



#### BOARD MEMBERS

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

#### Ridgewood Public Schools

Education Center  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

#### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

### Bond Referendum '09 Frequently Asked Questions: PART II

#### SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Q** What accommodations will be made to lessen the impact on students through each phase of the construction projects?

**A** *The safety of our students is always the first concern and top priority of the administration and Board of Education. Contractors working for the Ridgewood Public Schools understand that district officials have the authority to stop any work that hinders student or staff safety or learning, including noise.*

**Q** If the proposed Valley Hospital expansion is approved to move forward with a multi-year project, would students be able to utilize the planned new athletic fields at Benjamin Franklin Middle School during that construction?

**A** *In testimony before the Village Planning Board, the Ridgewood Board of Education has stated its expectation that the hospital safeguard our students before, during and after school from the dust and noise of any construction. Today's state-of-the-art construction and demolition techniques employ sophisticated methods designed to contain and minimize dust particles. It is also important to remember that the majority of district athletic activities take place starting after 4:30 p.m., by which time most construction sites have closed for the day.*

#### SUBJECT: CONSTRUCTION TIMELINES AND IMPACT ON LEARNING

**Q** When would the construction projects begin?

**A** *The first step following a successful referendum on December 8 would be to proceed with detailed architectural drawings, which would be reviewed and approved by the state, then put out to bid. For large projects, it will take approximately 12 to 18 months to put a shovel in the ground. Certain maintenance projects -- such as roofs, fields and running-track work -- may be started and completed sooner and could be finished within a year after receiving appropriate bids. Others could take longer because some work must be done during the summer months, i.e. asbestos abatement. The overall goal is for projects to be completed within two years of successful bid openings.*



#### BOARD MEMBERS

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

#### Ridgewood Public Schools

Education Center  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

#### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

### Bond Referendum '09 Frequently Asked Questions: PART II

**Q** What is the expected impact on student learning during construction, especially for the larger projects?

**A** *Most of the expected inconveniences to students will be in the form of temporary access restrictions to certain areas of the buildings. Occasional traffic issues may occur, as well. Companies that bid on school construction projects are experienced professionals that know how to schedule the work calendar so there is minimal disruption to the learning environment. For example, summer is the ideal time to dig and pour footings and put steel in place so that finishing work can proceed during the school year. Projects like roof replacements can also be done while school is in session because a "cold" application is used rather than hot tar. Informing students of the work in progress through photographs and other communication updates will also help lessen any disruption.*

**Q** What is the plan for air conditioning at Benjamin Franklin Middle School?

**A** *A successful referendum would allow for air conditioning to be installed in the auditorium at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, which is the site of many district and community-wide events. The school also needs a new air exchange system. The district's other buildings all have operational air exchange systems.*

**SUBJECT: INSTRUCTION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Q** To what is the increase in student enrollment attributed? Are all students known to be true residents of Ridgewood?

**A** *There are several factors at work here. First, education has changed, particularly special education, and accompanying those changes are new legal requirements for educational facilities. Ridgewood's schools were built for a different time, when small group instructional spaces were not needed; now the addition of specialty areas is necessary to accommodate students with special needs. In addition, Ridgewood is known to have an excellent educational program. People move here for the schools. A recent paper re-registration in all of our schools has ensured the Board of Education that no children attend school in the district who do not belong here. We are confident that our students are really "ours." We continue to conduct residency investigations when we have reason to believe something is not right and on occasion find someone who should not be here.*



**BOARD MEMBERS**

Joseph Vallerini, President  
 Robert Hutton, Vice President  
 Sheila Brogan  
 Laurie Goodman  
 Michele Lenhard

**Ridgewood Public Schools  
 Education Center**

49 Cottage Place  
 Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
 (P) 201-670-2700  
 (F) 201-670-2668

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
 Superintendent  
 Regina Botsford,  
 Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
 Angelo DeSimone,  
 Asst. Supt. for Business/  
 Board Secretary

**Bond Referendum '09  
 Frequently Asked Questions: PART II**

**Q** Where are classes currently held for children in the Special Education Program, and what will change if the referendum is passed?

**A** *At the Elementary level, there are four LLD (language and learning disabilities) classes. Three classes are for students in grades K-2, and they are located at Somerville, Travell and Orchard. One additional class for grades 3-5 is also located at Travell. If the referendum passes, the construction at Willard, Hawes and Ridge would provide classroom space for these classes.*

*We also have the RISE (Ridgewood Intensive Services) classes that provide instruction for students on the Autistic spectrum. There are two classes: one located at Somerville School for grades 1-3 and one at BF Middle School for grades 5-8. If the referendum passes, the construction at Willard, Hawes and Ridge would provide classroom space for the elementary RISE class and an additional grade K-2 class in the future.*

*Over past years, our special education classes have moved around due to space constraints. The construction of classroom space at Ridge, Willard and Hawes would allow us to minimize the moving of our special education classes and permit those students to remain in the same school for their elementary years. Classroom space will then be freed-up at Somerville, Travell and Orchard, eliminating the need to redistrict.*

*The following is an example of how the relocation might occur:*

<i>Pre-Construction:</i>	<i>Post-Construction:</i>
<i>Somerville:</i> RISe (K-2) LLD (K-2)	<i>Willard:</i> RISe (K-2) RISe (3-5) LLD (K-2)
<i>Travell:</i> LLD (K-2) LLC (3-5)*	<i>Hawes:</i> LLD (K-2) LLD (3-5)
<i>Orchard:</i> LLD (K-2)	<i>Ridge:</i> LLD (K-2) LLD (3-5)
<i>BFMS:</i> RISe (4-6)	<i>BFMS:</i> RISe (6-8)



**BOARD MEMBERS**

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

**Ridgewood Public Schools**

**Education Center**  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

**Bond Referendum '09**  
**Frequently Asked Questions: PART II**

**Q** Would it not be more efficient to have children in the district's Special Education Program all at one school, to maximize teachers' schedules and facilities in general?

**A** *Legally a district cannot segregate students with special needs in a "special" school. Students with special needs must be included, when possible, into regular education settings.*

**SUBJECT: TRACK AND FIELD**

**Q** Why is a new track and field being proposed for Benjamin Franklin Middle School rather than the high school?

**A** *The proposed plan is to build a full-size track to complement the district's large and successful track-and-field athletic program. This facility would also enable the district to host invitational and conference meets. As there is not enough land at Ridgewood High School for a full-size track, the plan is to build at Benjamin Franklin Middle School. Renovations of the high school property, including Stevens Field, would create a game field for the girls and boys soccer and lacrosse program, and football. Two track lanes would remain in place there, as well.*

**Q** Will the proposals for the track and field be listed as a separate question on the December 8 ballot?

**A** *There is one referendum question, which comprises all projects, including the track and fields. If successful, the district will receive nearly \$10 million of grant funds and over \$2,135,000 of debt service, which will reduce the cost of the projects to tax payers.*



#### BOARD MEMBERS

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

#### Ridgewood Public Schools

Education Center  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

#### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

### Bond Referendum '09 Frequently Asked Questions: PART II

#### SUBJECT: FINANCING/MONETARY

**Q** Can an additional request be made to the state for more money in direct grant aid and debt service aid for the projects? If not, why?

**A** *The district cannot ask the state for more money. The Board formally agreed to the state's commitment of funds through a Board of Education resolution, following a thorough review of the state proposal.*

**Q** Has the project been put out to bid (RFP) already?

**A** *Legally, the Board of Education must have a successful bond referendum vote in order to go out to bid.*

**Q** Many residents are financially burdened right now and the Village's recent revaluation meant a major property tax increase. To alleviate cash flow burden, can the bond be structured so that the interest payments are made at the end of the bond life?

**A** *The repayment schedule put together by the Board's professional advisors is called a "wrap-around" because it wraps repayments around the existing debt to minimize the impact on taxpayers. School districts are required by law to pay interest every six months.*



#### BOARD MEMBERS

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

#### Ridgewood Public Schools

Education Center  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

#### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

### Bond Referendum '09 Frequently Asked Questions: PART II

#### SUBJECT: THE VOTE

**Q** What question will be on the December 8 ballot?

**A** *On Tuesday, December 8, village residents will be asked to vote on a proposed bond of \$38,420,602. Project costs total \$48,265,314. Of that amount, nearly ten million dollars (\$9,844,712) of state grants have been awarded. In addition, more than two million dollars (\$2,135,471) in state debt service aid has been awarded for the track and fields projects, bringing the total state contribution to nearly \$12 million. The question on the ballot will be:*

#### **BOND PROPOSAL**

The Board of Education of the Village of Ridgewood in the County of Bergen, New Jersey is authorized: (a) to provide for rehabilitation work at Ridgewood High School, including field improvements, construction of additions and rehabilitation work at George Washington Middle School, Willard Elementary School and Ridge Elementary School, construction of an addition and roof replacement at Hawes Elementary School, roof replacement at Travell Elementary School and Somerville Elementary School, rehabilitation work and installation of a track at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, and rehabilitation work at Orchard Elementary School, including acquisition of equipment and furnishings and site work; (b) to appropriate therefore \$48,265,314, funded in part by grants in the aggregate amount of \$9,844,712 from the State of New Jersey; (c) to issue bonds of the School District in the amount of \$38,420,602; and (d) to transfer local share funds among school facilities projects approved at this referendum. The final eligible costs of the projects approved by the Commissioner of Education are \$29,950,456, consisting of \$14,970,541 for Ridgewood High School, \$1,078,978 for George Washington Middle School, \$4,184,073 for Willard Elementary School, \$3,101,538 for Hawes Elementary School, \$2,201,143 for Ridge Elementary School, \$1,343,765 for Travell Elementary School, \$1,022,290 for Somerville Elementary School, \$2,022,410 for Benjamin Franklin Middle School, and \$25,718 for Orchard Elementary School. The proposed improvements include \$54,382 for the Ridgewood High School benches and bleachers and \$9,594,243 for the George Washington Middle School addition for school facility construction elements in addition to the facilities efficiency standards developed by the Commissioner of Education or not otherwise eligible for State support pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-5(g). The School District will be entitled to receive debt service aid from the State of New Jersey that will equal 40% of the annual debt service due on the \$4,132,814 final eligible costs of the improvements to the fields at Ridgewood High School and the \$1,205,863 final eligible costs of the track at Benjamin Franklin Middle School.



**BOARD MEMBERS**

Joseph Vallerini, President  
Robert Hutton, Vice President  
Sheila Brogan  
Laurie Goodman  
Michele Lenhard

**Ridgewood Public Schools**

**Education Center**  
49 Cottage Place  
Ridgewood, NJ 07451  
(P) 201-670-2700  
(F) 201-670-2668

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Daniel Fishbein,  
Superintendent  
Regina Botsford,  
Asst. Supt. for C I & A  
Angelo DeSimone,  
Asst. Supt. for Business/  
Board Secretary

**Bond Referendum '09**  
**Frequently Asked Questions: PART II**

**Q** What would be the tax impact on my property if the referendum is approved on December 8?

**A** *If approved, the tax impact on homeowners would be \$37.47 per \$100,000 assessed value, or \$300.55 for the average home appraised at \$802,000. This figure is based on a 25-year bond at 4.75% interest rate.*

**Q** Who can vote on December 8?

**A** *Any Ridgewood resident who is a registered voter may vote on Tuesday, December 8. To register to vote, or to request a mail-in ballot, visit the Board of Education pages of the Ridgewood Public Schools website at [www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us](http://www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us).*

*Prepared 11.05.09*