



Springfield Public Schools

EDUCATION CONNECTION

Published By: Springfield Board Of Education (973) 376-1025 www.springfieldschools.com Volume 15, Number 1 WINTER 2003

Referendum Q & A Fact Sheet

Q. When will the referendum take place, and why is it being held now?

A. Voters will be asked to come to the polls on:

Tuesday, January 28, 2003, between 2:00 PM and 9:00 PM.

Some of the reasons the Board of Education proposed the bond referendum at this time include:

- the need for additional classroom space to accommodate a growing student population
- the need for core facilities (shared areas) to accommodate an increased enrollment
- the need to address current and future curriculum needs, e.g., science education, library services, performing arts
- the need to address health, safety, and other state-mandated facility standards
- the need to eliminate substandard instructional areas
- chance to vastly improve the efficiency of our utilities
- the opportunity to take advantage of State aid, which will reduce the costs to taxpayers if we pass the referendum.
- very favorable interest rates in a strong New Jersey bond market.
- the need for the district to continue to provide a quality education for all students in a fiscally responsible manner.

We are already out of space in classrooms and core facilities and this situation will only worsen as more students enter the district schools.

Q. Don't you have plenty of room in the high school? Why can't you

move students there if you're so crowded?

A. The high school has over 500 students and is growing. We use all but two classrooms every day for instruction. With an eight period day, teachers have classes five periods and use their room one period for planning and preparation. Scheduling the remaining two periods would not even allow us to place one other grade level in the high school. Some may recall a time when the high school had many more students. That was a time when we did not offer as many programs (TV production, computers, special education...) and didn't use as much of the building for central office staff as we do now.

Q. We're not required to have a pre-school program. Why not eliminate it to save room and money?

A. While not required, preschools play an increasingly important role in providing a quality education. Having our own program allows for control and consistency of the curriculum offered. It makes it possible for us to identify students in need very early and provide help to ensure academic competency. If we didn't have this program it would only save four classrooms and not create an appreciable decrease in the tax rate. Having the program, however, is a very strong draw to those who are seeking to live in a supportive community and it helps to protect/increase the value of all homes in the township.

Q. I heard you are going to use "modular construction." We have a great community, why would we want trailers here?

A. Off site construction (modular) does not mean trailers. We are using this method to save time (it will cut the construction time in half) but not at the risk of reducing quality. The additions will not look or be built in an inferior manner. You will not be able to tell the difference between what we presently have and the additions.

Q. The list of proposed work is quite extensive. How will you complete all of it and not disrupt classroom instruction?

A. All construction has some inconveniences that have to be dealt with. We will hold these to a minimum by using off site construction and carefully phasing in all of the work. We will not allow any situations that would put students or staff at risk.

(Continued on page 4.)

Special Bond Referendum Issue Please Vote January 28

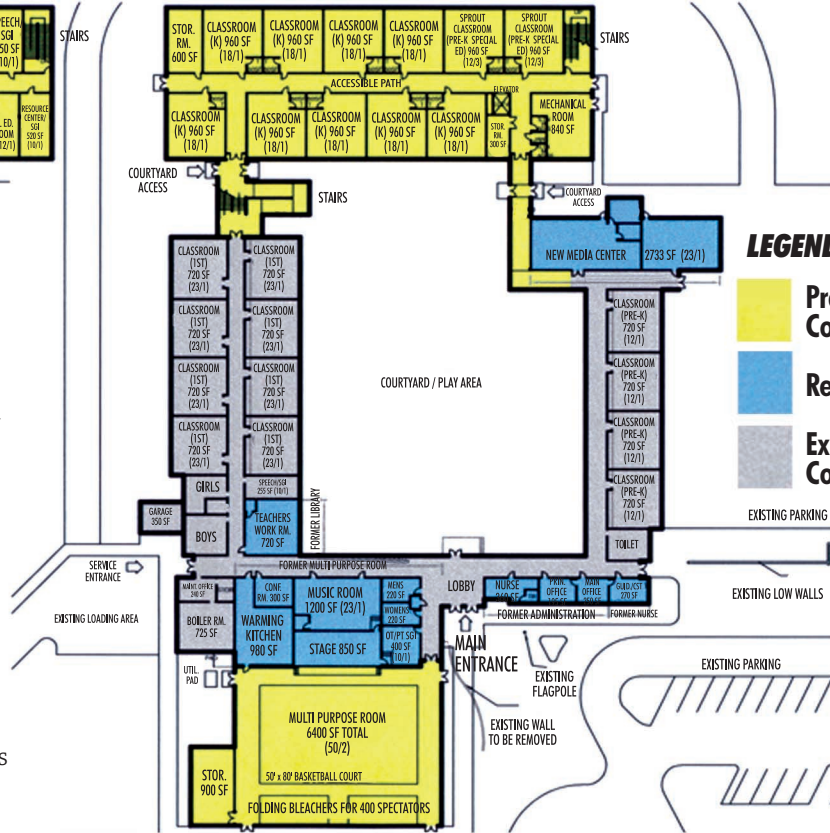
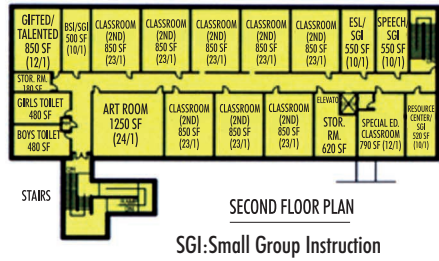
State Pays 21% of Bond

The district will receive nearly \$4 million from the state *if* the January 28 bond referendum passes. Every fifth dollar of the project will come from state aid as follows:

Total project cost:	...	\$18,918,888
Local Share:	\$14,999,908
State Share:	\$3,918,980

BOND REFERENDUM BU

WALTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Proposed Additions and Alterations



Walton:

New construction

- 9 kindergarten classrooms with bathrooms
- 8 second grade classrooms
- 2 preschool special education classrooms with bathrooms
- 1 special education classroom
- 1 gifted and talented classroom
- 3 small group instruction areas (ESL, BSI and special education)
- 1 art room
- 1 multi-purpose room (with bleachers for 400)
- toilets, stairwells, elevator, storage, mechanical...as dictated by code
- occupational and physical therapy room

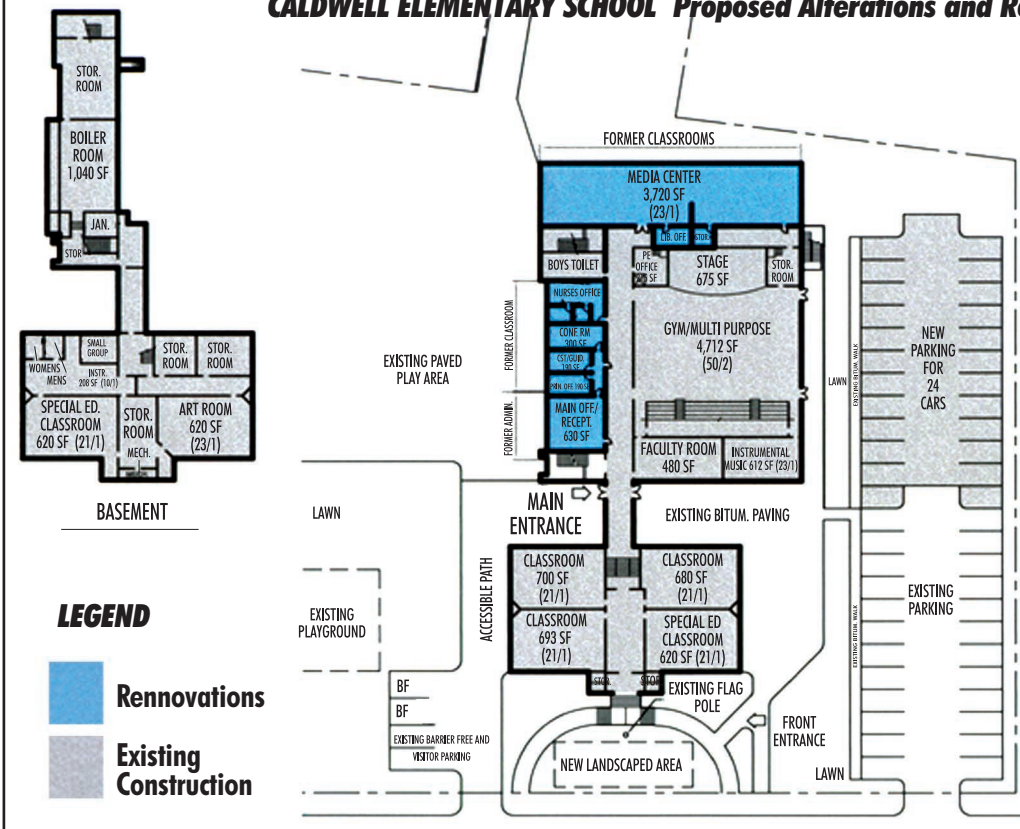
Renovation

- conversion of 2 classrooms to create a library
- conversion of multi-purpose room to create a kitchen, music room, stage, lobby, conference room, toilets and storage...
- renovate existing CST/guidance room and principal's office to a nursing station
- conversion of present substandard library to a faculty room
- conversion of present nursing station to a guidance/CST office

Other

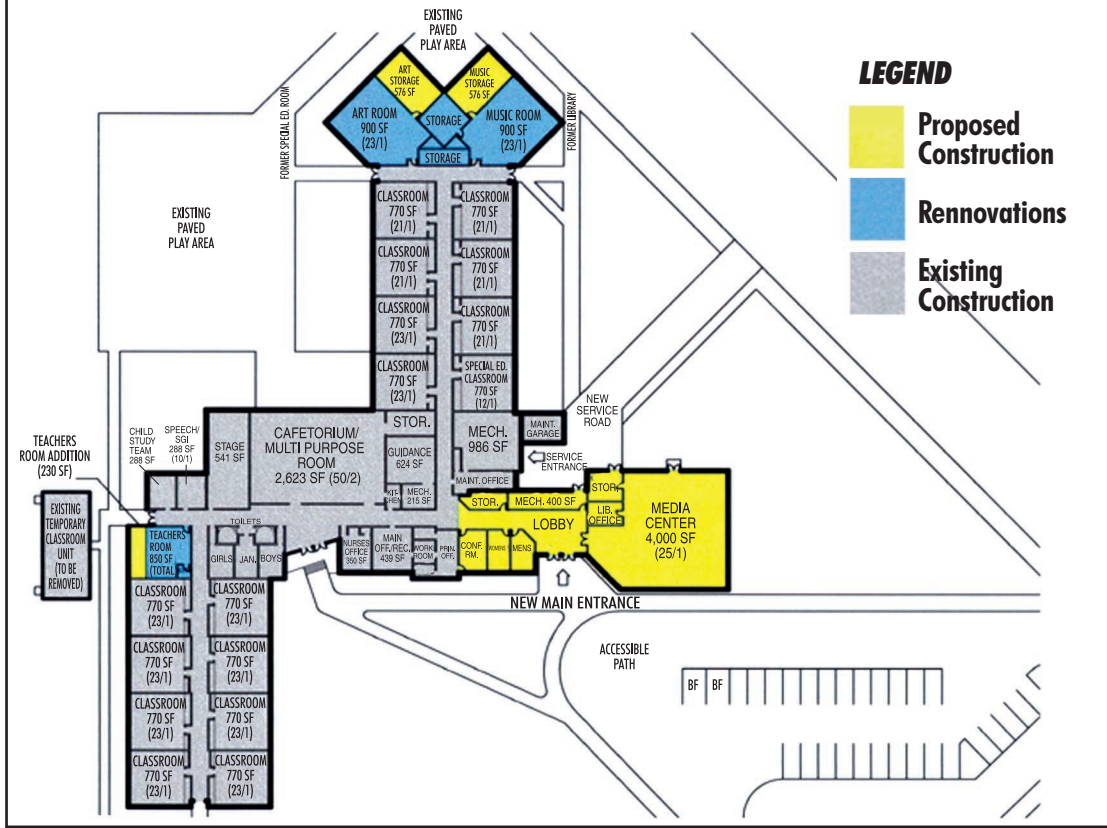
- double the available parking spaces (redesign entrance/exits)
- address the drainage (including flood potential)
- replace existing roof...improve drainage
- upgrade building's electrical service
- replace corridor windows
- playground for grades one and two
- replace one existing boiler

CALDWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Proposed Alterations and



BUILDING FLOOR PLANS

SANDMEIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Proposed Alterations and Renovations



Sandmeier:

New construction

- storage areas for music and art
- media center with office, conference room, storage, toilets, mechanical room

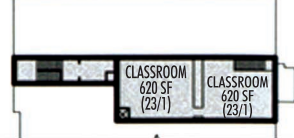
Renovation

- convert present library into a music room
- convert present special education room into an art room
- expand teachers work room/dining area

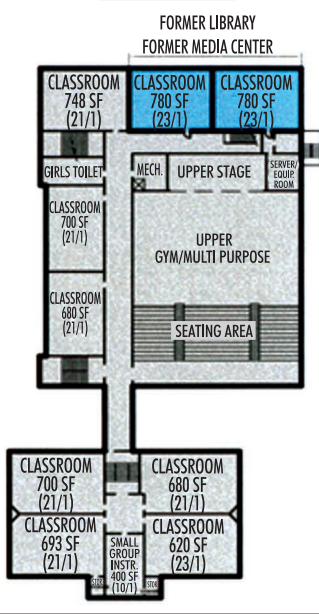
Other

- carpeting of classrooms with loose tiles
- replace gym roof
- create additional parking
- move electrical wiring from under the floors to plenum

Renovations



THIRD FLOOR PLAN



Caldwell:

Renovation

- convert one classroom (and use existing main office and nursing station) to develop improved main office, guidance, conference and nursing station.
- convert three first floor classrooms (and hall area) into a library
- convert existing second floor library into two classrooms

Other

- increase parking spaces and address erosion/drainage problems
- replace some exterior doors
- resurface the all-purpose room's floor
- replace one boiler
- upgrade the electrical service
- replace the plumbing waste line

ADDITIONAL RENNOVATION

Gaudineer:

Renovation

- renovate four science classrooms
- replace all classroom windows
- convert present VP office bathroom into an ADA bathroom
- replace loose asbestos classroom floor tiles
- replace some exterior doors

Dayton:

Renovation

- remodel five science classrooms
- upgrade the electrical service (to air condition the classrooms)
- replace the boilers
- replace roofing
- improve auditorium lighting, carpeting, seating and entrance steps
- air condition auditorium and cafeteria
- replace carpeting in library
- create ADA bathroom in the nursing station

Referendum Q & A Fact Sheet *(Continued from cover.)*

Q. Why wasn't some of this work done in previous years instead of waiting until you need to pass a referendum?

A. The projects included in the referendum are too costly to budget in our annual maintenance accounts. Our legal limit for increases (budget cap) makes it impossible to fund these projects without severely limiting instructional programs and services. Much of the work we will do will help us to reduce the expense of existing costs for utilities and maintenance.

Q. I appreciate the need for addressing our school buildings but why aren't you planning to do anything about our fields?

A. We are not ignoring the district's athletic fields. We have begun a systematic process for improving these areas. We cooperated with the township to obtain \$100,000 from the county to do much needed work, have purchased equipment necessary to maintain the fields, are regularly attending to aeration, weeding, seeding and fertilizing, have joined a state turf management association, and are cooperating with township and county officials regarding the reopening of the Meisel Field. The fields are a top priority for the district's maintenance crew.

Referendum Tax Impact

The cost of the referendum is projected to be **\$165 for the average homeowner ... just 45 cents a day.** This is based on a twenty-year loan at a 4.75% interest rate, the current figure for recent school bond sales. To determine your projected increase, you can add 0.105 cents per hundred to your current tax rate. You'll find that the cost of the referendum is very similar to the increase for last year's annual budget vote.

Q. Aren't our class sizes already very small? Why don't we just add more kids to each class instead of building?

A. We have manageable class sizes. They are in line with the state's recommended number of students per class and with the district's instructional goals. Keeping class sizes low is one of our highest priorities.

Q. What if the referendum fails? What is your backup plan?

A. There is no backup plan. We are already using several substandard areas for instruction that the State Department of Education is only permitting because we are making this effort to address our problems. With no additional instructional space available, our increasing enrollment will mean increased class sizes.

Q. How did the district settle on the proposed grade configurations?

A. By making Walton a Pre-K to grade 2 school we are able to accomplish several objectives. It keeps the youngest students together for a longer period of time, helping to reinforce the parent/school "team" that is necessary for success. Taking grades 1 and 2 out of Caldwell and Sandmeier makes room in those schools so we can take grade 5 out of Gaudineer and place them there instead. Most model middle schools in the country span grades 6 to 8. The middle school and high school will then be able to deal with the expected growth in enrollment.

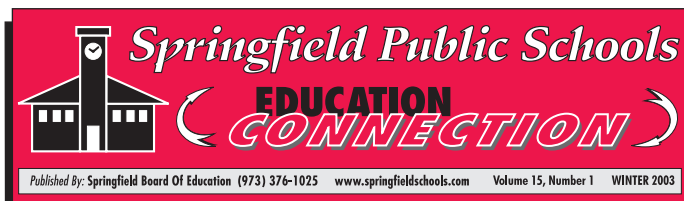
Q. Parking and traffic is such a problem. Have you considered this in your plans?

A. Yes, we are going to increase the parking at each elementary school and develop a system that should help the flow of traffic at Walton.

Q. I want to vote on the referendum but would rather go straight home after work. Is there any way I can still vote?

A. Yes, all you need to do is complete an absentee ballot and submit it to the county board of elections. Absentee ballots are available in each school office. ■

Bond Referendum — Please Vote January 28th — Polls Are Open From 2:00pm to 9:00pm.



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