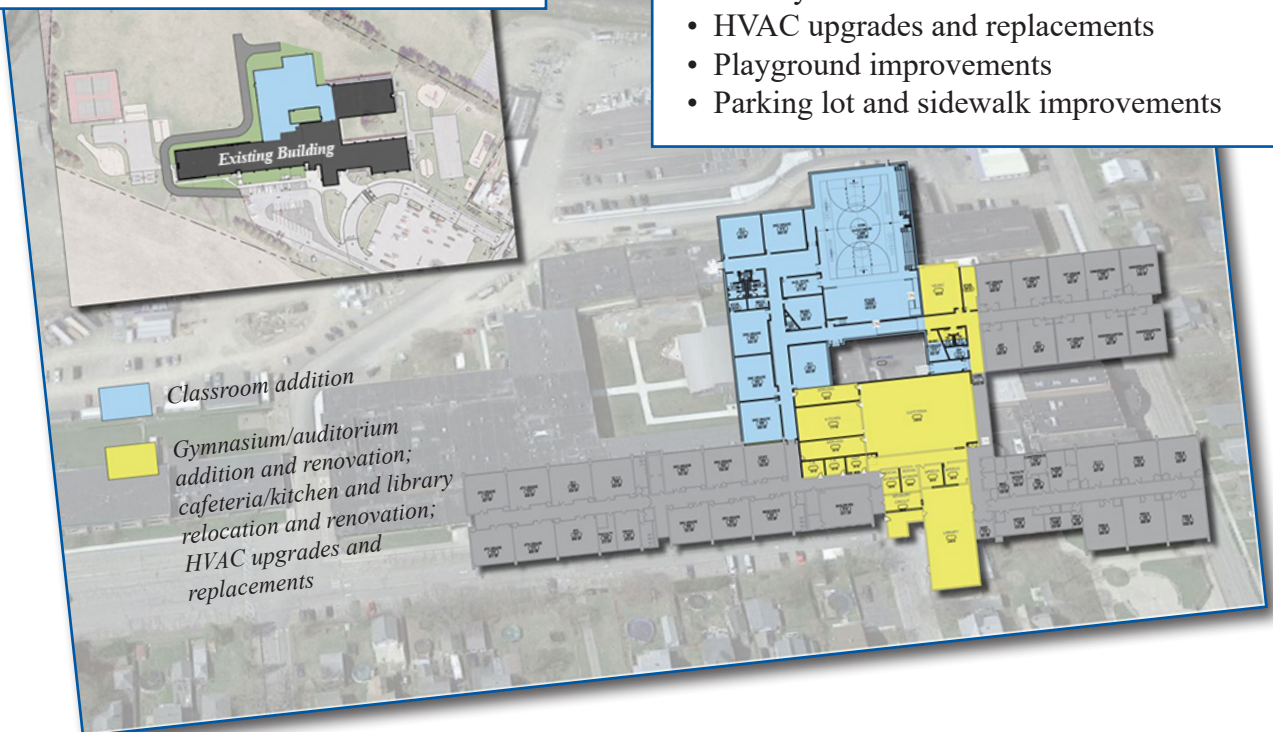
What would the project include?

Ridge Road Elementary School
\$24,958,373



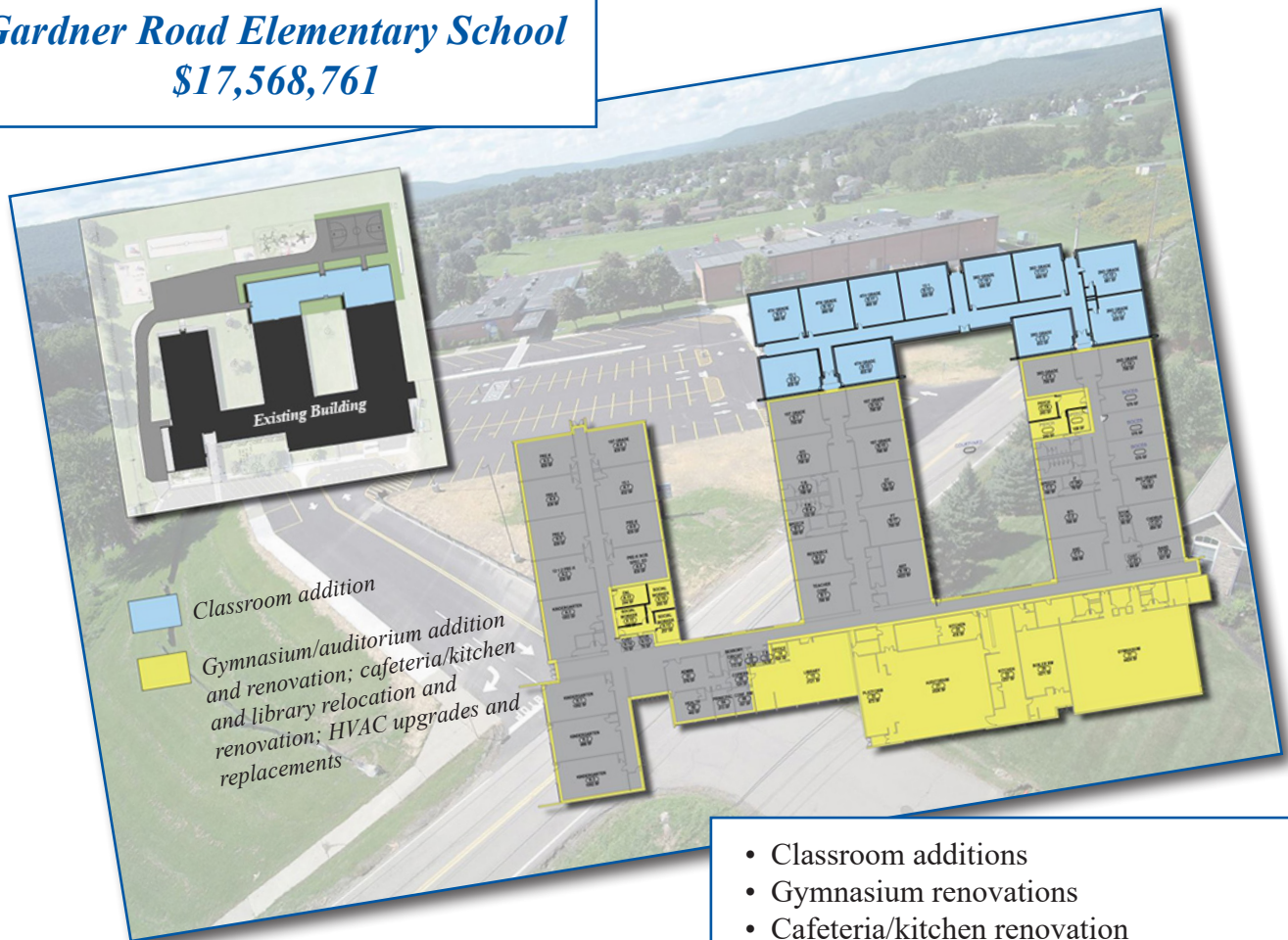
- Classroom additions
- Gymnasium/stage addition/renovations
- Cafeteria/kitchen relocation and renovation
- Library relocation and renovation
- HVAC upgrades and replacements
- Playground improvements
- Parking lot and sidewalk improvements

Big Flats Elementary School
\$19,603,542



- Classroom additions
- Gymnasium/stage addition/renovations
- Cafeteria/kitchen relocation and renovation
- Library relocation and renovation
- HVAC upgrades and replacements
- Playground improvements
- Parking lot and sidewalk improvements

Gardner Road Elementary School
\$17,568,761



- Classroom additions
- Gymnasium renovations
- Cafeteria/kitchen renovation
- Library renovation
- HVAC upgrades and replacements
- Playground improvements
- Parking lot and sidewalk improvements

Vote Tuesday, December 7 • 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. • High School South Gym

Absentee Ballots

Registered voters who cannot get to the polls on December 7 due to illness or travel may vote by using an absentee ballot. Current rules allow any voter who is at risk of contracting or spreading a communicable disease like COVID-19 to request an absentee ballot.

Applications for absentee ballots are available in the district's Business Office, 143 Hibbard Road, Horseheads, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. up to and including December 6.

Completed ballots must be returned to the Business Office, 143 Hibbard Road, Horseheads, no later than 5 p.m. December 7.

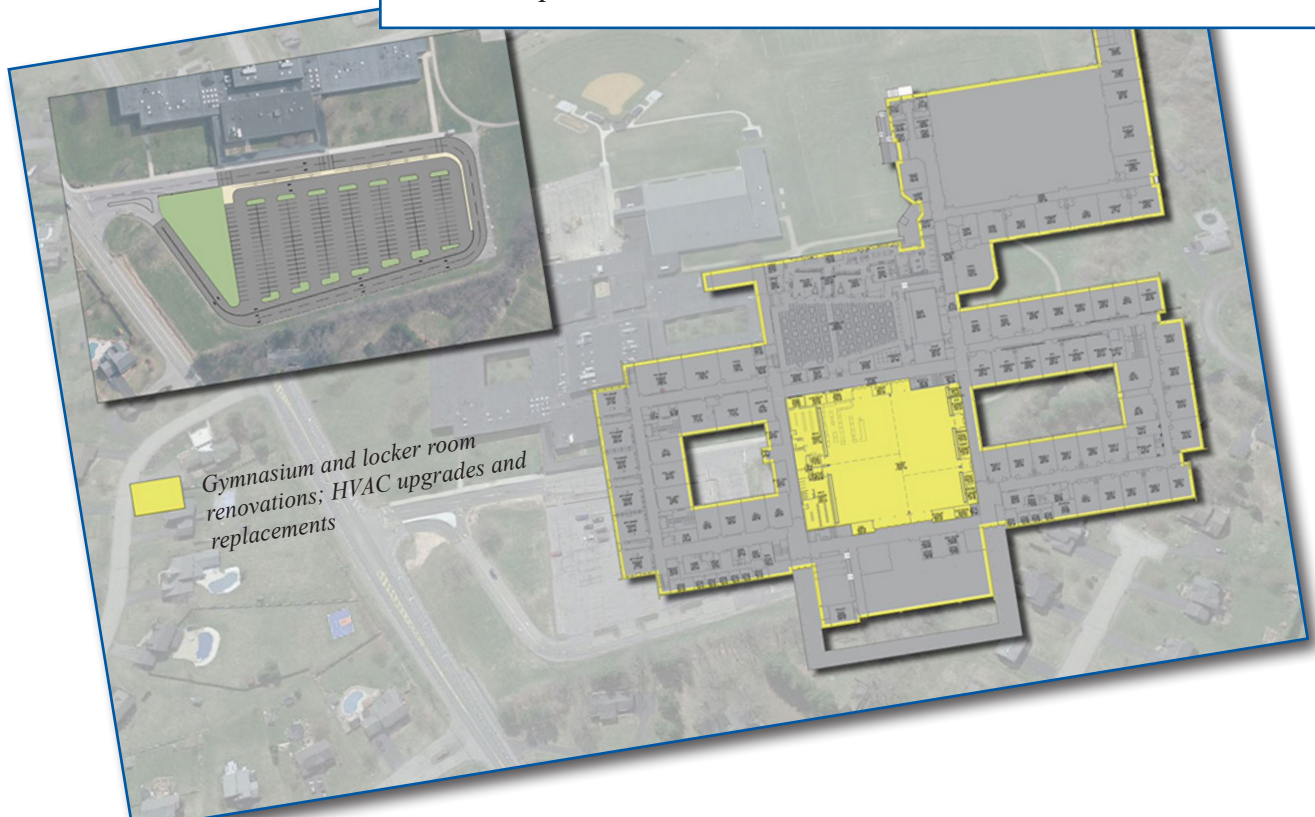
The district mails absentee ballots to voters listed as "permanently disabled" by the Chemung County Board of Elections.

Questions? Call (607) 739-5601, x4260.

What would the project include?

Intermediate School/Middle School
\$12,354,839

- Main parking lot circulation improvements and asphalt replacement
- Parking lot and sidewalk improvements
- Gymnasium and locker room renovations
- Intermediate School playground improvements
- HVAC upgrades and replacements
- Roof replacements



Capital Project Vote

Tuesday, December 7

7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

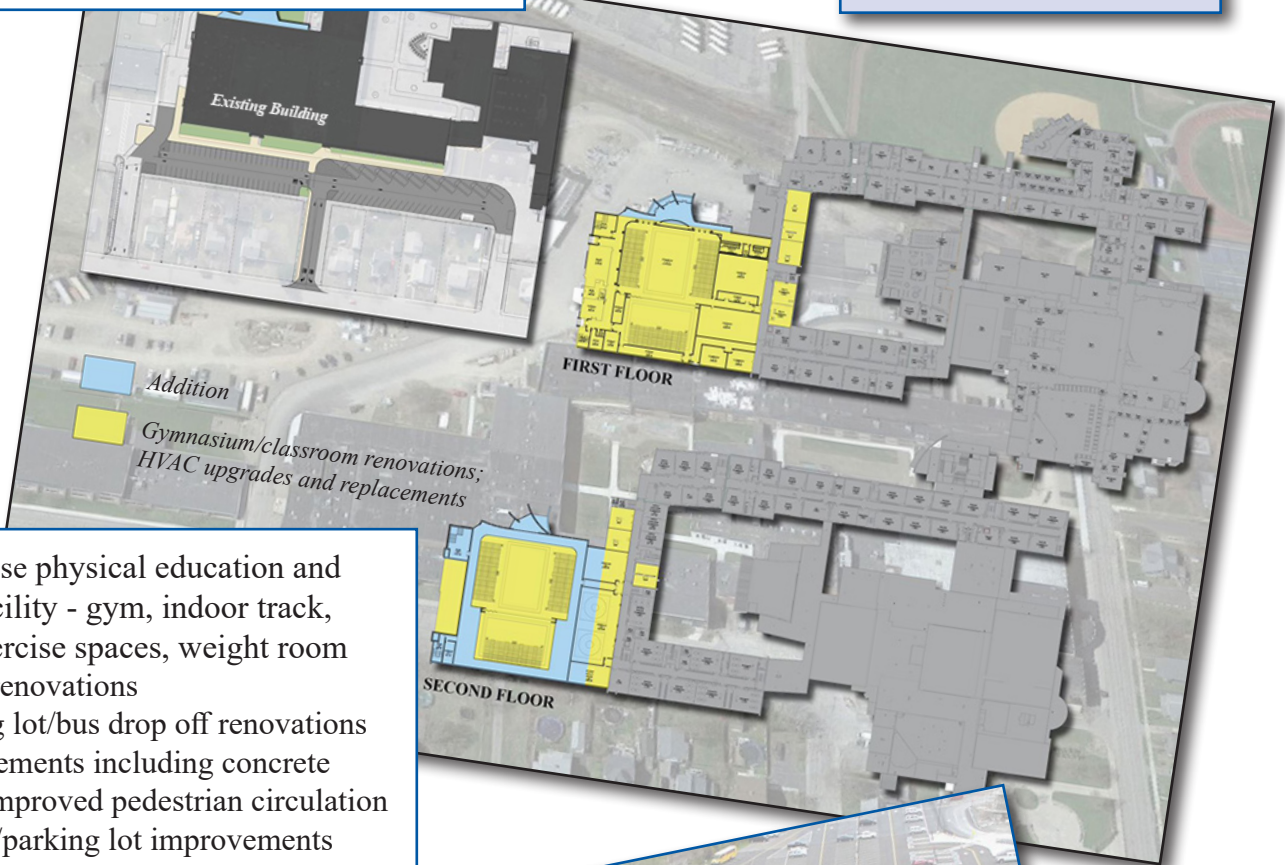
Horseheads High School South Gym

Safety protocols will be followed • Masks required

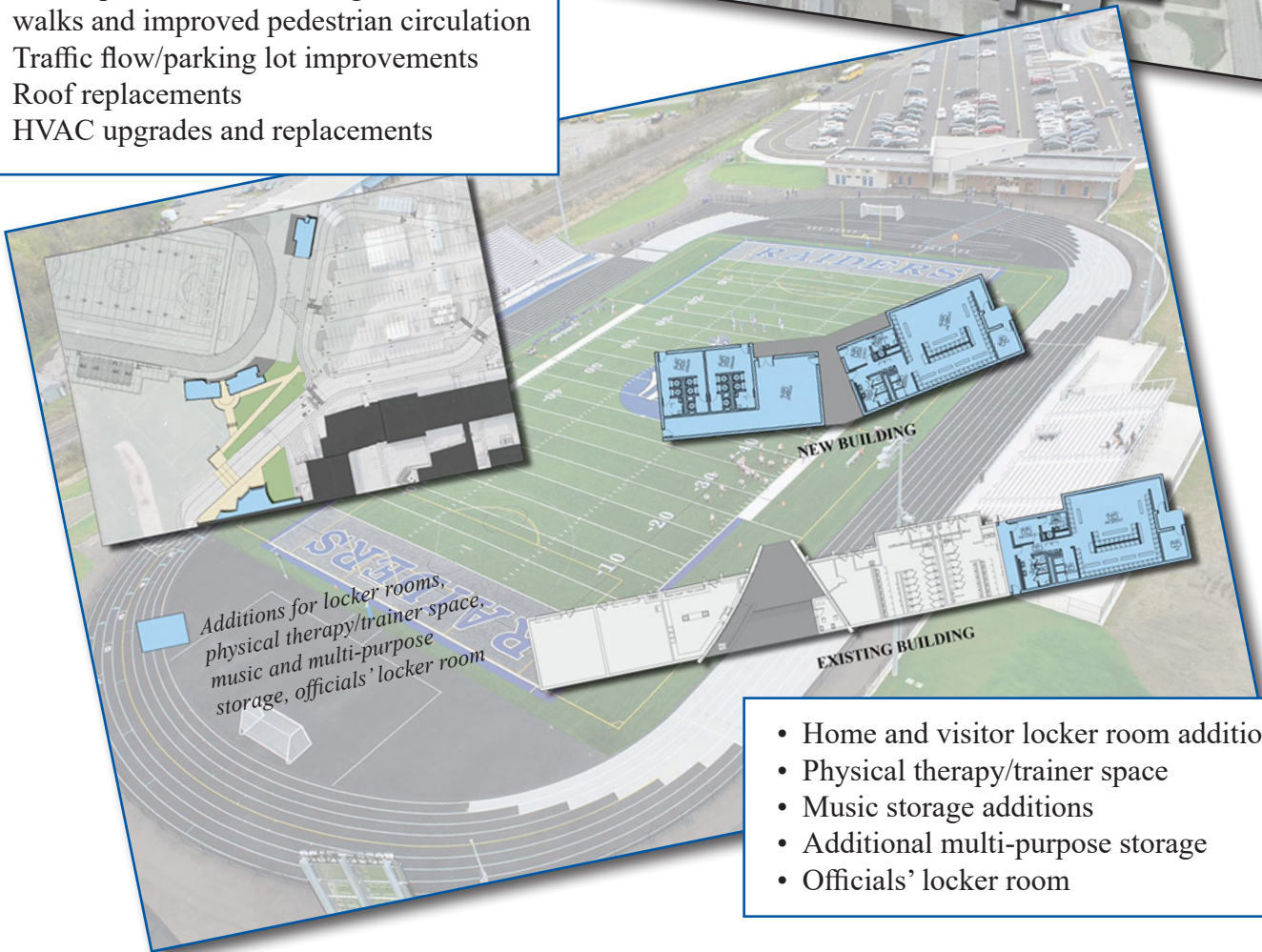
Questions? Call 739-5601, x4260.

High School/District Stadium
\$47,769,478

Vote December 7
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.



- Multi-purpose physical education and athletics facility - gym, indoor track, training/exercise spaces, weight room
- Classroom renovations
- East parking lot/bus drop off renovations
- Site improvements including concrete walks and improved pedestrian circulation
- Traffic flow/parking lot improvements
- Roof replacements
- HVAC upgrades and replacements



- Home and visitor locker room additions
- Physical therapy/trainer space
- Music storage additions
- Additional multi-purpose storage
- Officials' locker room

How would the project be funded?

The project would be financed with 15-year bonds, which will be paid for primarily with New York State building aid. Additional funds would come from existing district resources and money from the district's capital reserve to minimize the local share.

The district's financial advisors have been conservative in estimating interest rates and local share. Please note that the district estimated a small increase in the tax rate for the project approved in 2017; however, the tax rate has actually decreased since the project began due to assessment growth in our community and careful planning by the district regarding tax levy.

State Building Aid

New York State offers building aid to school districts on eligible building projects. The state uses a complex formula to determine aid, using a building's maximum cost allowance as set by the state. The district, architect, and financial advisors have worked to develop this project, maximizing state aid and minimizing local impact.

The district's current state building aid ratio is 82.1%. This means **the district will receive 82.1% of eligible costs as state aid to fund this project over 15 years.**

Existing District Resources

The district budgets \$1 million per year for small capital projects. **The plan is to allocate these funds to this larger capital project each year for fifteen years for a total of \$15,000,000.**



Capital Reserve

The capital reserve is a savings account the district can use to save money toward large scale capital projects over time. In May 2017, district voters approved an increase to an existing Capital Reserve limit. In addition, a new capital reserve was approved by voters in May 2019. **The district would use \$10,000,000 from these reserves for this project.**

Local Property Tax

The district's financial advisors have arrived at a conservative estimate of a 6.34% increase in the tax levy to fund this project over 15 years.

For a home with a full value of \$100,000 without a STAR exemption, this would amount to an increase of **\$109.90, or 30 cents per day**, phased in over a four-year period beginning in 2023. If the homeowner has the **Basic STAR exemption**, the estimated increase would be **\$76.93**; for those with the **Enhanced STAR exemption**, the increase would be **\$32.20**.

Cost Breakdown

Big Flats Elementary School	\$19,603,542
Gardner Road Elementary School	\$17,568,761
Ridge Road Elementary School	\$24,958,373
Intermediate/Middle Schools	\$12,354,839
<u>High School and District Stadium</u>	<u>\$47,769,478</u>
Total	\$122,254,993

Tax Impact

Tax rate impact per \$1,000 full value:	\$1.099
Estimated annual tax impact to a \$100,000 full value home:	\$109.90
Estimated annual tax impact to a \$100,000 full value home with Basic STAR:	\$76.93
Estimated annual tax impact to a \$100,000 full value home with Enhanced STAR:	\$32.20

District Tax Rate on Full Value Assessment

The district's current tax rate is \$17.32 per thousand on full value assessment. Last year's tax rate was \$18.00 per thousand. Ten years ago, the tax rate was \$18.26 per thousand. This decrease is due to good financial stewardship and growth in property values across the district.

Full value assessment means a property's value is assessed at 100% of market value. The district is made up of all or parts of seven municipalities. Each municipality determines its own level of assessment. Some maintain assessments at full market value, and some do not.

Because each municipality within a school district has its own level of assessment, the assessments must be equalized to full market value prior to determining the tax rate for each municipality. The district does this by applying equalization rates provided by the state's Department of Taxation and Finance. If your tax bill shows a different tax rate than \$17.32, this means that your municipality does not assess at full value.

If you have questions about your taxes, please call the Business Office at (607) 739-5601, x4217.

Tax Rate History

Year	Full Value Tax Rate per Thousand	Tax Rate % Change
2012-13	\$18.26	0.88%
2013-14	\$17.99	-1.48%
2014-15	\$17.84	-0.83%
2015-16	\$18.04	1.12%
2016-17	\$17.78	-1.44%
2017-18	\$17.54	-1.35%
2018-19	\$17.98	2.51%
2019-20	\$18.04	0.34%
2020-21	\$18.00	-0.22%
2021-22	\$17.32	-3.78%

Vote December 7 • 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Q&A, continued from page 3

Q: How has the tax rate changed since the approval of the first project in 2017?

A: The current tax rate is \$17.32 per thousand of a home's full value assessment. In 2017, when the first project was approved by voters, the tax rate per thousand of full assessed value was \$17.54, so the full value tax rate has decreased -1.25% since the



project was approved. The current year tax rate is a decrease of -3.78% from last year (\$18.00 per thousand of full value assessment). Overall, the district was able to manage its yearly budgets since 2017 and complete a \$94 million capital project during the same time while lowering the tax rate.

Q: Why weren't the stadium locker rooms and music storage built in the first project?

A: The entire stadium complex could not be completed in the first project without a significant local burden on the taxpayer.

Not all capital expenditures are state aidable. Additionally, the state sets the aidable amount a district can spend on construction during a specific project, based on a complex formula. Any unaidable work and any amount beyond the aidable amount must be paid for at the local level, without state aid. The district developed a plan to minimize the impact on the local tax base by distributing unaidable construction throughout the district's capital projects. It would not

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Public Hearing
Tuesday, November 30, 6 p.m.
High School Multi-Media Center

Q&A, continued from page 9

have been fiscally responsible to have completed the entire stadium complex in the first project.

So far this year, the stadium has held football games, soccer games, marching ensemble performances, the High School pep rally, opening day for district staff, and graduation for the Class of 2021. That class was the first group to be at the stadium in June 2021.

Q: What is meant by climate control in school buildings?

A: Climate control systems control the heating and cooling of buildings. This project would upgrade these systems at several schools so that we can provide an environment that is more conducive to learning, both on the hottest days and the coldest days of the school year.

Q: What is state aid?

A: New York State aid is the major source of funding the state provides school districts and municipalities. The funds come from taxes paid to the state by everyone in New York State. State building aid goes to districts across New York State with voter-approved capital projects. Horseheads district taxpayers pay into this statewide pool of money.

The district wishes to secure our share of these vital statewide building funds for our local community in order to continue the capital improvement which began district-wide with the first project that was approved by 82% of voters.



Q: What happens to Center Street in this project?

A: Center Street is one of the district's oldest buildings. For it to continue to be up to state standards for students to be in a building, it would require extensive mitigation work.



The district's 2015 Building Condition Survey and consolidation study in 2014 identified Center Street as a building that should be considered for closure or adult use.

Like many buildings its age, Center Street contains asbestos and sealed lead paint. The school is safe in its current state, but once any part of it goes under construction, full asbestos and lead abatement must occur at separate times. The cost for this work is prohibitive even with state funding and would require a significant local share in order to make improvements for student use of the building in a reasonable amount of time.

The plan for Center Street would be to phase it out as a student-use building in order to have as minimal an impact on students as possible and transition it to an adult-use building.

The district would still maintain ownership of the Center Street building so that it can be used for appropriate adult use: district offices displaced by capital construction, facilities offices and maintenance work areas that will need to be relocated once its current building is converted to the main parking area for high school activities, and a potential community-centered location for various programs (senior center, youth bureau, etc.).

Vote December 7 • 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Capital Project Vote

Tuesday, December 7

7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Horseheads High School

South Gym

Safety protocols will be followed • Masks required

Who is eligible to vote?

All district residents, both renters and homeowners, are eligible to vote, as long as they meet the following requirements:

- Are a U.S. citizen
- Are 18 years of age or older on the day of the vote
- Have lived in the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote on December 7
- Are not restricted from voting in general elections based on election law

Please note: You do not have to be registered in general elections in order to vote.

Questions? Call 739-5601, x4260.

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, military status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, predisposing genetic characteristic, or disability, and provides equal access to applicable groups under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo or Anthony Gill, Co-Title IX/DASA Coordinators and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officers; or Kelly Squires, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607) 739-5601. This policy of non-discrimination includes access by students to educational programs, counseling services, course offerings, and activities, as well as recruitment and appointment of employees and employment pay, benefits, advancement and/or termination.

Learn more about the district...

- Visit www.horseheadsdistrict.com
- Like us on Facebook - district and our schools
- Follow us on Twitter: *HhdsSchools*
- Follow us on Instagram: *hhdsschools*

Safe Schools Line

To report a concern, rumor, or other safety issue anonymously and confidentially 24 hours a day, call

795-2044 or
1-800-305-4984



**Office of Children
and Family Services**

To report child abuse or neglect, call toll free **1-800-342-3720** or go to **ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps**

Please send us information

If you live in the district and have a young child, we ask that you share your child's information with us so that we can contact you when your child is eligible for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

Please send your child's name, birthdate, parent(s)' name(s), address, and phone number to hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Questions? E-mail or call 739-5601, x4251.

Employment opportunities

The district is accepting applications for cleaners, food service helpers, bus drivers, substitutes, and other positions at any time. Other positions are publicized when they become open.

For more information on employment opportunities and to apply for a position, please visit our website at <https://horseheadsdistrict.com/employment.cfm>.

Questions? Call 607-739-5601, x4211 or x4212, or email hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Capital Project Vote

Tuesday, December 7 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Horseheads High School South Gym

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- Are not restricted from voting in general elections based on election law

Please note: You do not have to be registered in general elections or own property in order to vote.

Questions? Call 739-5601, x4260.

Horseheads Central School District
One Raider Lane • Horseheads, NY 14845
(607) 739-5601, x4295

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Events

November 24-26	No School - Thanksgiving Recess
November 30	Gardner Rd Principal Chat, 5:30 p.m.; Gardner Rd PTO, 6 p.m.; Public Hearing on Proposed Capital Project, 6 p.m., High School Multi-Media Center; Middle School Choir and Raider Blue/Raider White Bands Concert, 7:30 p.m., High School Auditorium
December 7	Capital Project Vote, 7 a.m. - 9 p.m., High School South Gym; Big Flats PTO, 6pm
December 8	Gardner Rd Grade 4 Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.
December 10	Ridge Rd Grade 4 Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.
December 13	Center St Grade 4 Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.
December 14	High School Orchestra and Wind Ensemble Concert, 7:30 p.m., Auditorium
December 15	Big Flats Grade 4 Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.
December 16	PreK Family Fun Night - Virtual Read Aloud, 6 p.m.

Board of Education

Kristine Dale, President;
Brian Lynch, Vice President;
Kevin Adams; Tom Casey; Daniel Christmas;
Warren Conklin; Mary Anne Corbett; Sheila
Javed; Doug Johnson; Caitlyn O'Dell (student
representative)

Superintendent

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas

Contact

Susan Pirozzolo, 607-739-5601, x4295
supirozz@horseheadsdistrict.com