JASPER-TROUPSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL

HOME OF THE WILDCATS

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November 13, 2026

Dear Jasper-Troupsburg Community,

In our last community update, we shared the challenges associated with the initial $130 million construction estimate for our new high school and the work underway to reduce those costs. At that time, we explained that additional design work and coordination with FEMA were necessary before we could confidently move toward a public vote.

Since then, we have made significant progress. Our architects and construction management team have worked to develop a more efficient building design, substantially reduce the estimated project cost, and establish a clearer path forward.

We are now preparing to bring the proposed high school replacement project before district voters on Wednesday, February 10, 2027.

I want to explain what has changed, where we stand with FEMA, and what our community can expect between now and February.

A More Efficient Building at a Lower Cost

Following our September meetings with FEMA, we directed LaBella Associates and Campus Construction Management to take a comprehensive look at the proposed building and site design.

Much of this work focused on reducing the significant construction costs associated with developing a school on sloped terrain. By revising the building layout and reconsidering its placement on the property, our team identified opportunities to simplify construction while maintaining the educational spaces our students need.

As a result, the estimated overall project cost has been reduced from approximately $130 million to $109 million, a reduction of roughly $21 million.

An important part of this redesign involves relocating the athletic track from the new high school site to our existing sports complex. This change allows for a more efficient use of the new property, reduces the amount of

site development required, and helps control construction costs.

Because the track was included in FEMA's original approved project, relocating it requires a formal change to the scope of work. We are currently working with FEMA and the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) to complete that process.

Importantly, the revised design remains approximately **85,000 square feet**, consistent with the size of the replacement high school already approved by FEMA. We are not proposing a larger building than the one included in FEMA's obligated project.

Understanding FEMA's Funding Commitment

One of the most important things for our community to understand is how FEMA funding works for a project of this size.

In June, FEMA formally obligated approximately $67 million for the replacement of our high school and associated facilities. This includes the new school building, demolition of the former building, site development, utilities, parking, access roads, and athletic facilities.

The $67 million obligation is not necessarily the maximum amount of eligible funding available for our project.

Our project is classified as a *Large Project* under FEMA's Public Assistance Program. For Large Projects that are not subject to a funding cap, FEMA's established policy provides that the final eligible project cost is based on the actual, documented expenses necessary to complete the approved scope of work.

Put simply, FEMA has approved what we are replacing, and the final eligible funding is determined by the actual cost of completing that approved work.

This distinction is particularly important when comparing the initial $67 million obligation with our current $109 million project estimate. The difference between those figures does not automatically become a local taxpayer expense. Costs that remain within FEMA's approved scope of work and meet federal requirements for eligibility, reasonableness, and documentation are eligible for reimbursement under the applicable federal and state funding arrangements.

Our responsibility is to ensure that the project remains consistent with FEMA's approved scope, that expenses are carefully managed and documented, and that the district receives the reimbursement available under the established funding process.

Preparing for the February 10 Vote

With the revised design and updated cost estimate, we are now moving forward with preparations for a public referendum on Wednesday, February 10, 2027.

The vote will ask residents to authorize the district to undertake and finance the proposed high school replacement project.

It is important to understand that the amount presented to voters must be sufficient to complete construction, even though FEMA reimbursement will occur through the established process of reviewing and reimbursing

eligible project expenses.

Over the coming weeks, we will continue working with our architects, construction managers, financial advisors, FEMA, and DHSES to finalize the information needed for the referendum. We will also complete the required environmental reviews and Board of Education actions.

Before the vote, we will provide additional information about the proposed project budget, anticipated federal and state funding, and potential impact on local taxpayers.

We have also scheduled two community information sessions on **January 6 and February 3**, where residents will have opportunities to review the proposal, ask questions, and learn more about the project.

Looking Ahead

The past five years have tested our school community in ways none of us could have imagined. Our students and staff have adapted to learning and working in a temporary location, our families have faced uncertainty, and our community has patiently navigated a process far more complicated than any of us anticipated. Through it all, the strength and resilience of Jasper-Troupsburg have been remarkable.

We now approach one of the most significant decisions in our district's history. This is about more than replacing a building. It is about the educational opportunities we provide our children, our responsibility to taxpayers, and the long-term future of a school district that has served generations of families.

We have made tremendous progress, overcome significant obstacles, and reached a point that once seemed very far away. As we approach February 10, my commitment is to continue sharing accurate information, answering questions, and ensuring our community understands both the opportunities and financial considerations associated with this project.

Our students deserve a safe and stable place to learn, and our community deserves a clear understanding of the decisions ahead. Those responsibilities have guided our work from the beginning and will continue to guide us as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Jason Oliver
Superintendent of Schools
Jasper-Troupsburg Central School District