

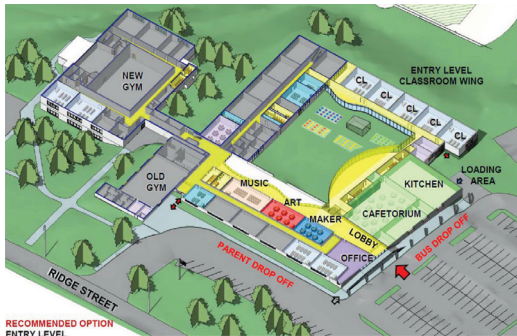


BOND 2021



Blind Brook Beacon

BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



BLIND BROOK-RYE UFSD BOND 2021

Promoting the continuous growth –
intellectually, socially and emotionally –
of all members of the Blind Brook
Community

COMMUNITY BOND VOTE DECEMBER 21, 2021

Dear Members of the Blind Brook Community,

In 2016, the District proposed a capital improvement project to renovate the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School. Our goal was to present our community with an updated and innovative learning space that would provide our students with the skills that they need to succeed in our ever-changing world.

That goal has not changed. Despite the challenges that we have faced, the District remains committed to providing an exceptional facility for our students, staff and community.

In order to successfully complete the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School project, we are asking for your assistance again. The proposed bond will provide us with the additional funding needed to get this project across the finish line. Please review the information in this brochure, and then cast your vote on Dec. 21.

Thank you for always supporting the Blind Brook Schools!

Sincerely,

The Blind Brook Board of Education

Dr. Colin Byrne, Interim Superintendent of Schools

ORIGINAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Middle School / High School

- ✓ New Fabrication "Fab" Lab
- ✓ Infrastructure Repairs –
Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing
- ✓ Building Envelope Repairs
- ✓ Conversion of custodial storage room into
a large modern multi-purpose classroom

Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School

- ✓ Butler Building Replacement
- ✓ Renovated and modernized 24 classrooms
- ✓ Bus Traffic & Drop-off Reconfiguration
- ✓ Building Envelope Repairs
- ✓ Code Compliance Work
- ✓ Safety/Security Enhancement
- ✓ Infrastructure Repairs –
Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing
- ✓ Improvements to Educational and
Extracurricular Programs
- ✓ New Makerspace
- ✓ New K-1 Wing and Enrichment Center
- Courtyard
- Cafetorium – Performing Arts Space
- New Kitchen – More prep space for
healthy food options; shorter lunch lines

80+% COMPLETE

SAVE THE DATE

Community Bond Vote:

Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2021

Blind Brook High School

7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

CURRENT PROJECT TIMELINE

PHASE	DESCRIPTION	COMPLETION DATE
1	24 classrooms, 2 gyms and alternative use spaces	September 2021
2	New K - 1 wing and enrichment center	November 2021
3	Courtyard	Winter/Spring 2022
4	Cafetorium	Spring 2022
5	Remaining spaces	Spring 2022



“Promoting the continuous growth – intellectually, socially and emotionally – of all members of the Blind Brook community”

FAQs

Will this bond ensure the planned improvements to our school?

In 2017 the community overwhelmingly supported investing in the school’s modernization, the first such investment in half a century. From the outset, the mission has been to create a 21st Century learning center and a safe and comfortable space that is environmentally appropriate and flexible enough to meet future needs. Approving this bond and completing the project will achieve this mission and benefit the community for years to come.

Why is the community again being asked to support a bond for this project?

Currently, we estimate that completing the project will cost an additional \$4.7 million to \$6 million. We are requesting authorization to borrow up to \$6 million to complete the work. While there are no assurances, we believe this is sufficient to finish the project. We are keeping two core principles in mind with respect to this work: First, act in a fiscally responsible manner by finding the smallest debt increase possible that provides certainty on the project; and second, don’t take away money from the classrooms and students. No decision needs to be made before January with regard to the exact amount borrowed or what form that borrowing takes. We will only borrow what we need.

What impact would this bond have on school taxes?

The additional bond debt service would be payable over 20 years with the first-year payment equal to \$345,361. If approved, the bond would cause the average annual school tax bill to increase by less than 1%. To put that in context, a home with an Average Assessed Value in 2021-22 of \$888,943 and paying \$15,793 in school taxes before STAR benefits are applied would see an annual increase of \$124. This will have the net effect of increasing the average homeowner’s taxes by \$124 over the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. In 2025-26, we have older, larger debt that is coming off of the books, so our overall debt-related payments will decrease. In other

words, the net effect is that these debt-related tax increases are temporary.

Why wasn’t the previous bond sufficient?

Changes by the general contractor and other prime contractors have totaled more than \$5 million. These changes included a redesign of the HVAC system, steel frame issues on the roof, structural reinforcement of windows and temporary windows, corridor redesign between the 1955 wing and the new classroom wing, and overtime. Additional professional services were also required.



Project management has extended longer than anticipated, while other services, such as legal and architectural, were needed. All approved change orders are posted on the district website for public review.

What steps are being taken now to ensure all work is done on time?

We understand the community’s frustration with the project and have put new measures in place to increase the rigor and scrutiny applied at each step. We have engaged BBS Architects to oversee progress. We have leveraged community input and expertise by reinstating the Facilities Committee, comprising 17 members and divided into subcommittees for Construction, Finance & Bond and Communications/Community Relations. The committee meets weekly. A Construction Project Subcommittee includes seven members with extensive project management experience.

EFPR Accountants performed an independent

review of the project’s financials. EFPR presented their findings at the Nov. 16 Board of Education meeting and found no material issues with the accounting of the project. All change orders will receive increased scrutiny by BBS, and the Facilities committee will remain involved. In preparation for inspections, BBS will stage advance walkthroughs for each phase. There will be greater engagement with inspectors and the New York State Education Department.

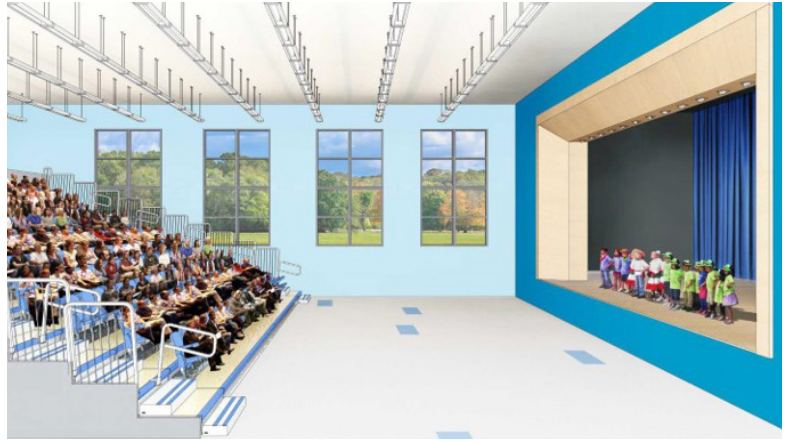
What would it mean for our district if this bond vote is not successful?

Without bond approval, the project would likely run out of authorized funds in early 2022. At some point the project would need to halt. The unfinished cafetorium would likely need to be closed off, and currently available space would instead be utilized. Children would continue to eat in the gymnasium, in classrooms and outside. The building exterior would remain unfinished indefinitely. The board would consider alternative solutions in consultation with counsel, including reviewing whether the incomplete building would create a public emergency.

Restarting the project at a future date would increase costs to taxpayers, including such incremental costs as the need to winterize the building, re-inspections to prevent structural damage from exposure, re-mobilizing consultants and contractors, and the inevitable impact of inflation and rising interest rates.

What does the schedule for the final phases of construction look like?

The Board of Education is committed to the project’s completion by the end of the current school year so that the community does not enter the summer with any uncertainty regarding to the 2022-23 school year. Phase 1 was completed in early October with the reopening of the building under a temporary certificate of occupancy. Phase 2 was completed and passed inspection prior to the Thanksgiving break. That included incorporating the new kindergarten and first-grade wing and the enrichment center. Phases 3-5: encompassing the cafetorium, courtyard and remaining spaces are projected to be completed by spring.



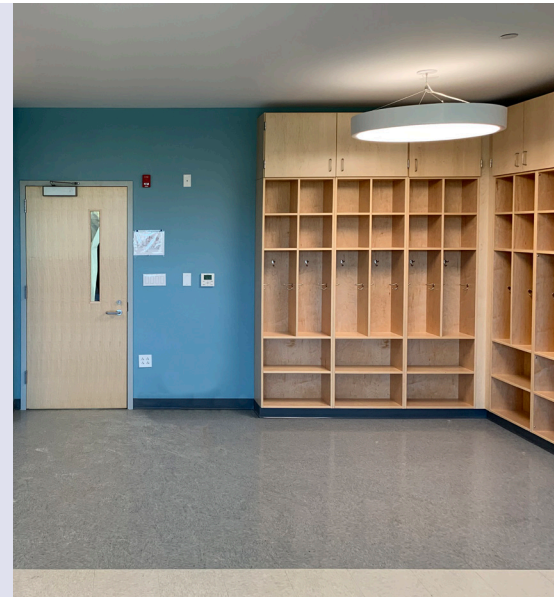
ABOUT THE CAFETORIUM

The cafetorium will serve as both a cafeteria and an auditorium and will feature retractable seating for up to 350 people. A modern and expanded kitchen will allow for preparation of new, healthy student lunch options. It will provide a large-group assembly space and a performance space with a full-sized stage.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Total amount to be borrowed: \$4.7 million to \$6 million
- Projected Tax Increase: \$124 per year on average assessed home, less than 1%
- Decisions on how much to borrow and what form borrowing takes do not need to be made until January. We will only borrow what is needed, up to \$6 million, to finish the project.
- The tax increases that will result from this project are temporary. This is because significant existing debt — more than \$1 million — from the 2005 Bond will be retired after the 2025-26 school year.
- The district anticipates receiving New York State building aid to offset taxpayers' expense.



Voter Information



When:	Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2021, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Where:	Blind Brook High School · 840 King St, Rye Brook, NY 10573
Qualifications:	You must be 18 years of age or older, a U.S. citizen, a district resident for a minimum of 30 days and registered to vote by Dec. 13, 2021.
Registration:	Please register to vote through the Department of Motor Vehicles at dmv.ny.gov or contact the District Clerk at 914-937-3600, ext. 1001.

Absentee ballot applications will be posted on the district website and may be submitted until Dec. 20





Blind Brook Beacon | 2021 Community Bond Vote

BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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For more information: www.blindbrook.org

COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES FOR BMPRSS

In 2017, our community voted overwhelmingly in support of investing in the modernization of the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School. This was the first such major investment of its kind in half a century. From the outset, the mission of this expansion and upgrade project has been to create a truly 21st Century learning center, in which to nurture, challenge and support our students' education. Our priority has been to ensure a school that is both a safe and comfortable learning space, and one that is environmentally appropriate and flexible enough to meet future programming needs. Completing the modernization of the Ridge Street School will achieve this mission and provide a benefit to the community for many years to come. The district is committed to doing so in a fiscally responsible manner, finding the smallest debt increase possible that provides certainty on the project and taking nothing away from classrooms and students.

IMPORTANT DATES:

12/7

Construction update
at BOE meeting

12/13

Last day to register to vote
(if not already registered)

12/20

Deadline to submit
absentee ballots

12/21

VOTE
at Blind Brook High School
from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.