

Bartlett High School Renovation Project

In partnership with the Mass School Building Authority

Town Meeting: Tuesday, June 21 *Bartlett High School - 6:30 pm*

Ballot Election: Tuesday, June 28 *Town Hall - 7:00 am – 8:00 pm*



A "Yes" Vote means:

- The BHS renovation project will proceed and the community will receive the \$51 million MSBA Grant, leaving the remaining \$49 million to be borrowed and paid for by the Webster Community.
- The impact to tax payers will not be immediate. Residents would see the increase in approximately 3 years when the project is completed. That is typically when the town goes out to borrow.



A "No" Vote means:

- Webster will lose the \$51,577,377 million in MSBA grant funding.
- The Webster Community will be responsible for 100% of the impending capital improvements. If the necessary updates are done incrementally over the next 12 years, they are estimated to cost the tax payers of Webster approximately \$105,000,000 without MSBA Reimbursement.
- In order for The District to qualify for any assistance again from the MSBA, it they would have to start the entire MSBA process over again, this took 8 years last time to get to this point.

Bartlett High School Building Project

Commonly Asked Questions

What is the MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority)

The MSBA is a government agency that assists school districts to build or renovate school buildings.

Where does the MSBA collect their funding?

The MSBA collects a portion of all sales taxes paid in MA. If you have purchased anything that is subject to MA sales tax, **your** sales tax dollars fund school building projects.

Did the School Administration neglect the building?

No. All necessary maintenance and repairs at Bartlett High School have been completed as they come up. Major capital projects such as the roof, hvac, windows etc. have been delayed in the hope of an opportunity for state support which the district received as part of the MSBA Grant. Based on maintenance of the building over the years, the district received additional incentive points towards their reimbursement percentage.

Could different building maintenance practices have prevented the need for a renovation project?

No. The current building was built in the 1970s and has been maintained, including general repairs, on a regular basis since it was built. The MSBA recognized Webster's maintenance practices as above average during their review.

What is the reimbursement rate and how does it work?

The reimbursement rate is set by the MSBA. The base rate is derived from the Community Income Factor, Community Property Wealth Factor and the Community Poverty Factor. In addition, districts can receive incentive points for new regionalization, High Efficiency Green School Programs, Routine and Capital Maintenance, Overlay Zoning, Renovation/Re-use of existing Facilities, and Establishing a Maintenance Trust. The maximum a district can receive is 80%. Webster base rate before incentives = 77.47%, incentive points received for maintenance, energy efficiency- "Green Schools", and renovation = 8.23%, totaling 85.70%. Webster is receiving the maximum reimbursement of 80%. This reimbursement rate applies to **Eligible expense** categories which have maximum limits.

If the Bartlett Project is receiving 80% Reimbursement, why does it only reflect 52.71% of the cost of the \$101,417,044.

The project is made up of Eligible and Ineligible costs. The 80% reimbursement is on eligible costs only, ineligible cost do not get reimbursed. A few examples of ineligible costs would be, modular classrooms, hazardous materials removal, excess sq. footage, and site work resulting in 52.71% of the total project cost.

We already voted on this matter. Why are we being asked to vote on this again?

The elected School Committee and Board of Selectmen believe they have an obligation to better inform the community of the

implications of both a "yes" vote and a "no" vote. The \$51,577,377 grant approval expires on June 30, 2022. The MSBA informed us an extension is not likely.

How much will the renovation cost the taxpayer?

For every \$100,000 of assessed value, the estimated annual tax increase would be \$164.90. Per the town assessor, the median home value in Webster is \$262,000. The taxes would increase \$432.63 on a \$262,000 home. This equates to \$1.19 per day. Residents would see the increase in approximately 3 to 4 years when the project is completed.

Why do we need 2 separate votes? (A Town Meeting and a Ballot Vote at election)

A Special Town meeting is required for voters to approve the project funding and to authorize the borrowing. A majority vote is not sufficient, a 2/3 majority is required. The Ballot vote is needed to authorize a debt exclusion which will allow the town the right to borrow in accordance with proposition 2 ½ state law. A simple majority vote is sufficient.

What is the difference between a debt exclusion and a proposition 2 ½ override?

A *debt exclusion* allows for raising funds more than 2 ½ % each year for the sole purpose of paying the debt for the project stated in the ballot, and once the debt is paid off the tax increase goes away. A *2 ½ override* allows the town to raise taxes above the 2 ½ limit and the funds can be used for anything and is permanent. ***This project is a debt exclusion, not a permanent tax increase.***

What happens if this project passes?

If the project passes **both votes**, the district will proceed with the project and the town will be responsible to pay for the remaining cost of approximately \$49,839,707.

What happens if this project doesn't pass?

If the vote does not pass **both votes**, the town will lose the \$51,577,377 grant. The Webster community will be responsible for 100% of the impending capital improvements. If the necessary updates are done incrementally over the next 12 years they are estimated to cost the taxpayers of Webster approximately \$105,000,000 without MSBA Reimbursement.

What effect does the building have on school choice?

Webster taxpayers are paying \$755,397 to other communities as 110 high school students are school choiced out annually. By updates to our building and the educational programming we expect to retain students keeping your tax dollars in Webster.