

District shares details on March 14 referendum

The Maywood Public Schools Board of Education will ask the community to vote March 14 on a \$22 million bond referendum to fund timely systems upgrades, building repairs and renovations, and additional classroom space.

The financial strategy would let the district borrow money by selling bonds, and leverage state aid that is not available any other way.

If voters approve the proposal, the state will contribute \$6.2 million -- 28 percent of the cost of the projects. This assistance would offset the cost to local taxpayers.

The district worked with financial advisers to carefully choose projects that address building needs while maximizing state aid eligibility. If the bond referendum is approved, the owner of a home assessed at the borough average of \$449,058 would see a tax impact of under \$28 per month. Without voter approval, critical repairs would still need to be made without the help of state aid.

The proposed improvements center on building repairs and renovations that will enhance the learning environment at the district's two schools. These upgrades will allow Maywood Public Schools to maintain the high standards that attract new residents.

Voters will be asked to consider funding for these projects:

- **Roofing work** is needed to address the aging roofs at both Memorial and Maywood Avenue Schools to keep the buildings dry and safe. The district can secure new warranties for flat roof areas once the work is complete.
- **Upgraded HVAC systems** would improve air quality, heating and energy efficiency. The new equipment would **bring air conditioning** to both schools, creating a better learning environment year-round and ensuring the buildings could be used throughout the summer.
- **Six modular classrooms at Memorial School** would give the district the space and flexibility needed as a result of growing enrollment in the Multiple Abilities Program. With schools at capacity, modular space is a cost-efficient option to add classrooms and avoid the need for out-of-district tuition payments.
- The existing science lab at Maywood Avenue School would be renovated into a **STEM Lab/Makerspace** that would give students more opportunities to work collaboratively on hands-on and tech-based projects, and bring the district in line with new standards.
- **Revamping the obsolete fire systems** is part of the district's commitment to student safety. Replacement parts for the current system are no longer manufactured, so repairs are not an option.

The district will use various methods to educate all voters, including a dedicated website - maywoodschools.org/vote, social media, and special bond referendum information forums.