



Maine Township High School District 207

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Dr. Kenneth Wallace
Superintendent

Administration Center

April 13, 2018

Dear Residents:

Maine Township High School District 207 seeks your thoughts and recommendations on a funding proposal to address renovations to the District's three high schools: Maine East, Maine West and Maine South.

The last time voters in District 207 approved additional funding for building improvements was in 1967—51 years ago. Since then, your high school district has worked hard to live within its means, properly maintaining facilities and addressing building improvement using monies set aside for these types of projects. Unfortunately, the scope of our current capital improvement needs is beyond what can be funded with available resources.

District 207 seeks to address building improvements that will make your local high schools safer and more secure, improve accessibility for students and staff with disabilities, extend the useful life of existing facilities, and create updated classrooms and labs. The proposal calls for these needs to be addressed at all three schools:

- Improving safety and security by constructing new front entrances with secure vestibules to prevent visitors from entering the buildings before being cleared by school personnel.
- Installing new fire suppression systems.
- Replacing outdated plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems to extend the useful life of the existing buildings, reduce costly emergency repairs and improve energy efficiency.
- Updating classrooms and labs to create flexible learning spaces that leverage instructional technology, enhance current teaching methods and promote collaboration.
- Relocating the offices of counselors, deans, psychologists and other support personnel into one area at each school. This will enhance student access to these important services while also maintaining student privacy/confidentiality.
- Right sizing and relocating special education spaces to better meet the needs of students.
- Expanding undersized fine arts spaces.
- Creating flexible learning spaces for students to study individually and in small groups.
- Improving the Library Media Centers to increase functionality and access by all students and staff.

District 207 is also seeking the community’s input on proposed improvements specific to each high school. They include renovations to Career and Technical Education (CTE) spaces, installing new flooring and casework in classrooms, pool renovations to meet code requirements, auditorium upgrades and other improvements.

To reduce the amount of the total request and impact on taxpayers, District 207 is proposing to allocate significant reserves toward the proposed improvements. If a \$240.7 million proposal is pursued, the District would allocate \$45.7 million in reserves, bringing the total request down to \$195 million. The estimated annual tax impact of this size bond measure is \$91.02—or about \$7.59 per month—per \$100,000 of a home’s market value (as determined by the county assessor).

District 207 has had a long history of being fiscally responsible and frugal with your tax dollars. This has included reducing expenses, proactively correcting structural deficits, setting aside funds to address facility repairs, and abating a debt service levy to reduce taxes for property owners. The District maintains a fund balance that is adequate to address day-to-day operations without the need for short-term borrowing and allows us to maintain a “Aaa” bond rating, an unusually strong rating among Illinois school districts.

In addition to the proposed \$195 million bond measure, District 207 also seeks your input on a scaled-back, \$135 million bond proposal. The District’s “Plan B” would eliminate building fire suppression systems, classroom flooring and casework improvements, pool improvements and auditorium upgrades at each high school. Classroom furniture that is an integral part of creating collaborative instructional spaces would be scaled back at each school. Plan B also eliminates improvements to Maine East’s lower level and certain CTE and performing arts space renovations at Maine South. A new commons area at Maine West would also be scaled back.

Please share your thoughts on the proposed improvements. Over the coming months, District 207 will be hosting community open houses and tours, conducting informational presentations and gathering public input through a mail survey. Open houses and tours are scheduled at each of our high schools on the following days and times:

- Saturday, April 28, 10:00 am, Maine West
- Tuesday, May 1, 6:30 pm, Maine South
- Thursday, May 3, 6:30 pm, Maine East
- Saturday, May 5, 10:00 am, Maine East
- Wednesday, May 9, 6:30 pm, Maine West
- Saturday, May 12, 10:00 am, Maine South

I wish to thank the many community members, students and staff who participated in the development of our Master Facility Plan as well as the 65-member Citizen Task Force that helped vet the District’s proposed building improvements and financing options. Your efforts have taken us a big step forward in addressing our facility needs and identifying proposed solutions.

Additional information regarding the proposed capital improvements and funding proposal is available on the District’s website: www.Maine207.org.

These are your high schools. Your input will shape how we move forward.

Sincerely,



Dr. Ken Wallace
Superintendent