

**LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT THE UPCOMING McHENRY COMMUNITY
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 156 REFERENDUM**



Preliminary renderings for proposed projects.

See inside for a complete list of proposed facility improvement projects.

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MCHENRY COMMUNITY HIGH
SCHOOL DISTRICT 156
REFERENDUM**

Community Connection Newsletter

**McHenry Community High
School District 156**
4716 W. Crystal Lake Rd. • McHenry, IL 60050



What if I want more information about the referendum?

Please join us at a Community Connection Session:

September 27th 6:30-8:00 PM @ West Campus Auditorium

October 4th 6:30-8:00 PM @ East Campus Theater

October 11th 6:30-8:00 PM @ Harrison School (District 36)

October 13th 10:00-11:30 AM @ West Campus Auditorium

October 17th 9:30-10:30 AM @ McHenry Public Library

October 18th 6:30-8:00 PM @ McHenry Middle School (District 15)

October 25th 6:30-8:00 PM @ West Campus Auditorium

or visit dist156.org and click **Community Engagement**

There will be an important referendum question on your November Ballot.

You will be asked to vote either “Yes” (in favor) or “No” (opposed) to District 156 issuing bonds for \$44,000,000 to improve our facilities across the school district.

Why is this referendum on my ballot?

District 156 faces unique challenges. Our facilities are aging. East Campus is approaching 100 years and West Campus is nearing 50 years of service to the community. A comprehensive facility assessment conducted at both campuses identified over 41 million dollars of necessary facility and life safety projects that need to be addressed to provide our students safe, secure, and accessible learning environments. Due to capacity issues, we are forced to use 26-year-old mobile classrooms, which pose a substantial security risk and expose over 200 students to outside forces every period, for eight periods a day. Inequity exists in our educational environment with twice as many students at West Campus compared to East Campus. Therefore, we are unable to replicate resources at both schools, forcing nearly a quarter of our students to travel between campuses and many other students to forego educational opportunities. Additionally, student enrollment is shifting between campuses, which will further exacerbate the issues of equity and access to courses in the future.

How was this plan developed?

Over one thousand members of our community provided feedback regarding the future of our schools. Parents, students, teachers, business owners, community leaders, seniors, and taxpayers all collaborated to develop our path forward using information gathered from the recently-completed comprehensive facility assessments of both campuses, which are available on the district’s website. Ultimately, the community identified an affordable plan that solves our immediate challenges while still giving us the opportunity to pursue more ambitious possibilities in the future should the community wish to do so. This community-driven plan is fully supported by our school board and administration.

How will the referendum improve our school district?

The plan calls for funding a majority of the priority facility and life safety infrastructure projects at both campuses, improving our students’ safety, and maintaining our investment in our schools. This plan establishes East Campus as a freshman center and West Campus for tenth through twelfth grade students, eliminating approximately 95% of student travel, and ensuring all students have equal access to educational opportunities. The plan renovates East Campus to prepare it to serve all freshmen students, expands West Campus to house upper-level students, and eliminates the use of mobile classrooms. Additionally, this plan constructs a state-of-the-art Science, Technology, and Industry Center at the upper-level West Campus, providing our students real-world experiences in an innovative and integrated learning environment.

What is the impact on my tax bill if the referendum passes?

Due to the district’s fiscal stewardship, it is possible to fund this plan while also achieving tax savings for residents. As current district bonds are set to be paid in full, we can issue these new bonds, in combination with investing from district reserves, to fully fund this plan. **he part of your tax bill for the district’s bonds is expected to go down by about 25% or roughly \$70 per year for the median district market value home, which is estimated to be \$200,000.** The principal and interest cost of the new bonds will be less than the cost of the current bonds, which will be retired when the new bonds are put in place. The greater the value of your home, the greater the decrease will be in the bond portion of your tax payment.

What projects will be funded if the referendum passes?

- **Repair or replace priority life safety and facility improvement projects at both campuses.**
- **Construction of a new Center for Science, Technology, and Industry at West Campus allowing our students to access the most modern and relevant coursework in an innovative and integrated learning environment. It will also provide students with real world opportunities and expand our partnership with community businesses and skilled manufacturing leaders.**
- **Construction of new classrooms with resource areas to eliminate 26-year-old mobile classroom units at West Campus.**
- **Construction of additional new classrooms, resource areas, office space, and expansion of parking lot to accommodate all District 10th, 11th, and 12th grade level students at West Campus.**
- **Renovation of East Campus classrooms, resource areas, and specialty labs to accommodate all District 9th grade level students.**