
Does the Dec. 16 renovation project include renovated classrooms and science labs, expanded libraries, a multi-sport field, new track and solar energy panels?

Yes – and more. After months of study, the Board of Education has approved a \$26.76 million renovation project that focuses on these areas:

- ✓ *Replacement* of elementary school roofs and 10-year-old computer and telephone network servers as well as a host of maintenance improvements at all six schools;
- ✓ *Renovation and ventilation and lighting upgrades* in the 35-year-old science, technology and family and consumer science rooms at the middle school; and 50-year-old technology classrooms and A-wing art rooms at the high school;
- ✓ *Enclosure and 3,500-square-foot expansion* of the now “open” middle school library to improve learning and security;
- ✓ A 3,200-square-foot *expansion* of the high school library into the adjoining courtyard. Use of the library has climbed by 90 percent since 2004, topping 55,800 student visits in 2007.
- ✓ *Replacement* of the running track, which cannot now be used for competitions, and *installation* of a multi-sport artificial/synthetic field to replace the current football field. The artificial field would take pressure off of the remaining grass fields and allow them to “rest” and be replenished;
- ✓ *Installation of 200 solar panels*, which would generate electricity, on the roof of the Sacandaga Elementary School. The panels would reduce electric costs by an estimated \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year – 25 percent of the school’s electric bill.

The project would increase taxes by 1.9% – less than \$5 per month – by 2012?

Yes. The renovation project would increase taxes by an estimated maximum of 1.9 percent, phased in during the 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

On a Glenville assessment of \$160,000, the average in the school district, taxes would increase by a maximum of \$59.20 per year or \$4.93 per month based on the current tax rate. Again, that increase would be phased in during 2010, 2011 and be fully felt in 2012.

That increase, as is the case with all school tax bills, would be reduced further by the state’s STAR school tax reduction program.

As well, with the current burst in new commercial and residential construction going on in Scotia-Glenville, the ultimate impact will likely *be less than 1.9 percent.*

Where did these proposals come from?

The proposals came from the:

- ✓ Facilities Committee report and athletic fields study from 2005;
- ✓ Five-year facilities plan projections required by the state;
- ✓ Building conditions survey required by the state;
- ✓ Community forums in June and comments from parents and community members since then.

The vote is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 16?

Yes. Voting will be held from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16 at the High School.

A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Monday, December 8, at the Middle School.

How do we pay for these renovations?

During these difficult times, the Board of Education has been careful to craft a proposal that uses several sources of funding in order to lessen the burden on the community while receiving the biggest benefit.

The renovation project’s cost and interest would total \$37.6 million by 2026. That total would be paid by using:

- ✓ *\$27.5 million in state building aid* which, historically, is a social contract between the state and school districts and one that has not been reduced during tough state economic times. While this is still state taxpayers’ money, the state offers building aid as an incentive for schools to keep buildings in repair. *Scotia-Glenville will receive 81 cents back on every \$1 that it spends for construction or renovations.* Building aid is repaid over 15 years for renovations.
- ✓ *\$935,000 in EXCEL (EXpanding our Children’s Education and Learning) funding.* This aid, available to all New York school districts, is not part of the state budget; it is money the state Dormitory Authority has been authorized to borrow. By combining the EXCEL funding with building aid, about \$5 million in projects can be done to pay for roofs, maintenance items and network server upgrades. *That \$5 million would be at no local cost.*
- ✓ *\$900,000 that was put aside in a special debt reserve account.* This money can not be used for the general budget but can be used to reduce debt, as the district will incur for this project.
- ✓ The school district plans to pursue grants and other forms of non-tax funding to help pay for the solar energy project at Sacandaga Elementary.
- ✓ Interest on deposited funds and paying off other debt will further reduce the project’s costs.
- ✓ *\$7.3 million paid from school taxes between 2010 and 2026 to pay the local part of the project.*

Which students would be the first to benefit from these renovations?

From the date of the vote, it generally takes 18-24 months for the architects to develop specific plans and receive state Education Department approval. Based on a Dec. 16 voting date, it is expected that the project would break ground by the summer of 2010.

Today's grade 4 students would likely be the first to use the new science labs, library and classrooms at the Middle School during the 2011-12 year. As well, current Middle School students would benefit from the High School classroom, library and athletic improvements.

Have other schools done solar projects?

Yes. Other area schools are doing or will do solar demonstration projects. The Icabod Crane School District in Columbia County plans to put solar panels on one building – a buildings and grounds office – to test the technology. Recent state legislation allows schools and others to sell self-generated electricity, such as through solar or wind power, back to utilities.

Is Scotia-Glenville's enrollment stable?

Yes. Like other school districts, total enrollment has declined slightly over the past few years. Enrollment numbers for 2008-09 show that total district enrollment is down 67 students from last year and is now 2,793.

While secondary (gr. 6-12) enrollment has declined slightly over the past few years, elementary enrollment has been steady or increased slightly. In September 2005, there were 1,172 students in kindergarten to grade 5; in September 2008, there were 1,186.

Despite the slight changes in enrollment over the past few years, the building needs have not changed. Enrollment would *only* be an issue if new classrooms were being constructed. *No new classrooms will be built in the December 16 renovation proposal.*

Are the physical education/athletic improvements necessary?

Some athletic improvements, such as upgrading the running track, were proposed but cut from the 1999 building project because of higher-than-expected construction costs in other parts of that project. As for the proposed improvements, please keep this in mind:

- ✓ 394 high school students and 138 middle school students – 32 percent of the gr. 6-12 student body – played on 26 varsity, junior varsity and modified interscholastic sports teams in the last school year.

As well, all 950 high school students and 660 middle school students are required to take physical education classes three times each week;

- ✓ Two years ago, the running track's condition was deemed unsatisfactory by the regional president of track and field officials (*Section II*). S-G runners have been hosted at other schools for all events;
- ✓ While the football field is the only one of the eight grass fields in good shape, it has stayed that way because it is used **ONLY** for football.

The proposed multi-sport artificial turf would be used for at least 443 two-hour events each year, including physical education classes and practices/games for at least the soccer, football, lacrosse and field hockey teams. A new grass field could host a maximum of 50-70 two-hour events each year because grass needs to "rest;"

- ✓ Maintenance on the multi-sport turf field would be about \$7,500 per year, compared with the \$17,320 spent last year on the current field;
- ✓ Studies have shown that students receive fewer head and nerve injuries on artificial turf fields;
- ✓ Guidelines from New York state released in August 2008 require that installed school turf fields contain *no lead or lead chromate* and that *the turf "carpet" or top layer has at least a 15-year warranty.*

11/08

Preparing for Scotia-Glenville's Future



Community to consider a \$26.76 million school renovation project on Tuesday, December 16

Even in these difficult economic times and with the already high cost of public education, parents and community members should expect and hope that Scotia-Glenville is forward thinking and preparing for their children's and grandchildren's future.

The Board of Education, mindful of the financial burdens facing families today, has developed a conservative building project that renovates classroom and library spaces, saves electricity by using solar energy and catches up on maintenance needs at all six schools.

The renovation project also upgrades the physical education/athletic facilities used by thousands of students and community members every year.

The school district also uses financing methods – special EXCEL state aid and separate funding already set aside for the project – that lessen the need to rely heavily on annual school taxes.

Today's grade 4 students would likely be the first to see the full benefits of this project as grade 7 Middle School students in 2011-12.

Check out ScotiaGlenvilleSchools.org for more project information.
