

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



1. Why does ECASD need to go to a capital referendum?

- ✓ To address aging infrastructure
 - This vital investment in our facilities will extend their life cycle, allow the district to continue to support the community by utilizing our facilities, and continue our strategic plan for addressing our infrastructure and growth.
- ✓ To improve the learning environment for our children
 - The facility study identified key areas to address more multifunctional areas, increased flexible learning areas, eliminate infrastructure challenges that are impacting our children’s classrooms, and other key items that will improve the quality of the atmosphere in which our children learn.
- ✓ To continue the necessary reinvestment in buildings
 - ECASD community generously supported a capital referendum in 2011 and an operational referendum in 2016 that addressed deferred maintenance needs.

2. How did you plan for November 2022 referendum?

- ✓ Architects and engineers identified concerns and prioritized projects this past winter to provide guidance in a report of our facility needs in our 22 buildings for the next ten years. From January through June of this year, our Board was informed of and discussed the studies, findings, reports, and general survey feedback and data from our district stakeholders. On August 15, the Board approved the referendum question.

3. Can you share more information about the facility study?

- ✓ The Facility Study examined all 22 ECASD buildings and provided guidance on facility needs until 2032. This study helped the District prioritize required maintenance costs in the next 1-5 years (high & medium priority) and the next 6-10 years (low priority) as indicated in the chart below:

School	Overall Project Cost
Priority 1 – High	\$ 5,237,856
Priority 2 – Medium	87,185,280
Priority 3 - Low	<u>35,535,552</u>
TOTAL	\$ 127,958,688
Elementary	\$ 44,837,104
Secondary	79,804,088
Other	<u>3,317,496</u>
TOTAL	\$ 127,958,688

Where Knowledge and Inspiration Meet to Create the Future



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



- ✓ Currently the ECASD spends \$1.8M/year from its operating budget on maintenance. At this rate, it would take the District 71 years to complete all identified needs from the facility study. This does not include any new projects, new space or maintenance issues that may arise in those 71 years.
- ✓ To put this in perspective, the District maintains 2,331,326 square feet of space in 22 buildings. Comparing this to an average 2,500 square foot home, the District is responsible for the equivalent of 933 homes. In addition to the building square footage, the District maintains 360 acres of land including 67.34 acres of paved parking lots, drives, and playgrounds.

4. What buildings are included in the referendum?

- ✓ Memorial High School
- ✓ North High School
- ✓ South Middle School
- ✓ Putnam Heights Elementary School
- ✓ Northstar, Locust Lane, Manz, Meadowview, Northwoods, Sam Davey, and Sherman

5. Why does the referendum include additions to North High School and Putnam Heights Elementary School?

- ✓ The Board Demographic Trends and Facility Planning Committee, consisting of District community members, monitors enrollment trends and makes recommendations regarding school capacity and facility needs. In July 2020, the Committee recommended to the Board that additional space be considered at the elementary level with an addition to Putnam Heights. In August 2021, the Committee recommended an expansion at North High School. In November 2021, the Committee reaffirmed the recommendation that Putnam Heights Elementary School and North High School needed additions due to continuing capacity concerns.

6. What is the cost to taxpayers for the referendum?

Estimated Tax Increase Per Year for 20 Years* 2022-23 to 2042-43	Per Year	Per Month
\$ 100,000 of property Value	\$ 40	\$ 3.33
\$ 200,000 of property Value	\$ 80	\$ 6.67
\$ 300,000 of property Value	\$ 120	\$ 10.00

*Tax impact estimates have been provided by financial advisors from Robert W. Baird.

*Assumptions include 20-year bond issuance at 4.75% interest and equalized valuation growth of 11.16% in 2022 and 1.00% thereafter.

Where Knowledge and Inspiration Meet to Create the Future



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



7. What will the debt be used for?

Projects	\$ 99M
Putnam Heights	\$ 6.9M
Memorial High School	\$ 19.7M
North High School	\$ 20.9M
South Middle School	\$ 42.7M
Other	\$ 8.4M
Total	\$ 98.6M
Mill Rate Per \$ 1,000 of property value	\$0.40

Other Buildings	Projects	Estimated Cost
Northstar	High Priority	\$ 957,500
Sam Davey	High and Medium Priority	\$ 372,000
Locust Lane	High and Medium Priority	\$ 563,500
Manz	High and Medium Priority	\$ 507,500
Meadowview	High and Medium Priority	\$ 1,462,000
Northwoods	High and Medium Priority	\$ 4,309,000
Sherman	High and Medium Priority	\$ 209,000

8. How is this referendum different than the November 2016 referendum?

- ✓ The referendum in November 2016 was an operating referendum used to address deferred maintenance needs for most of our buildings in addition to some operational needs. This referendum will address overcrowding issues and remodeling buildings to address aging buildings and does not address operational needs.

Where Knowledge and Inspiration Meet to Create the Future

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



9. How have the 2016 Referendum Funds been spent?

	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Budget
Regular Salary & Fringes	\$ 4,660,187	\$ 817,978.41	\$ 2,921,476	\$ 1,856,889	\$ 3,111,727	\$ 1,798,127
Class Size	0	1,800,000	223,200	948,600	0	0
Technology/Safety & Security	246,662	694,062.59	561,236	884,423	578,035	1,877,435
Debt Payment	<u>953,149</u>	<u>2,547,959</u>	<u>2,154,088</u>	<u>2,170,088</u>	<u>2,170,238</u>	<u>2,184,438</u>
TOTAL	\$ 5,860,000	\$ 5,860,000	\$ 5,860,000	\$ 5,860,000	\$ 5,860,000	\$ 5,860,000

10. When will the enrollment needs and deferred maintenance of the elementary schools not impacted by the referendum be addressed?

- ✓ ECASD has committed to \$ 1.8M of operating funds for deferred maintenance and ESSER funds to address some of the high and medium priority needs from the study.
- ✓ At the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, there are attendance areas the Board Demographic Trends and Facility Committee are monitoring. Furthermore, the Referendum Committee has recently charged the Board Demographic Trends and Facility Committee to review elementary populations in targeted areas and make a recommendation to the Board. Based upon their recommendation to the Board, deferred maintenance needs will then be addressed.

11. What will happen if the referendum doesn't pass?

- ✓ The Board has not identified what will happen if the referendum doesn't pass. More information will follow as the Board continues to discuss this issue.
- ✓ If the referendum fails, the current proposal would be modified, but not dismantled to address growth where it is occurring and other major renovations. Other considerations could include:
 - With North and Putnam Heights over capacity, there could be boundary changes prior to 2024
 - Higher than average class sizes in our overcrowded schools
 - Returning to voters in the future with a new capital referendum question
 - Considering alternative scheduling options for North High
 - General maintenance will continue to be deferred, which results in more costly repairs later. For example, in 2016, when a similar project was explored for South, the cost was approximately \$27 million. Now the cost is \$42.7 million.
 - Utilizing significant operational funds for urgent capital improvement which will impact our student programming

Where Knowledge and Inspiration Meet to Create the Future

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



12. Where and when can I vote?

- ✓ Election Day is November 8, 2022
- ✓ Poll locations can be found here <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>
- ✓ Mail-in Absentee Ballots can be requested here <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>
- ✓ In Person Absentee voting is available October 25, 2022 – November 4, 2022

New September 27, 2022

13. The ECASD capital referendum question for November 8 is as follows:

- ✓ Shall the Eau Claire Area School District, Eau Claire, Chippewa and Dunn Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to issue pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$98,600,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of a school building and facility improvement project consisting of: construction of additions and renovations at Memorial and North High, South Middle and Putnam Heights Elementary Schools; capital maintenance, building infrastructure, and site and extra-curricular facility improvements at Locust Lane, Manz, Meadowview, Northwoods, Putnam Heights, Sam Davey and Sherman Elementary, Northstar and South Middle, and Memorial and North High Schools; and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment?

***The City of Eau Claire will have a separate and unconnected referendum question put to voters on the November 8 ballot.**

14. If the capital referendum passes on November 8 when would construction on projects begin?

- ✓ Smaller projects could begin as soon as summer 2023 while larger projects would begin summer of 2024. All projects must be completed within three years of debt being issued.

New October 10, 2022

15. Why is synthetic turf at North and Memorial part of the referendum? How much will it cost to include?

- ✓ Synthetic turf has a measurable, positive impact on the environment. Depending on the region of the country, a typical grass sports field requires between 500,000 to a million gallons of water or more each year.
- ✓ Eliminates the need for pesticides and fertilizer
- ✓ Reduces CO₂ and other noxious emissions from mowers (the EPA reports that a push mower emits as much pollution in one hour as 11 cars and a riding mower emits as much as 34 cars)
- ✓ Crumb rubber infill is made from recycled tires keeping them out of landfills



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NOVEMBER 8, 2022 REFERENDUM



- ✓ Turf materials can be recycled at the end of their useful life.
- ✓ Turf is always ready. Synthetic turf fields are typically utilized for about 3,000 hours of play per year, with no "rest" required, the equivalent of three to four well-maintained natural turf fields.
- ✓ When properly maintained it costs about \$40,000 a year to take care of natural grass and about \$10,000 a year to maintain synthetic turf.
- ✓ Turf impacts multiple programs that benefit all students. Examples include: Physical Education, Adaptive Physical Education, Special Olympics, Band/Marching Band, other sports/programming, etc.
- ✓ Synthetic turf will cost approximately \$1.7M at each high school

16. Will lights and grandstands at the high schools be included in this referendum?

- ✓ At this time, they are not included; however, they may be phased in at a future date. Including the lights and grandstands exceeded the tax threshold the community indicated they would support in May of 2022.

17. How did our buildings get to the current state of deferred maintenance?

- ✓ Going to referendum is the only option districts have to support significant and costly repairs and additions. School districts are limited in what they can spend by a revenue cap that was set by the state based on what districts were spending in 1993. Due to the community impact of the Uniroyal closure, ECASD spent very conservatively when these caps were put in place. Our entire budget, based on state funding, includes only \$1.8 million per year for deferred maintenance which causes work to be deferred from year to year.