

News from:

Watervliet City Schools

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Watervliet City Schools Board of Education approves \$21.7 million building proposition: proposal will go to voters in March 2008

For Immediate Release: 12/19/07

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Watervliet, NY: Last night the Watervliet City Schools Board of Education approved a resolution for a \$21.7 million building proposition that will go to voters in March 2008. The proposal expands and renovates the Watervliet Jr./Sr. High School and also includes some improvements to the Watervliet Elementary School. The plan includes:

- Construction of 12 new classrooms at the Jr./Sr. High School
- Construction of a new state-of-the-art gymnasium with renovated locker rooms, team rooms and a fitness center which would be open to the community for use during off-hours
- Improvements to the technology infrastructure throughout the district
- Installation of a new cooling system Jr./Sr. High School library and auditorium
- New cafeteria and kitchen facilities at the Jr./Sr. High School
- Renovation of the two playgrounds at the elementary school
- Restructuring of the parking lots at both the Jr./Sr. High School and the elementary school

"This is really the right time to be doing a project of this scope," said Superintendent Paul Padalino, citing the district's eligibility for 95.2 percent building aid from the state and \$700,000 in remaining excel funds available for the project. "When all is said and done, the tax impact on our homeowners is expected to be less than one percent."

Last February, the voters overwhelmingly approved an \$8.6 million dollar capital project which focused on Watervliet Elementary. The project was financed by State Aid and EXCEL Grant funds with no local taxpayer contribution needed, and is on schedule to be completed by September 2008. Padalino stressed that the elementary school project was just one phase of the district's overall facilities plan, and that deteriorating facilities at the Jr./Sr. High School need to be addressed soon.

"Our schools are the hub of this community and this community deserves up-to-date, modern facilities, district-wide," said Padalino. "We need to prepare our students with 21st century skills for 21st century jobs, and to do that we need 21st century facilities."

Voters will have a chance to weigh in on the project on Tuesday, March 4, 2008. If the proposition is approved, work is expected to begin as soon as all state approvals are obtained. Padalino and other district administrators will be conducting a series of public meetings throughout January and February to ensure that the public is well informed of the details of the project. Information will also be available on the district's website, www.watervleicityschools.org.

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