

Capital Project FAQs

Q: What is a Capital Project?

A. Our District inspects its property regularly, working with an architect to maintain a five year, capital improvement plan. Some issues require immediate attention, while other repairs and upgrades can be spread out over time. This is done in much the same way a homeowner plans to fund major repairs, such as a roof. For school districts, this is called a "Capital Project". To further encourage schools to maintain or improve their facilities, New York State Education Department (NYSED) reimburses districts through "Building Aid" for capital projects. NYSED pays a percentage of capital project costs, and the district pays the balance known as "Local Share".

Q: Why are these projects needed?

A. The Building Project task force identified several needs for the future focusing in the areas of Performing Arts, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) and Athletics. In addition, the District completed a Building Condition Survey in 2020 as required by New York State, and several areas were identified to improve the facilities in terms of code, energy, building envelope and equipment.

Q: Why now?

A. The timing is right. Over time, our facility needs will continue to grow, not diminish or go away. We don't expect NYSED's contribution to capital project costs to get any better than they are right now.

For instance, the percentage of aid for aidable capital project improvements costs available to the District in 2008 was 69.6%. Our current percentage of aid, while still very strong at 66.6%, may be even less in future years. For this project, when looking at the aidable scope and what percentage of the project will receive building aid the District expects 49% of the project cost to be paid for with building aid.

We also know that construction costs continue to escalate with each passing year. The construction industry is a very competitive marketplace right now. The District can undertake a construction project in this climate and benefit from lower material and labor costs.

If we choose to wait and pursue the same project in the future, we would expect the cost to be higher.

Without the advantage of building aid, the project would have to be completed with 100% local funding.

During the building inspection, we learned that a great deal of work is needed on our building. When exploring the different options for the capital project, the feedback

received from the District stakeholders was in support of critical program and athletic upgrades, as well as infrastructure.

Q: Isn't State 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 our own community and improve safety and the educational setting for our children.

Q: If the project is approved, when will the work start and be completed?

A: After voter approval, the plans and specifications will need to be completed by the architects and engineers and will be submitted to New York State for approval (NYSED issues our building permits). This process and approval from the state can take up to a year. Work will begin in 2022 with anticipated completion by the end of 2023. The construction schedule would seek to minimize disruptions to the school day.

Q: How can we learn more about the project?

A: We encourage the community to attend a Public Information session on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm. Additional information can be found on the District's website at www.geneseocsd.org, as well as contacting the Superintendent, Business Administrator or any Board Member. A brochure including project information will be mailed to District residents in January, 2021.

Q: What is included in this Capital Project?

A: There are three major areas of improvement targeted: Performing Arts, STEAM and Athletics. For Performing Arts, the lighting in the auditorium will be improved, along with safety upgrades, better exiting and renovated scene shop and storage. Also included will be renovations to the Band and Chorus Rooms. For STEAM, renovations are planned to the High School Tech area. In addition, a new High School STEAM classroom will be created in an addition, for use by all Middle School and High School students. For Athletics, a turf field on the "Field of Dreams" is planned, as well as a gymnasium addition for a new modified competition gym.

In addition to this work, several other enhancements are planned, including but not limited to: cafeteria renovation, elevator upgrades, fitness and team room upgrades, along with extensive infrastructure improvements.

Q: How much will the proposed project cost?

A: The total maximum project cost is \$15,550,000. 49% of the project cost will be paid for by State Building Aid. In addition, the District will be applying \$1,549,428 of Capital Reserve funds to the project. Capital reserve funds are monies saved over time for capital project expenses. The District cannot use these funds for other purposes. The voters must approve the use of these funds, which is being requested as part of this

capital project vote. Additionally, the District has local share (tax levy) associated with debt from a prior capital project that is retiring that will be applied to this project to offset the local share impact. After applying building aid, capital reserve and tax levy from the retiring debt the taxpayer share would amount to an increase to the annual tax levy of approximately \$242,000 a year or 2.10%. This increase would then be spread evenly over all the taxpayers of the Geneseo Central School District. The estimated cost for a \$150,000 house (full value) would be \$51 per year for 15 years. With STAR the cost would be \$40.80 and with Senior (Enhanced) STAR the cost would be \$26.96 per year.

Q: How was this project developed?

A: For most of 2020, the Board of Education, Building Project Task Force including community members; administrators, and staff, in conjunction with the architects and engineers, have had numerous meetings to determine what would be included in the project. Priorities were established and from there the scope of the project was developed.

Q: Why a capital project versus operations and maintenance?

A: NYSED encourages school districts to undertake a routine schedule of capital improvements to maintain their facilities and grounds.

To further encourage enhancing schools, SED reimburses districts through "Building Aid" for capital projects (different from "Operating Aid"). SED pays a percentage of capital project costs, and the district pays the balance known as "Local Share". SED allows districts to undertake major improvements and take advantage of Building Aid every five years.

If facility construction work were to be completed out of the Operations and Maintenance budget, there would be NO STATE BUILDING AID (100% Local Share).

Q: Will this project complete our capital improvement needs?

A: No. Our buildings are aging, and our facility needs are large and on-going.

Our facilities host over 1,000 people every day...students, staff and visitors...walking on our floors, opening and closing our lockers, doors and windows, playing in our gyms, swimming in our pool, eating in our cafeterias, driving and parking on our roads and in our lots, and playing on our play fields. Normal wear and tear and the effects of time have taken their toll on our buildings and grounds.

Acting with fiscal responsibility, we wish to minimize the cost to our local taxpayers, while maintaining safe, healthy and appropriate facilities and learning environments for our students, staff and community.

Q: How can we justify building additions based on current enrollment?

A: Based on a study completed by independent consultants, our enrollments are staying relatively steady. Our current enrollment is 853, and our study anticipates nominal fluctuations over the next 10 years.

The building addition is not meant to accommodate additional students or classrooms, but rather to improve safety and security and to replace current inadequate program spaces which are either too small or need specialty space constructed. The overall project scope was developed in a manner that **maximizes** every state aid dollar. SED has pre-approved the state building aid on the addition of the STEAM rooms. The approval of state building aid on the addition may not be available in the future which would result in a higher local share for the same work if it was undertaken at a future time.

Our schools are at the heart of, and used by so many in our community. Maintaining and improving our facilities may attract families to live in Geneseo... or... keep some from moving away to provide better learning environments for their children.

Q: What is an Energy Performance Contract, and how is it beneficial to the District?

A: The Energy Performance Contract (EPC), completed by Day Automation, will fund energy saving building improvements, including all new LED lighting and modern building controls across the District. The EPC allows for the District to cover the costs of energy efficiency upgrades by using the savings generated by these upgrades without increasing taxes. These energy savings are guaranteed, and if the utility targets are not met, Day Automation will make up the difference. New York State will also provide aid for the project and voting yes will allow the district to receive an additional 10% state aid for this project. The energy savings and aid offered by New York State will end up saving the District more than it initially spends. As an added benefit, the district will be able to demonstrate being "Green" and promote energy efficiency to our students who will be the future environmental stewards of the world.