

Wall Township Public Schools has answered individual citizens' questions sent to vision@wallpublicschools.org since the bond referendum webpages were established in mid-October. If a question about the December 13 referendum was asked frequently, it was considered for addition to the FAQs page. Recognizing the community's interest in more detailed questions that are asked less frequently, WTPS shared this compilation of questions and responses.

This means of communication was designed for individual citizens and, as such, names and email addresses have been removed from this compilation. Commentary was removed while questions were left intact. Additionally, this means of communication was dedicated to questions that were very specifically about the funding mechanism and scope of work of projects that are part of the December 13 bond referendum. It was not used to respond to questions outside that area. Many questions were submitted during the Virtual Forum ([recording here](#)) and answered during that time.

Questions were routed to the people who were equipped to provide answers, including sometimes the architects and/or financial advisers. Responses were sent directly to the citizens who submitted the questions.

Q. Can we see a copy of all 18 applications?

A. The topic of timing for the applications was covered during the Virtual Forum on Dec. 1. In case you missed that, please refer to [the recording on this page](#) and advance to timestamp 1:28. There are many pieces of each application to the state Department of Education. Due to numerous requests, WTPS will share these documents on the referendum website. We expect to have those files posted by the end of the day Wednesday.

Q. Do requests for mail in ballots need to be received by December 6 or postmarked by December 6?

A. To ask for a vote by mail ballot for this referendum, your application must be received by the county by Dec. 6. All vote by mail ballots must be postmarked by December 13. Either of those actions can also be done in person at the County Board of Elections office in Freehold. Please note that mail-in ballots will not be accepted at in-person polling locations.

Q. Was everyone supposed to receive the color flyer the district sent out?

A. WTPS worked with a printer and mailing house to produce the informational flyer and have it sent to every residential address in the postal system. We investigated the delay and were disappointed that the production and delivery were delayed. The flyer summarizes information that is available to anyone on the website. We have also posted a copy of that mailed flyer on the website.

Q. What is the total cost of the special election? How will that cost be paid? Will it be included in the district's operating budget for the 2023-2024 school year, or is the plan to absorb it into the present school year budget?

A. Estimates as of December 1, 2022, put the cost of the special referendum at about \$63,000. It is paid out of the current year budget, and if it is a successful referendum the cost will be reimbursed from the referendum bond sales. The cost of this special referendum is less than 1% of the total value of improvements that would serve our students and community for decades.

Q. Whose responsibility is it to calculate the exact cost of the election: the BOE or the consultants hired to engineer the referendum questions?

A. Determining the cost for a special voting event is a multi-step process. It is not a predetermined package price. There are multiple costs; some are not known until the process is underway and some not until after the vote is complete. WTPS gathered this information throughout the month of November. Additional cost estimates were available December 1 after the printing of ballots and the mailing of ballots.

Q. Can someone please articulate how supporting this referendum does not encourage poor fiscal planning?

A. A streamlined version of your question was read aloud during the Virtual Forum on Dec. 1. In case you missed it, that recording is posted on the [referendum website](#) and you can fast-forward to about 1:07 to hear the dialogue.

Q. What efforts have been made specifically to inform the members of Wall's numerous senior communities about the referendum questions? Were there any planned outreach events or attempts made by the BOE to engage the senior members of the community at locations and times convenient to the senior communities?

A. We answered this question at the Virtual Forum (advance to about 1:03 from the forum recording at [this link](#)), and we will double up by answering you by email in case you missed that. Wall Township Public Schools worked with a printer and mailing house to deliver a flyer about the referendum to every household in the district – including senior communities. In addition, the district recently overhauled its website to be easier to use by *all* members of our community, and that included features to meet ADA standards for easy viewing, screen-reading and hearing of the content there. The website has specific pages dedicated to the referendum. In general, WTPS has added the ability for citizens to live-stream Board of Education meetings from their homes. For the referendum, that included architects' presentations and citizens comments; recordings of those are available on the site. We have maintained a relationship with the Coast Star newspaper, which has published several articles and reaches a broad audience within our community.

Q. Are we able to see how the professionals got the number they proposed?

A. The project budgets are on the [Improvements page](#) of the referendum website. Those cost estimates are formulated by the district's architects, who thoroughly research projects and use their considerable market knowledge to conservatively estimate costs. State rules require that they plan for potential

increases in costs or other unforeseen circumstances. Estimates include a margin in case costs exceed what voters approved, and in that case the district would have to adjust project details while meeting the intent of the referendum.

Q. I just read through the website. Am I reading it right that they have not paid off the debt that they've sold bonds for back in 1998. Why is that? And where did all the money go that they purchased the bonds for - can we see some numbers?

A. In 1998, voters invested in the future of Wall Township Public Schools by approving a 25-year bond to build additions at Allenwood, Central, West Belmar and Old Mill elementary schools, Wall Intermediate School, and Wall High School. That bond also funded other improvements at each of the district's schools, as well as the 18th Avenue Sports Complex. Bond funding like this is a long-term plan, similar to the way a homeowner uses a home equity loan to pay for improvements. That voter approval led to the sale of bonds with the forecast of a 25-year term. The debt from the 1998 referendum was refinanced in 2005, 2006, and 2007 to take advantage of falling interest rates. Those strategic efforts resulted in a savings of \$1.2 million. The debt was again refinanced in 2015, resulting in an additional savings of \$1.8 million. It will be paid off in 2024.

Q. If the referendum goes through, will we be able to see where the money goes as they spend it?

A. If the referendum is approved, all of the bids, contracts and bills become part of the district's financial records. Bills are listed and approved at public Board of Education meetings. The dedicated webpages about the referendum will be maintained and updated with project status, schedule, actual costs, etc.

Q. Knowing we have some very talented people that projected our costs for the various projects it may make sense, if not part of the process already, is to float bids for costs "before" the contractor firms know our budget and limits. I fully understand we must add a contingency for unknown issues uncovered, but still may optimize our costs?

A. If voters approve the referendum, Wall Township Public Schools will follow the contracting laws and regulations for public schools. The work may be divided into several projects to create the most advantageous bidding scenario for the district. Projects are publicly advertised for any qualified contractor to bid, and contractors submit sealed bids. The Board of Education will open those bids in a public bid opening. By state law, any contract that is issued must be awarded to the company that submitted the lowest responsible bid that meets the specifications.

It is important to note that WTPS can only spend the amount of money approved by voters. State regulations require that they plan for potential increases in costs or other unforeseen circumstances. Estimates include a contingency to cover any unforeseen conditions.

You are correct that there is a required contingency. State rules require that school districts plan for potential increases in costs or other unforeseen circumstances. Estimates include a margin in case costs exceed what voters approved, and in that case the district would have to adjust project details while meeting the intent of the referendum. It is important to note that WTPS can only spend the amount of money approved by voters.

Q. Will the new artificial turf field be used for football?

A. The main function of a new, synthetic turf field would be to provide additional opportunities for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey teams to play on their school campus. The varsity stadium field would keep its natural grass surface.

Q. Is this turf field considered a new stadium build?

A. The improvements proposed in Question 2 should not be considered a “new stadium build.” They would be considered a field renovation because there is existing infrastructure there.

Q. Will new bleachers be installed? If so, at what cost?

A. The goal is to have seating available for spectators and other schools (example: for a track meet). The fine points of the scope of work will be determined later as we want additional input from the community.

Q. Will new goal posts, soccer goals, lacrosse goals, field hockey goals be purchased for this field? If so what is the cost?

A. The systems that anchor the goals to the synthetic turf to prevent them from tipping over are generally replaced as part of these projects because footings are installed under the turf. These generally start around \$20,000 to \$30,000 depending on type.

Q. Will there be a new press box built? If so, what is that cost, including sound equipment?

A. Decisions about a press box will depend on the final site layout and community input, should voters approve the referendum.

Q. What is the anticipated annual cost to maintain the artificial turf? (Infill replenishment, brushing/sweeping, decompacting, disinfecting)—How often will this maintenance be completed annually?

A. Maintenance costs for synthetic turf range from about \$5,000 to \$7,000. Testing is part of regular maintenance to measure and certify impact cushioning. Service is done biannually. That cost would be an operational expense in the usual annual budget just like costs for mowing and striping are now. All other costs that are mentioned in this email are ballparked capital expenses that are already factored into the estimates for projects proposed through Question 2 of the bond referendum.

Q. What grade artificial turf will be installed? What is the cost? Has the district considered a higher quality turf?

A. Cost estimates that make up Question 2 of the bond referendum call for higher quality synthetic turf, but the actual grade of the turf WTPS would install will also depend on the type of projected use.

Q. What is the cost for drainage to this area?

A. The cost of drainage for the entire site is included in the referendum estimates. This can cost upwards of \$500,000 or more for the entire complex (including the varsity stadium field and other ancillary areas). Site access (sidewalks, walkways, etc.) is also included in the overall scope of work.

Q. Will new light poles/lights be installed? If so, what is the cost?

A. The goal is to (re)light both the existing stadium field and the new synthetic turf field to bring them up to current standards for nighttime play.

Q. Can any of the equipment be moved from the current varsity field to the new turf to save money?

A. See answer to your 4th question, and also note that the current varsity stadium field will continue to be used.

Q. Why aren't the athletic facilities at Wall Intermediate being addressed? I noticed the video presented by the BOE showed WIS athletic fields when referencing facilities needed updating. However, I did not see WIS athletic fields listed as receiving upgrades.

A. If the WIS fields were included in the video, that was a mistake. WIS fields are not included in this referendum because the costs can be absorbed within our annual operating budget. The work needed at WIS is not as extensive as the proposed HS project.

Q. How will all those contracts be awarded? Will they all be firm fixed price?

A. If voters approve the referendum, Wall Township Public Schools will follow the rules for all government contracts – state, county, local or school district. The work may be divided into several subsets. Projects are announced through a public bid process, and contractors submit sealed price bids. The Board of Education will open those bids in an advertised, public meeting. By state law, any contract that is issued must be awarded to the company that submitted the lowest bid that meets the specifications.

The costs are part of the bid and are based on the scope of work that is known at the time of the contract. Just like when a homeowner opens walls that were built decades ago, there may be unforeseen circumstances that require attention. Solid estimates are made; sometimes prices go up or down more than expected. Because not everything can be known in advance, there may be “change orders” that deviate from the original plan/cost estimates.

It is important to note that WTPS can only spend the amount of money approved by voters. State rules require that school districts plan for potential increases in costs or other unforeseen circumstances. Estimates include a margin in case costs exceed what voters approved, and in that case the district would have to adjust project details while meeting the intent of the referendum.

Q. Have you studied the injury rate on synthetic vs natural grass? And do you have any peer reviewed studies on carcinogens and potential long term effects on frequent users of those fields? Also the impact on the environment? Natural grass absorbs carbon dioxide and releases oxygen. how much is lost?

A. We have not directly studied injury rates related to synthetic fields or researched any long-term effects of its use by student-athletes. There have been several studies that show the turf technology has improved over the years, upon a successful referendum the district plans to review turf options with multiple manufacturers to ensure the product selected is the best synthetic turf option for WTPS.

Q. Will an audit be completed at the end of each project to ensure compliance? How was this handled in 1998?

A. New Jersey law requires an annual school audit which includes expenditures by project funded through the referendum.

The first proposal is requesting \$53M of funds to make repairs but, with state aid, it will be tax neutral.

How much of the \$53M is fully covered by State Aid vs capital raised through the bonds?

Question 1 projects total \$53,078,733 and the district was awarded the highest possible level of state aid of \$18,046,769. That would reduce the local costs for these projects to \$35,031,964.

Q. During the 1998 process, how close were the actual expense vs estimates?

A. We do not have the information from 20+ years ago readily available. However, the district's professional advisers (architects, financial, bond counsel) specialize in their fields and they are adept at making estimates.

Q. What happens when the actual cost is less vs the estimates for projects in option 1? How are the savings managed?

A. When market conditions change, savings in one area can buffer higher costs in others. If costs for those projects end up being lower than the voter-approved amount, that money is used to reduce debt, and thus, reduce taxes. WTPS can only spend the amount of money approved by voters, and can only spend that on projects described on the ballot and the detailed documentation provided to the state Department of Education.

Q. With this referendum (or even with Wall's Yearly Budget) will technology be upgraded in the K-3 classrooms and will students be moving to a "one to one" approach like similar districts throughout the state with similar tax brackets?

A. Technology upgrades for our classrooms are not part of the referendum. Due to the relatively short lifespan of technology, a 25-year bond issue is not the best approach to fund those types of projects. However, the Board of Education continually plans for school upgrades within the usual operating budget. Smaller-scale projects such as classroom technology can be handled within that budget. To set priorities for future improvements, WTPS will continue its strategic planning process in 2023.

Q. Will HVAC be brought to each classroom in these buildings?

A. HVAC upgrades are a significant part of the referendum's Question 1. For details about which schools would get those improvements, see the graphics that are here. If voters approved both referendum questions, all instructional spaces in Wall Township Public Schools will be air conditioned.

Q. Will bathrooms be upgraded or will an additional bathroom be placed for “gender” neutral students?

A. At this planning stage, the focus of the referendum is to modernize restrooms that have seen only minor updates since construction. Those were prioritized to meet ADA guidelines and add efficiency measures such as touchless faucets and motion-sensor lighting. Any discussion about gender designations would take place separately from this referendum.

Q. Who replies to the Vision emails?

A. Questions that come to this referendum-specific email address are routed to the people who are equipped to provide answers. They often cross into numerous areas including the scope of the proposed work, finances, and areas of the district not included in the referendum's scope of work. Several people contribute to the responses, including sometimes the architects and/or financial advisers. The compiled responses are in collaboration with the WTPS Administrative Team.

Q. While I understand that the district somehow did not manage to submit the info to the state in time for approval and a vote during the General Election this November, how much extra will it cost to have a special election in December?

A. As of December 1, 2022, put the cost of the special referendum at about \$63,000. Determining the cost for a special voting event is a multi-step process. It is not a predetermined package price. There are multiple costs; some are not known until the process is underway and some not until after the vote is complete. WTPS gathered this information throughout the month of November. Additional cost estimates were available December 1 after the printing of ballots and the mailing of ballots. The cost of this special referendum is less than 1% of the total value of improvements that would serve our students and community for decades.

Q. What date did you receive state approval?

A. State approval came in stages, as the full scope of work was divided into 18 project sets. This is standard practice for a broad scope of work like the one proposed for Wall Township Public Schools. Final approval was received on Oct. 20. The deadline for schools to submit questions for the General Election ballot is 60 days in advance. That was Sept. 9 for the 2022 General Election. The timeline for special elections is shorter: For special elections such as the Dec. 13 date, questions can be submitted up to 19 days before the vote.

Q. Who filled out the paperwork and why is the application not on the referendum tab? Please attach a copy of the application to your reply.

A. Spiezle Architectural Group worked with the leadership of WTPS to submit the many pieces of the application. This is a sizable body of documentation, and it cannot be attached to an email. There are many pieces of each application to the state Department of Education. Due to numerous requests, WTPS will share these documents on the referendum website. We expect to have those files posted by the end of the day Wednesday.

Q. Is it true that, if you are to receive the money, you can spend it any way you wish, not just how you have laid it out for the vote? Please explain your answer.

A. That is not true. The NJ Department of Education oversees the process of public schools using bond funding. School districts can only spend the amount of money approved by voters and only on projects described for the referendum. Bond funding cannot be used for salaries or other everyday operating costs. It can only be used for long-term capital expenses that are described in the scope of work that was reviewed and approved by the DOE.

Q. Why can't this just wait for the November 2023 election, assuming it does cost extra to hold an election in December or any of the other months that are not November?

A. Waiting until November 2023 would have led almost certainly toward increased costs for inefficient HVAC/boiler equipment and roof repairs/water damage. It may have also led to increased costs for renovation supplies/labor. This topic was addressed during the Virtual Forum on Dec. 1. In case you missed it, that recording is posted on the referendum website and you can fast-forward to about 1:07 to hear the dialogue.

Q. How many PTO meetings did members of the BOE, the superintendent, and Mr Smyth attend from September 2022 until now and how many more do they plan to attend? Shouldn't there be public notice for each of these rallies so that the public can attend and hear what they have to say?

A. At a minimum the administration visited the PTO at every school in an effort to communicate information about the referendum. Public notices are not applicable to PTO meetings.

Q. When were the FAQ questions chosen for the referendum tab and who chose them?

A. Working with professional advisers, WTPS approved the initial list of FAQs and has added to them as specific questions came from the Wall Township public through this email address and from the Dec. 1 Virtual Forum.

Q. Re: for roof repairs budgeted after the 1998 referendum can the district provide specific details of vendors, work done and warranties? Is any work done here being replaced with funds proposed from the referendum?

A. The roofing work reported in the 2012 CAFR (audit) included flat, built-up roof replacement at Allenwood, Central, and West Belmar Elementary Schools, as well as Wall High School. The roofing projects were publicly advertised for bid, received and opened at a public bid opening, and awarded to Roof Management Inc., Neptune, NJ at a public meeting of the WTPS Board of Education. The roof manufacturer was Tremco and the warranty issued was for 20 years. The areas that received new roofs are still under warranty and are not included in the scope of roofing work included in the current 2022 referendum.

The roofing work reported in the 2015 CAFR (audit) included roof replacement of shingle roof areas at Allenwood, Central, and West Belmar Elementary Schools, and the flat, built-up roof at Wall Primary School. The roofing projects were publicly advertised for bid, received and opened at a public bid opening, and awarded to Roof Management Inc., Neptune, NJ at a public meeting of the WTPS Board of

Education. The roof manufacturer of the shingle roof was GAF and included a 30-year warranty. The manufacturer of the flat, built-up roof areas was Tremco and the warranty issued was for 20 years. The areas that received new roofs are still under warranty and are not included in the scope of roofing work included in the current 2022 referendum.

Q. I would like the breakout of \$63,000 to date by the end of today.

A. The breakout of costs, and the dates those costs were provided to the district, are posted in two places on the referendum website. This question and answer (with a link to cost breakout) is under the Funding Details and Voter Information sections: "What is the cost of holding a special referendum on December 13?"

Q. What are the days and the times you can vote for the Referendum in Freehold if you are out of town on December 13, 2022?

A. A registered voter who will be out of town on December 13 should make plans to use a Vote By Mail ballot. Details are on the referendum's [Voter Info page](#) under "To Vote By Mail."

Q. No they do not want to vote by mail they want to go to Freehold. Kindly provide the days and times.

A. You may be thinking of the large, general election when the state mandates in-person voting for an extended time prior to the election date.

<https://www.monmouthcountyvotes.com/voter-information/early-voting/>

That is not the case for special votes that happen at various times throughout the year. A registered voter who will be out of town on December 13, 2022, should make plans to use a Vote By Mail ballot. Details are on the referendum's Voter Info page under "To Vote By Mail."

Q. Can folks vote early for the Referendum vote? If yes what are the days and hours. I have asked this question with no response from Vision.

A. Kindly confirm receipt of this email. This is the third time your question is being answered. This was answered via an email to you at 4:05pm on Dec. 5 and again at 12:39pm today.

You may be thinking of the large, general election when the state mandates in-person voting for an extended time prior to the election date.

<https://www.monmouthcountyvotes.com/voter-information/early-voting/>

That is not the case for special votes that happen at various times throughout the year. A registered voter who will be out of town on December 13, 2022, should make plans to use a Vote By Mail ballot. Details are on the referendum's Voter Info page under "To Vote By Mail."

Q. Do you have the cost for the December 13th referendum that you can share today?

A. Estimates as of December 1, 2022, put the cost of the special referendum at about \$63,000. Determining the cost for a special voting event is a multi-step process. It is not a predetermined package

price. There are multiple costs; some are not known until the process is underway and some not until after the vote is complete. WTPS gathered this information throughout the month of November. Additional cost estimates were available December 1 after the printing of ballots and the mailing of ballots. The cost of this special referendum is less than 1% of the total value of improvements that would serve our students and community for decades.

Q. How much is this special election costing as it should be budgeted for under "election fees"?

A. Estimates as of December 1, 2022, put the cost of the special referendum at about \$63,000. Determining the cost for a special voting event is a multi-step process. It is not a predetermined package price. There are multiple costs; some are not known until the process is underway and some not until after the vote is complete. WTPS gathered this information throughout the month of November. Additional cost estimates were available December 1 after the printing of ballots and the mailing of ballots. The cost of this special referendum is less than 1% of the total value of improvements that would serve our students and community for decades.

Q. Why are you doing a special election to (what seems like) hide this? Any reason? Why not do it in November

A. There are many steps to scheduling a bond referendum, and one of them is approval by the NJ Department of Education. Districts cannot act without that. WTPS did not have state approval in time to schedule a referendum before the Dec. 13 date. This topic was addressed during the Virtual Forum on Dec. 1. In case you missed it, that recording is posted on the [referendum website](#) and you can fast-forward to about 1:07 to hear the dialogue.

Q. [Re: the [Virtual Forum](#)] how many voters are on this call? When will voters going in public receive the ballots?

A. The number of "attendees" (not panelists) taking part in the Virtual Forum varied between 30 and 66 throughout the event. There is no way of knowing how many of those are voters.

Q. Is everyone receiving a sample ballot in the mail for the referendum vote? or just those doing mail in?

A. Both sample ballots and Vote By Mail ballots are sent by the Monmouth County Clerk's Office. This is not a function of the school district. It is our understanding that all registered voters will receive Sample Ballots.

Q. When will those voting on December 13, 2022, receive the ballot in the mail? Are the 6,000 mail in ballots part of the 22,000? 16,000 voting day of?

A. Both sample ballots and Vote By Mail ballots are sent by the Monmouth County Clerk's Office. This is not a function of the school district. It is our understanding that registered voters will receive Sample Ballots. Communications with them indicate that Vote By Mail ballots were to be mailed Nov. 30. Your more detailed questions about voter rolls are best directed to that county office.

Q. Sometime in 19/20 the Architect came and did a presentation to the BOE. Kindly send me the complete presentation before 3:00 PM today. I recall the cost that the BOE needed was up to \$239M for the school via referendum.

A. The 1/21/2020 presentation of the Facilities Needs Assessment was posted 10/27/2022 on the referendum website.

<https://www.wallpublicschools.org/cms/lib/NJ50010904/Centricity/Domain/158/Facilities%20Condition%20Assessment%201.21.2020%20Spiezle%20Architectural%20Group.pdf>

Q. Can I see a copy of all submitted to the DOE and returned from the DOE to the district for the December Referendum.

A. A great deal of documentation goes into the bond-funding applications to the state's Department of Education. This material was not posted initially on this referendum website as these are technical documents written to match DOE specifications and not designed for public interpretation. However, WTPS recognizes that some members of the community are interested in this level of detail. You will find that documentation on the referendum website's [Communications tab](#), posted there on 12/6/2022.

[One person sent commentary without forming that into questions. WTPS Administrative Team responded. This compilation of citizen Q & A paraphrases the citizen's commentary in the form of questions.]

[Q. paraphrased - Is the district preparing for a potential influx of students, given the amount of property development that is planned? Can the demographer revise the 2021 study that projected a shortage of space?]

A. We are aware of the housing units in various stages of developments. The demographic studies we have show the district is under capacity, from an overall perspective. While two of our elementary schools are maximized or nearly so, two of them do have space to accommodate some growth. We are monitoring whether new housing developments actually translate to increased enrollment. If that happens, our first step would be to maximize the use of our current building capacity.

In the meantime, the building projects proposed through this referendum are Priority 1 needs and they must be completed regardless of what happens with enrollment.

[Q. paraphrased - Is this referendum just a way to capture the expiring debt due to be paid off in the next few years?]

A. You are right that this plan is timed with the payoff of existing debt, which will occur in the 2023-24 school year. The Board and administration have been judiciously addressing some pressing building needs with the operating budget while taking a "repair and wait" approach toward others. Bundling projects in a bond referendum enables a school district to capture state aid it cannot get for improvements made through the operating budget. Timing that with debt payoff, and the extension of that tax rate, keeps our schools maintained and the tax rate steady.

[Q. paraphrased - The referendum site is full of generalizations about the maintenance needed, but where is the itemized, building-level plans and cost projections and a schedule of the draw-down of the referendum proceeds?]

A. We just added an itemized list of building-by-building plans to the referendum website. The state finalized its approval Oct. 19, which led to consideration of which projects would go into which ballot question, which required consultation with architects and financial advisers. The added information reflects the Board's movement toward what voters will see on the Dec. 13th ballot.

We will not be able to post an advance schedule of projected draw-down of bond funding. The process of estimating costs is handled by very experienced architects and reviewed by the state. However, they are estimates at this stage. We will gain more clarity of costs after the competitive bidding process, and even then there can be changes. The WTPS Board is committed to a transparent process that goes beyond the legally required opening of bids in public. As bids come in over or under budget and adjustments are made accordingly to the overall plan, the Board plans regular reports at its meetings.

[Q. paraphrased - Have you reached out to parents in what appears to be a "quiet" campaign to pass this?]

A. The state allows just five specific dates for voting in January, March, September, December, and the general election date in November. WTPS did not have state approval in time to schedule a referendum before the Dec. 13 date. Waiting until January would reduce the chances of getting any significant work done in summertime 2023, which would be least disruptive for schools. Waiting until March would eliminate that potential. The Dec. 13 date was the best option considering state approval was finalized in the latter half of October.

WTPS has been researching and planning for a bond referendum for as long as five years (to coincide with the debt payoff). It has been discussed at public meetings. Even before the plans culminated in state approval, the Board openly announced that it was planning for a bond referendum in December 2022 and established an informative website that has expanded since then. We have sent two emails to parents; we do not have email addresses for the entire township's population. Three newspapers have covered the referendum in multiple articles, which is a way to reach non-parents. We are preparing a postcard to be sent to every household. Architects will present the full plan at the Nov. 15 Board meeting and allow time for public questions. A virtual forum will be held about two weeks before the vote, accommodating people who want to learn more without leaving home to do so.

This is not a "quiet" campaign. This is a young campaign. After significant research, the communications campaign is only about four weeks old, with an ample six more weeks for people to become educated voters.

[One citizen sent in three questions shortly before the Dec. 5 Virtual Forum. That citizen's questions were best directed at the outside consultants that were panelists for that forum, and so the questions were posed during that event.]

Q. If both questions are approved, can unexpended proceeds from question one be used for projects in question two that might require additional funds or are the funds in each question only available for transfer amongst the projects specific to the question?

[A. - paraphrased from the Virtual Forum] If voters approve both questions, WTPS would have flexibility to use funding described in each question to accomplish the projects. The district's bond counsel explained why that flexibility is granted and how the district would be limited to spending no more than the total amount that voters approve. Review the discussion at [this recording](#) of the Virtual Forum; advance to about 0:33.

Q. How and where can the interest accrued on unexpended referendum proceeds be used, does it go toward paying down the principal, does it go to the general fund or can it be used if a project requires additional funds?

[A. - paraphrased from the Virtual Forum] Interest that is accrued cannot be used for project costs, because that would increase the amount spent on projects beyond that which voters approved on the ballot. Accrued interest can be transferred at the end of the fiscal year to either reduce debt tax impact or go into the district's fund for non-referendum capital improvements. Review the discussion at [this recording](#) of the Virtual Forum; advance to about 0:53.

Q. Also, how does the state require the reporting of the projects(cost-over/under, completion status). Would all of the referendum projects be detailed and included in the annual audit?

[A. - paraphrased from the Virtual Forum] Funds generated by the sale of bonds in conjunction with the referendum would be managed in a fund that is separate from the district's general fund. All district expenditures are reported as part of the comprehensive annual financial report. Review the discussion at [this recording](#) of the Virtual Forum; advance to about 0:58.

- *The only exception is the question about the election costs. This citizen also sent that question as a separate email, and that email was answered with the costs.*

Q. Can you tell me who was sent the color flyer on the referendum?

A. That flyer was mailed to about 30,000 residential addresses in the zip codes that intersect with the school district's boundaries.

Q. Spreadsheets for the listed schools identify "hard costs". Do these figures include required Architectural/Engineering services? If not, on what percentage of "hard costs" would fees be based, and how will they be funded?

A. The "hard costs" do not include fees for architectural or engineering costs, nor do they include contingencies for unforeseen circumstances. A "soft cost" percentage of 15% and a 15% contingency is estimated for every element of the preliminary proposals. The \$53 million in Question 1 and the \$13.5 million in Question 2 both include the estimated hard and soft costs. If voters approve, the sale of bonds would fund the hard and soft costs.

Q. Footnotes list exceptions for hazardous materials. Given the age of some of the schools, it's conceivable that these could be encountered, ie; roofing, pipe insulation, floor tile, etc. How would hazardous material remediation efforts be funded?

A. Remediation for some hazardous materials are not included in the hard costs spreadsheet that you referenced. The contingency is in place to cover these types of items.

Q. Were "hard costs" in spreadsheets based on engineers estimates or actual quotes?

A. The hard costs to which you refer are based on estimates from the architectural firm and its knowledge of market conditions. School districts do not pursue price quotes the same way a consumer might. Contracting regulations for public schools are designed to create the most advantageous bidding scenario for the district. Projects are publicly advertised for any qualified contractor to bid, and contractors submit sealed bids. The Board of Education will open those bids in a public bid opening. By state law, any contract that is issued must be awarded to the company that submitted the lowest responsible bid that meets the specifications. Bids cannot be advertised until voters approve bond funding, and the designs are complete.

Q. Were contingency allowances included in the "hard costs" and what percentage of overall values? If not, how would "construction extra costs" for example hidden conditions, field changes, etc. be funded?

A. The "hard costs" do not include contingencies. The "soft costs" are projected at 15% and there is an additional 15% for contingencies of every element of the proposals. The dollar amounts listed on the ballot for voters to consider (\$53 million in Question 1 and \$13.5 million in Question 2) includes both hard and soft costs, so those would be funded by the sale of bonds if voters approve.