

Scituate School Bond Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of this proposed bond?

On average, Scituate Public Schools' buildings are 72 years old. Two were built more than 80 years ago. Many schools are in need of repair and upgrade to provide students with modern learning environments and to address unsafe conditions. The school bond addresses health and safety concerns at all three elementary schools, the middle and high schools as well as upgrades to Caito field and the existing track.

The projects identified to be corrected by the 2017 bond issue proceeds were highlighted by the Rhode Island Department of Education in a report entitled the "Jacobs Report". This report identified over \$17 million in school deficiencies. Deficiencies were assigned a priority scale from 1 to 5 based on the need of replacement or repair. The link to this Jacobs Report is:

http://www.scituateri.net/Scituate_LEA%20Review%20Doc%2010%202016%20V2.pdf

How will the projects be funded?

For the first time in recent history, the school district has a comprehensive approved capital asset protection plan to address the highest priority building repairs and upgrades as well as improvements to our athletic venues. The Scituate School Department submitted an application to the RI Department of Education (RIDE) to ensure partial reimbursement for the capital projects allowable per RI General Law (35% reimbursement of annual principal and interest costs). RIDE approved the application and Scituate is able to receive its fair share of State Aid to the extent of the law. Over \$7.2 million of repairs will be addressed as follows:

- \$4.9 million bond that will be presented to voters in November
- \$2.3 capital reserve fund

The majority of these repairs (79%) are eligible for 35% reimbursement from the state.

What projects is the bond funding?

If approved by voters in November, the proposed bond would finance capital costs for the following projects:

Middle & High

Replace original sanitary system (1956)	\$534,970
Exterior envelope (1956)	\$307,488
Repair/Replace HS bathrooms	\$50,000
Repair/Replace MS bathrooms	\$40,000
Repair boys locker room (replace lockers)	\$55,000
Replace HS bathroom fixtures (sinks toilets, etc)	\$84,000
Replace MS bathroom fixtures (sinks toilets, etc)	\$43,500
Add water neutralization system	\$25,000
Subtotal High/Middle School	\$1,139,958

Projects supported by 5 YR capital reserve fund - \$826,188

Elementary Schools

Clayville	
Well (tankerline/retrofit)	\$90,000

Projects supported by 5 YR capital reserve fund - \$392,381

North Scituate	
Replace storefront/curtainwall	\$202,803
Resilient flooring (VCT)	\$128,944

Projects supported by 5 YR capital reserve fund - \$297,050

Hope	
Exterior ramp (ADA non-compliant rails & slope)	\$171,083
Architectural finishes to replace urinals in Boys	\$25,000
Replace urinals in 1929 boys bathroom	\$75,000

Projects supported by 5 YR capital reserve fund - \$744,681

Subtotal Elementary Schools	\$692,830
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Total Elementary Projects supported by 5 YR capital reserve fund - \$1,434,112

Athletic/Physical Education Venues

Caito field renovation - synthetic turf	\$1,668,239
400m regulation track	\$1,210,965
Conduits for future field lights	\$80,000
Manning Field (well, irrigation, sod)	\$100,000
Subtotal Athletic/Physical Education Venues	\$3,059,204

Why is synthetic turf versus grass?

A citizens group comprised of engineers, financial analysts and town and education stakeholders carefully studied and made recommendations to address the health and safety concern of Caito Field. The current field was deemed a risk due to health and safety concerns related to debris that surfaces from the topsoil including glass and metal objects. Due to the lack of water and the intensive use by high and middle school students, a synthetic field will be installed to ensure the return on taxpayer dollars. It would not be prudent to invest taxpayers dollars in a grass field only to have it wither away due to the lack of water. A FAQ has been developed regarding the synthetic field and can be accessed through the following link:

<http://www.scituateri.net/Field%20Frequently%20Asked%20%20Questions%20Save%20Our%20Schools%20Bond.pdf> .

Why is passage of this bond important to Scituate?

The district's general fund is for salaries, utilities, and other recurring operating expenses. Capital funds pay for major renovations such as facility construction or renovation and athletic venue grades. The most common way of financing capital projects is through the sale of bonds. Bonds allow school districts to complete projects now, and then pay them off gradually over time – much like a mortgage on your home. Without bond propositions, the district would have to use its general fund to pay for capital expenditures, leaving little money for teachers or to conduct daily operations.

When was Scituate's last school bond referendum?

In 2009, the Scituate community approved an \$8 million bond. Work from the 2008 bond has been completed. The 2017 proposed bond is \$4.9 million.

How will passage of this bond affect my taxes?

A portion of Scituate School bond debt issued in 2009 will retire in 2018. Subsequently, the proposed new bond payments will take effect. The drop-off in debt service and addition of new debt will not impact the tax rate. In fact, the Town's annual debt service payment will decrease by approximately \$240,000 because the new bond is less than the one issued in 2009. Low interest rates also create favorable financing conditions.

Are taxes frozen for those Scituate residents over age 65?

Yes. Once individuals are 65 or older, they qualify to have their property taxes frozen at the rate at the time that they turned 65.

I don't have children in Scituate schools. Why should I be concerned about the bond request?

Strong public education is critical for everyone in our community. Research confirms that there is a direct correlation between property values and high performing school districts. Great schools mean great communities. This supports a vibrant community and economy.

When is the referendum on the bond and where do I vote?

The referendum is on Tuesday November 7, 2017. There will be three polling places available: Scituate High School, Scituate Senior Center, and Hope Elementary School. If you are unsure where to vote, please call the Town of Scituate Board of Canvassers at 401-647- 2822. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Are absentee ballots available and what is the deadline to register to vote?

Yes. Absentee ballots are available on the Scituate Board of Canvassers' website or hard copies can be picked up at the office. The deadline to apply for a mail ballot is October 17, 2017. October 18 emergency ballots will be available in the Board of Canvassers' office up to November 6, 2017

You can register online at <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/>. Please contact the Town of Scituate Board of Canvassers at 401-647- 2822 for more information on absentee ballots and voter registration.

Why is my vote important?

This will be special election specifically for the approval of the bond so it will be important for our citizens to make the effort to come to the polls. Each vote is critical so please remember to cast your ballot November 7th!

Who should I contact for more information?

If you have questions regarding the school bond contact the following:

Scituate School Department
197 Danielson Pike
North Scituate, RI 02857
401-647-4100