
Pittsford Schools

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Why do a Capital Improvement Project?

The District manages repairs and improvements through a five year, NYSED-mandated facilities assessment called a Building Condition Survey. This report is used to prioritize necessary repairs and educational components that fall outside the scope of the District's annual operating budget. Capital improvement projects allows the District to address repairs and renovations to provide the best and safest learning environments for our students while maximizing State Aid and the use of capital reserves.

A voter-authorized reserve fund was created to allow the District to save funding for just such projects. Voter authorization is required for the District to expend these funds for capital purposes.

Why now?

It has been over a decade since the last capital project and capital work has continued to pile up. With the economic impacts that COVID-19 had on the community in the past few years, the Board chose to delay bringing such a project forward. And now, with the repayment of prior debt coming off, our ability to address these capital issues is both appropriate and viable with no additional impact to the tax levy.

How much will this cost me as a taxpayer?

The proposed capital project amount is \$69,822,169. Between State Aid and capital reserves covering more than 75% of the total budget, and the timing of the project coinciding with repayment of debt from previous projects, the drop in debt will cover the remaining cost of this new project. Therefore, *there is **no planned increase in the tax levy*** for this capital project.

What improvements will this capital project include?

This project will focus on school health and safety renovations across all nine schools while addressing instructional space inequities across the secondary schools.

Our priorities include:

- More secure single point-of-entry with double-door vestibules at every school
- Installing emergency generators, intruder locks for large assembly areas, and HVAC systems while addressing repairs to building roofs, exteriors and windows
- Renovations and a two-story addition to MHS that will include new science classrooms and labs to improve safety and enhance STEM education
- Removing the outdated portable classrooms located at BRMS, as required by the State Education Department (SED)
- Addressing a trend of escalating student mental health needs with dedicated spaces for students to meet with mental health providers like social workers, behavioral specialists, psychologists and counselors
- Creating a Commons area at Barker Road Middle School, as many students currently eat in the hallway due to the lack of space in the current cafeteria
- Improved competitive and community athletic resources by replacing SHS and MHS tennis courts, adding pickleball courts at both high schools, adding multipurpose track and field surface at BRMS, enhancing drainage on secondary athletic fields, and making renovations to MHS pool facility

How are repairs and renovations prioritized?

This project reflects a portion of the \$300,000,000 Buildings Condition Report. Over the past few years, the Pittsford Schools Board of Education has been reviewing the five-year Building Condition Survey report and gathering feedback from our facilities team, district planning team, building committees, and our financial team, to determine what repairs and renovations were of most importance. As always, health and safety needs are a top priority.

Why are Barker Road Middle School and Mendon High School getting the most repairs and renovations?

During the 2002 capital project, Sutherland High School and Calkins Road Middle were prioritized for updates and repairs. Renovations and an addition would bring Mendon High School science classrooms and labs more in line with Sutherland's. Renovation of the Barker Road Middle School Commons area would open up currently separated cafeteria space, allow all students to eat together and create a large assembly space for students and the community, like the Commons at Calkins Road Middle School.

Are these improvements really necessary?

Pittsford Schools works hard to maintain its facilities. The District manages repairs and improvements through a five year, NYSED mandated facilities assessment called a Building Condition Survey. This report is used to prioritize necessary repairs and educational components that fall outside the scope of the District's annual operating budget. Since the last capital project over a decade ago, additional infrastructure improvements are recommended to address changing curricular and student needs, address items that are at the end of their useful life, and most importantly to provide the most updated safety and security measures for our students, staff and community.

How will this benefit the students?

Pittsford Central School District constantly strives to create the best learning environment for its almost 6,000 students. This capital improvement project allows the District to provide updated teaching and support spaces that meet the needs of today's curriculum and safety standards for a high level education. Such spaces include mental health resources, science labs, permanent classrooms in lieu of temporary (BRMS), and additional safety and security measures to protect our students and staff.

Not only do these renovations benefit our students, they also benefit our community with larger common spaces for events and enhanced athletic facilities such as pickleball courts.

When will these repairs and renovations take place?

If the referendum passes, requests for bids and construction may begin as early as 2024 through 2027. The first construction project will be upgrading the secure entrances at every school.

What about the Swimming Pool?

These items are addressed in the proposed project:

- A new scoreboard and integrated timing system
- New sound system
- Tile and fixture repairs
- Locker room renovations

The planning team initially identified a new pool as part of the District's \$300 million list of priorities in the Building Condition Report required by NYSED. We reviewed many options to bring a new pool to vote within this capital project but there were many considerations that led to the decision to postpone this endeavor:

- Given the amount of violence in schools nationwide, health and safety has become the number one priority.
- The proposed project at \$69.8 million will not increase the tax levy as the cost will be covered by the drop in debt from a previous projects.
- A new pool would cost \$30 million (almost half of the entire project) and while the work within the project is being reimbursed 75% by the state, the state would

not reimburse the District the same for the pool. Therefore, the cost would have to be absorbed primarily by the local taxpayers.

- While benchmarking other area districts, the majority of them have one pool. PCSD remains committed to two pools (CRMS and MHS) to support our current needs.
- Both pools have the longevity needed to remain open through to the next capital project (approximately 15-20 years).
- Sensitivity to post-COVID-19 economy and inflation.

What is the long-term plan for the pools?

The board of education and superintendent are committed to maintaining two pools. We will be asking the public to vote on establishing a reserve for the specific use of pools/athletics during this May's budget vote. The district has also committed to meeting quarterly with pool stakeholders, consisting of the PCSD swim program, boosters, PACK and the YMCA to create a shared vision as it relates to the MHS pool and pools in general.

What exactly am I voting on?

- Authorization for a capital improvement project consisting of alterations, renovations, and improvements to the District's school buildings and associated facilities for a total aggregate maximum cost of \$69,822,169
- The expenditure of \$14 million from the District's existing Capital Reserve Fund
- Authorization for the District to borrow an amount not to exceed \$55,822,169

When and where do I vote?

The referendum vote will take place on Tuesday, March 28 from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at Barker Road Middle School in the gymnasium (75 Baker Rd).

Qualified voters must be a citizen of the United States of America, eighteen (18) years of age or older, and a resident within the District for a period of thirty (30) days preceding the date of the vote. Proof of residency may include the following valid and current documents: New York State driver's license, New York State non-driver identification card, utility bill, or voter registration card. Voters shall also be required to provide their signature and printed name.

If you are unable to vote in person on March 28, 2023, you may request an absentee ballot application by contacting the District Clerk's office at 267-1057 or email your request to Cynthia_Coleman@pittsford.monroe.edu.

How can I learn more?

The District will be hosting two public forums for the community on January 31 at 6:30 p.m. at Barker Road Middle School cafeteria and on February 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Mendon High School commons.

You can also visit pittsfordschools.org/2023CapitalProject.