



2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Prepared for Olean City School District
April 9, 2025



Q. Why is the District proposing a capital project now?

- A. The Olean City School District is committed to exercising care and good judgment in managing the community resources with which we are entrusted. We need to continue to take care of our schools, an important asset the community owns. Just as one's home ages and needs renovations and upkeep to keep it in good shape, so do our schools. The District is addressing its highest-priority facilities issues now, rather than delaying and facing future higher costs and further deterioration.

Q. Why is the District having a bond vote?

- A. Our District is committed to providing a safe learning environment and well-maintained facilities for students and public use. Routine facility maintenance and repair work is typically funded within the annual District budget, with local taxpayers bearing the full cost. However, sizable renovations, reconstruction, and replacement of "end of useful life" items, such as those included in this project, would have a major impact on the tax rate if included in the annual District budget. A bond proposition is the fiscally responsible alternative because the State reimburses a vast majority of the cost, and the expense is spread out over a longer period of time.

Q. Why is this work needed?

- A. Every five years, all school districts are required by the State to have a certified Architect review the condition of their buildings and grounds. In 2022, our architectural consultant performed a Building Condition Survey (BCS) that examined the District's facilities and identified problem areas requiring repair or replacement. A District subcommittee studied the BCS items and developed a prioritized list of recommended repairs and upgrades. The District is addressing those issues now, rather than delaying and facing future higher costs and further deterioration.

Q. How was the proposed capital project developed?

- A. Over the past several years, the District administration and Board of Education have been developing a long-range facilities plan to assess current and future capital improvement needs and the means to responsibly achieve them. During this process, critical safety upgrades and building preservation needs were identified and prioritized, as were opportunities to enrich our students through academic program enhancements. To evaluate conditions at all facilities, the District utilized its Building

Condition Survey (BCS), which is mandated by the State to be conducted every five years, and considered work completed in previous projects.

Q. How were the project's components chosen?

A . Building Condition Survey items, academic program enhancements and safety concerns received top priority, as did code compliance, mechanical systems (HVAC and building controls) and building envelope (roofs and exterior wall systems) items. In other instances, work is required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Q. When will the work take place?

A . It's expected that State Education Department's approval for the project would be received by Spring 2027 with the first phase of work starting in Summer 2027. It is anticipated that the project would be substantially complete by the end of 2029.

Q. What is the total cost of this proposed project and how can it have NO TAX IMPACT?

A. The total combined cost of the two capital project propositions is \$55,595,000.

Proposition 2: \$29,435,000

Proposition 3: \$24,160,000

The entire referendum would be paid for with a combination of State Building Aid funding and the District's reserves that have been set aside for use on only capital projects. In addition, the District has retiring debt that will partially be used to offset project costs, thereby causing no increase in taxes.

Q. Isn't State Building Aid just my tax dollars too?

A . Yes, it is. The New York State Legislature has given all Districts in the state an opportunity to use tax dollars to enhance their communities through school building improvements and renovations. This is an opportunity to keep some of those tax dollars in the Olean community, working to improve the educational setting for our children and the public.

Q. What if one of the capital project propositions does not pass?

A . Proposition 2 requires a simple majority vote in order to pass due to the current available debt limit. Proposition 3 can only pass if it achieves a supermajority vote AND if Proposition 2 also passes.

If Proposition 2 does not pass, many of the critical safety improvements and building renovations identified by the State-mandated Building Condition Survey would still be absolutely necessary. These requirements would still need to be addressed. The required work may instead have to be funded within the annual District budget, without the benefit of State Building Aid, with local taxpayers bearing the full cost.