

COMMUNITY CONNECTION



A PUBLICATION OF THE CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Capital Improvement Project Edition Fall 2019

Project Focus

- ✓ Improved safety and security for students
- ✓ Addresses increased enrollment
- ✓ Student achievement and support
- ✓ Thorough yet fiscally responsible design

Public Referendum

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019
Noon to 9 p.m.

Cheektowaga Central School District
Raymond L. Carr Board Room
3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga

Please park in main (south) lot and use side entrances (adjacent to the parking lot).

You are eligible to vote if you are:

- A legal resident of the Cheektowaga Central School District for at least 30 days
- Age 18 or older
- A citizen of the United States

Identification will be required. The preferred forms are a Board of Elections card, driver's license, postmarked mail, rental/lease receipt, a non-driver identification card or a utility bill.

Absentee ballots are available from the District Clerk's office. We must receive your application at least seven days before the day of the vote in order for an absentee ballot to be mailed back to you. If you personally deliver the application, you may pick up a ballot up to the day before the vote. No representative may pick up a ballot for you. The completed absentee ballot must be received by the District Clerk by 5 p.m. on Dec. 10, 2019.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Cheektowaga Central Community,

I have had the privilege to serve the Cheektowaga Central School District for the last 28 years and over the expanse of these years have marveled at how careful we have been to keep our buildings running smoothly and our campuses operating efficiently. Over the years we have embarked upon a series of capital projects which allowed us to maintain our level of operation, but those improvements did not expand the footprint of our buildings in terms of space. As a result, we now need to create new space for the safety, as well as academic growth, of our youngest learners at Union East Elementary.



*Superintendent
Mary Morris*

I can remember the excitement surrounding my first capital project in 1995 which addressed facility improvements and technology upgrades. On the tech side of that project, my Apple 2C computer was replaced by a state-of-the-art IBM computer. The project was commonly referred to as the windows project, due to the replacement of windows throughout our campus. In addition, the high school auditorium was refurbished and a new music wing created a performance space for our student-musicians that is on par with our award-winning performing arts program. Our chorus and band programs are identified locally as some of the best in the area and growing at such a rate that we now have 134 students participating in the third-grade choral program and 86 at fourth grade.

Since then, there have been many projects similar in nature designed to repair crumbling infrastructure and upgrade our systems so we could remain current in the world of education. Our most recent capital project, which is concluding now, allowed the district to complete asbestos abatement work, conclude HVAC improvements, complete some minor reconstruction, add new doors, security enhancements, bathroom upgrades from the original 1978 fixtures and create new sports facilities / field. Reflecting back to the 2003 project, our current Middle School was created, allowing a new level of inspiration to occur as well as the expansion of learning.

Throughout these projects, growth at Union East Elementary School has continued to occur. Classes have grown to capacity. Therapists are working in hallways. Cafeterias are being utilized for Academic Intervention Services and multiple classes are combined in the gymnasium in order to accommodate for state requirements in physical education. Art classes, as well as music education classes, are on a mobile cart because there is simply no room. Children eat breakfast in the classroom as our cafeterias do double duty as classrooms. Physical therapy is now taking place in a rented classroom annex, next to the building. UPK enrollment is up with increases from 4 ½ to 6 full day sessions.

Due to this exponential growth and our enrollment numbers exceeding prediction over the last 10 years, we need a plan to create the best space possible for our youngest children. The district has been studying this need and has called upon experts in the field of architecture and planning to collaborate with us in designing a solution. The proposed 2019 Union East Elementary capital improvement project we present to our community is both educationally and fiscally responsible to meet the needs of our growing educational community. It will provide an addition to Union East Elementary School that is desperately needed and one our families deserve.

The Board of Education and I encourage you to be informed about the project and vote on Dec. 10, 2019.

Sincerely,

Mary Morris, Superintendent

Board of Education:

Renee M. Wilson, President
Heather E. Dubard, Vice President

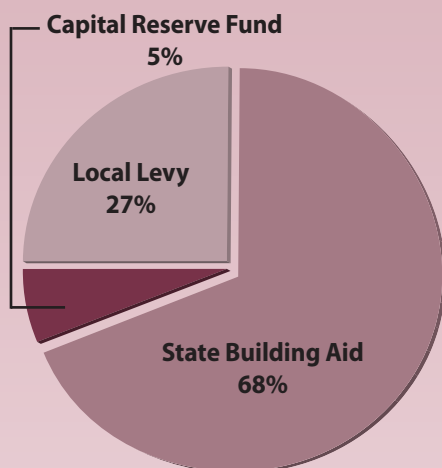
Walter R. Burgett
Carol Kiripolsky

Thomas Raczka
Edward Schaefer

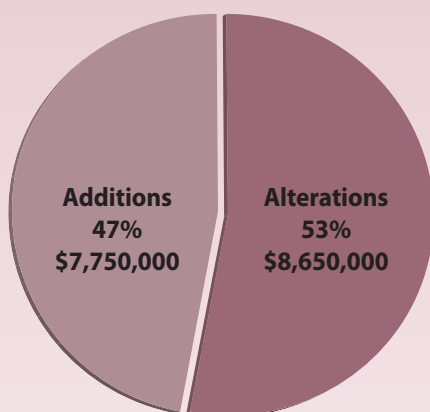
Matthew A. Weigand

Project Financing

Total Project Cost:
\$16.4 million



Building Addition vs. Alterations - percent of total cost



Average Annual Taxpayer Costs per \$100,000 home
(assessed value, based on 85% equalization)

	Average Annual Cost
Enhanced STAR with Veterans Exemption	\$3.93
Enhanced STAR	\$6.81
Basic STAR with Veterans Exemption	\$10.72
Basic STAR	\$13.61
No Exemption	\$18.87

Project Details:

The Union East Elementary School Capital Improvement Project proposal focuses on providing students with a 21st Century education by improving our facilities and optimizing operational efficiencies. This plan will provide a safe, secure, and improved learning environment for our youngest learners through a fiscally conservative and responsible approach for our taxpayers. The work will include the following key scope items:

Improved Safety and Security for Students

- New secured main entrance/foyer
- New fire alarm system with voice evacuation
- Improved safety with additional site lighting
- New security fencing
- New perimeter fire access road

Addresses Increased Enrollment

- New prekindergarten classrooms
- New kindergarten classrooms
- New special education classrooms
- Improvements to cafeteria efficiency to address building increased enrollment
- Expanded student/visitor drop off loop
- Additional staff/visitor parking

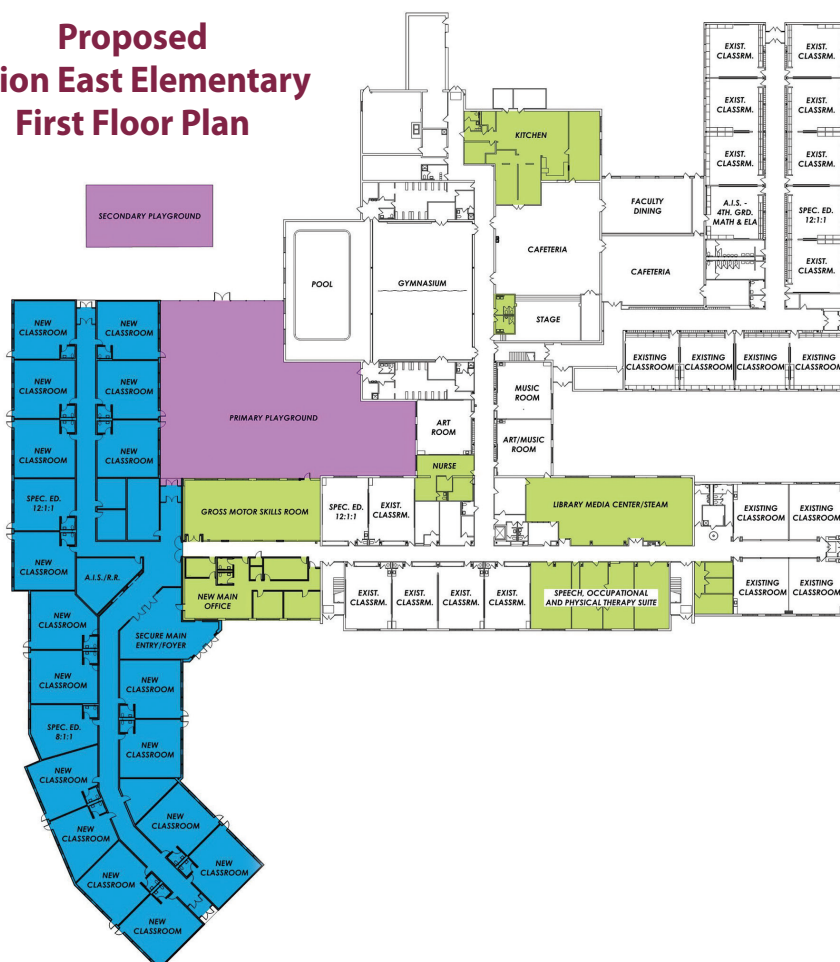
Student Achievement and Support

- Creation of a gross motor skill room
- Creation of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) within library media center
- Creation of speech, occupational, and physical therapy suite
- Creation of A.I.S. (Academic Intervention Services)
- New centralized main office

Thorough Yet Fiscally Responsible Design

- Proposed Areas of Addition
- Proposed Areas of Alteration
- Primary and Secondary Playgrounds

Proposed Union East Elementary First Floor Plan



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the district having a bond vote?

Cheektowaga Central is committed to providing a safe learning environment and well-maintained facilities for students and public use. Similar to upkeep and repairs in your home as it ages, our school buildings are aging and in dire need of attention. Many routine repairs and projects are funded with the annual District budget, with local taxpayers bearing the full cost. Large repairs and facility upgrades such as those in this capital improvement project totaling approximately \$16.4 million would have a major impact on the tax rate if they were included in the annual budget. A bond issue is a fiscally responsible alternative because the State reimburses Cheektowaga for approximately 68% of the cost, and the expenses are spread out over a longer period of time.

Why is this work necessary?

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 2015, our architectural consultant, Gordon W. Jones Associates Architects, examined Cheektowaga's facilities and identified significant problem areas. The district addressed many of the health and safety issues in a 2016 capital project that included work at the High School/Middle School complex, Union East Elementary School and Pine Hill Education Center, which was rented in 2018 by Erie 1 BOCES for the EDGE Academy under a five-year lease agreement.

Why didn't the district use Pine Hill Education Center?

The district's capital project team reviewed the feasibility of using Pine Hill for kindergarten and prekindergarten classes, but the cost and programming implications for splitting grade levels between two buildings and the loss of \$1.4 million in rental revenue over four years made repairs at Union East a more cost effective option.

How were the Union East projects chosen?

The 2015 Building Condition Survey identified several areas where the classroom sizes were out of compliance for the kindergarten and prekindergarten populations. At that time the district knew enrollment projections were on the rise. Since then enrollment has continued to increase to the point where there are waiting lists for the prekindergarten program. We do not have enough classroom space for art and music education classes which are held on carts in the gym. The capital project is needed to bring classroom square footage for our youngest learners into compliance, as well as add 12 new classroom spaces. We must address these issues now, rather than delay and face future higher costs.

When will the work take place?

It is expected that the project will start in April 2021 with completion in September 2022.

What happens if the project is not approved by voters?

If the project is rejected, parts of these costs will be funded through the general fund where no building aid will come from the state. Therefore the local taxpayer will pay for the total cost for those items that need to be addressed.



Hallway teaching space



Physical therapy in rented trailer



Overcrowded classroom



Music class in small storage area



Inefficient cafeteria space



Teaching storage in hallway



Teachers store supplies in hallway



Academic Intervention in cafeteria

CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

3600 Union Road
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

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Capital Improvement Project Vote

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019
Noon – 9 p.m.

Cheektowaga Central School District
Raymond L. Carr Board Room
3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga

Stay Connected Online

www.cheektowagak12.org/2019capital



2019 Project Focus - Union East Elementary

Improved Safety and Security for Students

- New secured main entrance/foyer
- New fire alarm system with voice evacuation
- New security fencing
- Improved site lighting

Addresses Increased Enrollment

- Increase quantity of prekindergarten and kindergarten classrooms
- Improvements to cafeteria efficiency

Student Achievement and Support

- Creation of a Gross Motor Skill Room
- Creation of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) space within library media center
- Creation of Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy suite
- Creation of Academic Intervention Services
- New centralized main office

Thorough Yet Fiscally Responsible Design

Board of Education

Renee M. Wilson, *President*
Heather E. DuBard, *Vice President*
Walter R. Burgett, *Trustee*
Carol Kiripolsky, *Trustee*
Thomas Raczka, *Trustee*
Edward W. Schaefer, *Trustee*
Matthew A. Weigand, *Trustee*

Superintendent of Schools

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District Offices

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716.686.3606

Registration Office

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sweinholtz@ccsd-k12.net

School Board meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of the month at the District Office, 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, at 7 p.m.
Those planning on attending are encouraged to verify meeting date and time by calling 686-3606.