Focus Areas of the Bond

The proposed bond seeks to reimagine school facilities to address current realities and future demands in what the district believes is a financially prudent manner. The proposal will address the critical infrastructural needs, improve learning environments and resources for all students, and upgrade arts and athletic facilities. The $89.9 million project was conceptualized with input from the Facilities Advisory Committee and after careful analysis of the district’s five-year facilities plan. The district also received input from its Health, Safety and Security Committee and from community members during two special capital project forums. All registered voters are encouraged to learn more and vote on Feb. 2, 2022.

To learn more, please visit www.esmonline.org.
Have a question? Email ESMcapitalproject@esm.online.org or visit our FAQ on the website.

BOND VS. BUDGET
Capital improvements of this scale cannot be included in the operating budget without significantly impacting the tax levy. A bond spreads the cost out over a longer period of time, mitigating the annual tax impact and maximizing the use of New York State Building Aid, which for ESM is estimated to be about 72%. This means that the local cost of the project is cut almost to a third of the total cost of the project. For example, the repairs to the HS roof are projected to cost $13.2 million. Paying for this single project in one budget cycle without state aid instead of a bond would cause a 22% increase in property taxes. For a home that pays $7,000 in school taxes, this repair alone would increase that homeowner’s taxes by $1,540 in one year if this repair was not a bond.

ALL ABOUT TIMING
The district’s upcoming retiring debt, which was incurred from the construction of the Junior-Senior High School and Tuttle Avenue, presents an optimal opportunity for this project to be considered without significantly impacting the local tax burden. The new debt associated with the proposed bond will essentially replace the old debt. When coupled with the district’s 72% New York State Building Aid, it would allow the district to complete these much-needed, major renovations at a fraction of the total cost.

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Although the district has continued to make strong investments into its educational program, it has held off on major renovations and upgrades since our last bond, which was over 12 years ago. While our buildings still provide safe learning environments, education has continued to evolve and many of our spaces need updates to meet today’s standards. The emergency repairs completed over time have helped to defer complete overhauls, until now, when many of our infrastructural systems have simply reached the end of their lifespans. For example, the boiler at Eastport dates to 1965 and the school’s original chalkboards are still in classrooms. Here’s a look inside some of the other updates that are planned.

A reimagined high school library will not only provide space for study and collaboration, but will also include a bookstore-style café run by students in the business and special education programs.

A reimagined high school athletic complex to include: one mile fitness trail, two multipurpose turf fields, turf baseball and softball fields with grandstands, two restored multipurpose grass fields, four bullpens and batting cages, and practice softball and baseball fields. Additional updates to fields at Dayton Avenue and Eastport Elementary.

The HS asphalt shingle roof, which has been patched to address damages, is now beyond patchwork repairs. It would be fully replaced with a metal roof that is expected to last 50 years.

Outdoor learning spaces at the elementary schools will be created to reimagine hands-on learning and creativity.

A fence installation at Eastport Elementary will improve perimeter security and student safety while still preserving the historic esthetic of the area.

Security booths would be installed at the entrance of each school and entrances will be reimagined to help with traffic flow and safety.

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FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF PROJECTS, PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODES BELOW: