

CAPITAL PROJECT



Gouverneur

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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CAPITAL PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

TOTAL COST
\$57.38 million

STATE AID
\$47.78 million

**CAPITAL RESERVE
FUND**
\$9.6 million

COST TO TAXPAYERS
\$0

VOTE!

Polls will be open
from noon to 8 p.m. on
Tuesday, December 12,
in the Gouverneur High
School Auditorium.

Residents to vote on \$57.38 million capital project on Tuesday, December 12

On Tuesday, December 12, voters in the Gouverneur Central School District will decide on a \$57.38 million capital improvement project that prioritizes student and community involvement.

Through careful planning, the district has developed a project that benefits our students and community without additional funding from new tax dollars. The majority of this project will be funded through state aid, with \$9.6 million coming from the capital reserve fund established by the Board of Education to help pay for future projects. District residents will see no increase to their taxes as a result of this project.

This plan addresses our athletic and fine arts facilities and creates new spaces for community involvement. Multi-sport learning areas for use by our students and community will be built and improvements to the band and choral suite, auditorium and theatrical lighting, and communications systems will be undertaken. These new facilities will become an integral part of our curriculum and will expand the opportunities that our students have to participate in a wide array of athletics, arts, and other activities. The project will focus on the improvement of existing athletic areas, such as the swimming pool, auxiliary gymnasium, and athletic fields. The creation of outdoor bathroom facilities, a concession stand, and

the construction of an artificial turf field and a new track, will provide our athletes with more opportunities to participate in home games and will give our students access to equitable facilities to those of their peers in neighboring communities.

The safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and the public will also be addressed in this project. Parking lot improvements, sidewalk replacement, accessibility upgrades, and emergency generators will be included at each building. At the high

school, the main entrance will be renovated to address the security of the building. Security and safety upgrades will occur at both the elementary and middle schools. The outdated heating system at the high school will be replaced with an energy-efficient geothermal system.

Voters will also be asked to decide on the purchase of three new diesel-engine school buses for \$555,520 from the existing Transportation Capital Reserve established by the Board of Education and approved by voters in 2023 to help pay for future transportation needs. This will help the district to keep our fleet of school buses up-to-date and ensure we have enough buses to provide for the necessary transportation to and from school and athletic and extracurricular events.

"We believe that this project will allow us to continue to foster a positive connection between our school and our community by emphasizing a commitment to safety, health and wellness. This project is an opportunity to continue to support our vision to deliver the promise of a brighter future for our students and community."

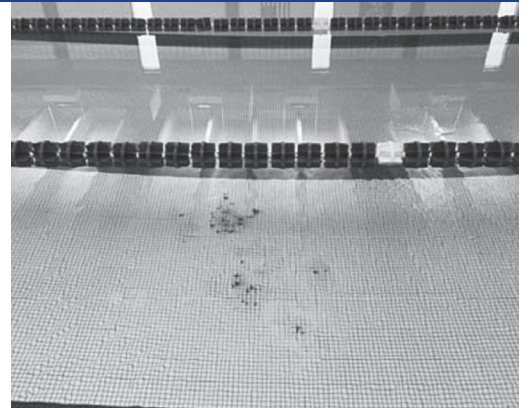
- Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly



The image above is a digital rendering of the proposed athletic stadium at the middle school.

Gouverneur Capital Project Highlights

- **Athletic stadium** – The new athletic stadium would feature a state-of-the-art artificial turf football field and track, new field lights, bleachers, a concessions stand and a new bathroom facility. The stadium would be relocated to the middle school to district-owned land. Gouverneur CSD currently has a lease on the current football field located at the fairgrounds. By moving the location of the new stadium to the middle school, the district will have the ability to make all decisions on uses and future improvements to the stadium.
- **Swimming pool upgrades** – The proposed capital project includes upgrades to the existing indoor swimming pool located at the high school. Upgrades to the swimming pool and facilities include a new pool water heater, upgrades to the existing locker rooms, new dehumidification and filtration systems and modernization of the entire space.
- **Band and choral suite upgrades** – The suite would be upgraded with equipment and materials better suited for music such as sound panels. The space will also be modernized during the renovations.
- **Auditorium upgrades** – Upgrades to the auditorium space include theatrical lighting upgrades in the seating and stage areas.
- **Auxiliary gymnasium upgrades** – The auxiliary gymnasium will be restructured for modernization and ADA compliance.
- **Geothermal** – An outdated heating system at the high school is slated for upgrades. The current system would be replaced with geothermal, which is significantly more efficient and fiscally responsible after the initial installation cost.



Large rust stains and spots of grout erosion are at the bottom of the swimming pool.



A digital rendering of the proposed swimming pool upgrades at the high school.

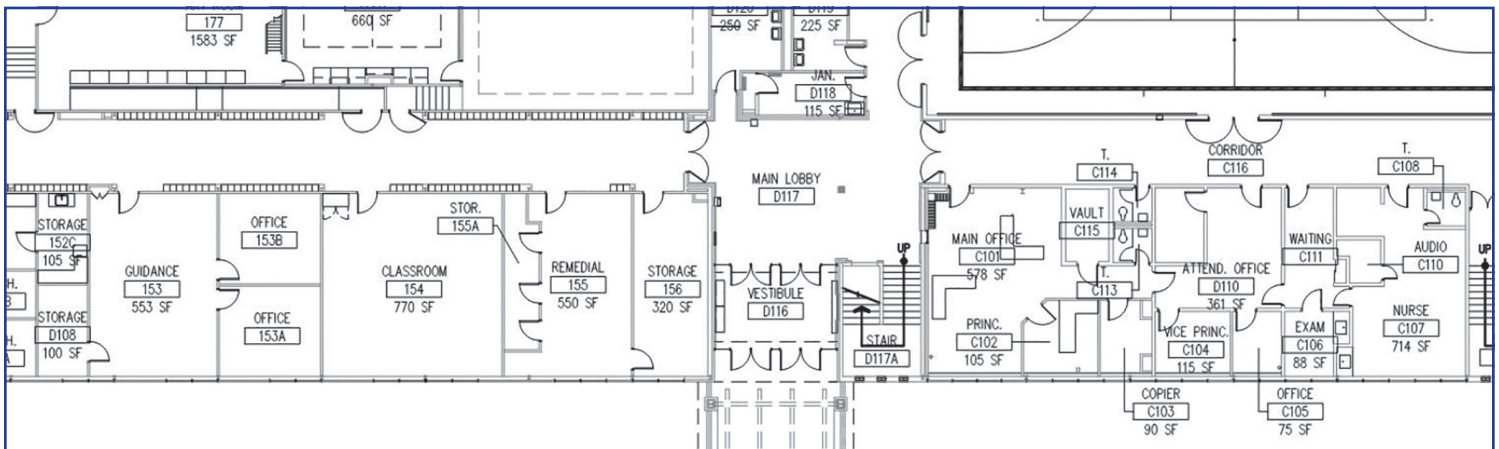
- **Bus garage** – The bus garage’s upgrades include improvements to the fuel dispensing system, bus wash bay, sidewalk, a new pole barn, interior infrastructure upgrades and ventilation in the proposed capital project plans.
- **Main entrance** – The high school main entrance would be reconfigured to provide a secure vestibule entrance under the proposed capital project. This would help enhance the safety and security of students and ensure only those permitted in the building are entering.
- **Nurse suite** – The relocation of the nurse suite will allow it to be in closer proximity to the newly secured main entrance. The relocated suite will be ADA-complaint, including state-of-the-art medical equipment and modernized renovations.
- **Emergency generators** – All three district school buildings would get new emergency generators under the proposed capital project.
- **Parking lot improvements** – Upgrades to the existing parking lots at all three school buildings and the bus garage are included due to wear and tear and safety concerns.
- **High school bathrooms** – Bathrooms at the high school would be replaced with new ADA-compliant facilities. The current bathrooms have toilets that don’t flush properly.
- **Communication upgrades** – The existing public safety address and clock system is past its useful life. The new system will be a combination IP sound/clock system, which will have better technology for school alerts.

“The pool is in need of renovations because there is rust at the bottom of the pool. The tiles are broken on the deck and in the locker room.”

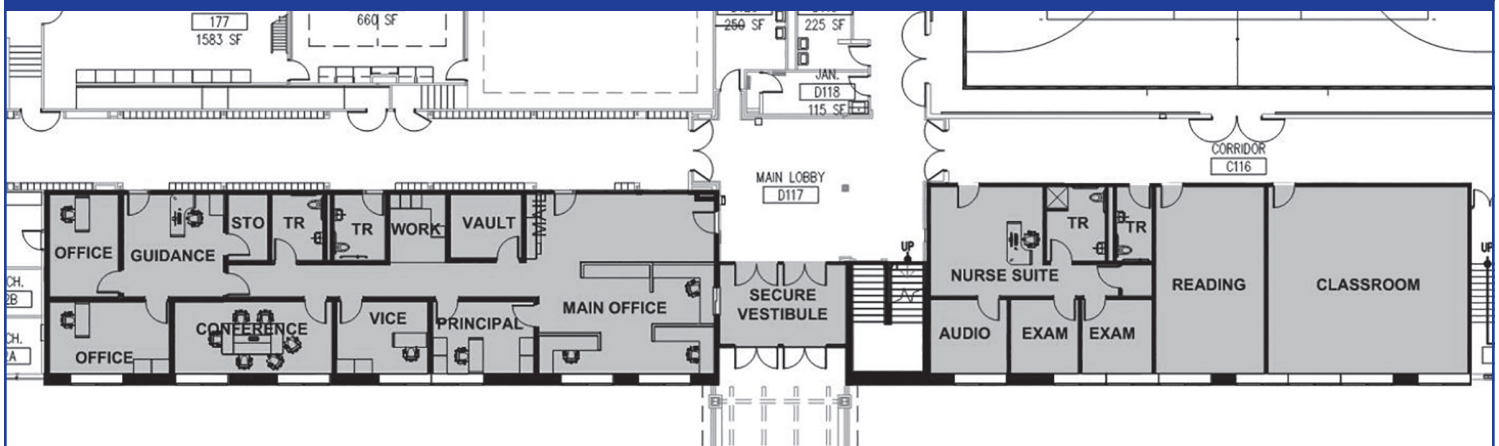
– Giuliana Shepherd, Grade 8 swimmer

“The new vestibule project at the main entrance would greatly help the security of the building by not allowing visitors access to the student and staff areas. If a threat did enter the vestibule, the closed door would delay entry and allow time to activate lockdown procedures.”

– Gouverneur CSD school resource officer (SRO)



The current high school main entrance lacks a secure vestibule and has an outdated floor plan.



High school main entrance upgrades feature a secure vestibule and reconfiguration of the floor plan for a higher level of security.



Questions & Answers

Q How does this project benefit the community?

The Gouverneur Central School District is committed to the lifelong health and wellness of our students and community members. This project:

- Upgrades parking lots and sidewalks which provides a hub for community activities.
- Constructs an athletic stadium and bathrooms accessible from the outside of the school building, for use by community members utilizing the public walkway or attending school athletic events.
- Maintains a quality school environment that is a critical part of a vibrant community.

Q How much is it going to cost?

- For district residents owning a home or property, there is NO estimated tax increase per year for the proposed project.
- The district will receive up to 97.5% in state aid to complete the renovations and manage cost for our community, with the remainder coming from capital reserves.

Q How will this project positively impact our students?

- This project will provide equitable access to athletic facilities and programming for all students.
- The development of multi-sport resources, including facilities for football, soccer, track and field, swim and other sports will allow the district to expand the physical education curriculum.
- The modernization and improvement of athletic fields will allow athletics teams to participate in more home games and will limit event cancellations due to poor field conditions.
- The improvements will allow the district to hold outdoor ceremonies.

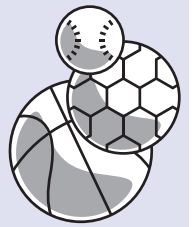
Q Why do we need a capital project now?

- The district and Board of Education explored ways to maintain and upgrade the facilities while considering the impact this may place on the taxpayers. This provides no additional tax impact for the community, and continuously generates revenue for the district through state aid.

BY THE NUMBERS STATISTICS

STUDENT ATHLETES:

- **FALL:**
Varsity – 155
Modified – 101
- **WINTER:**
Varsity – 105
Modified – 75
- **SPRING:**
Varsity – 108
Modified – 82



Athletics Achievements

Boys football

3x Section X Class C Champions
(2019, 2022, 2023)

Boys swim

2023 Section X Team Champions

Girls basketball

2023 Section X Overall Champions

Musical Achievements

Marching band

Senior Hayley Burt was selected for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade All American Marching Band

New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA)

Numerous 2023 1st place Class B finishes

Q What are the benefits of a geothermal heating system for our high school?

- There are three main benefits to installing a geothermal heating system into our high school. These include cost, adaptability, and the environment.
- While the initial cost of installing a geothermal heating system is substantial, \$16.6 million, the payback period is relatively brief and the economic benefits will continue for the life of the system. A combination of New York State aid, grants and decreases in utility costs will allow us to break even in only 5-10 years and recognize an approximately \$20,000 annual decrease in utility costs. Beyond the cost savings, the system provides the added benefit of allowing for more consistent and year-round control of classroom temperatures.

Q Why are we building a stadium at the middle school?

- The district does not own the property on which we currently play football. We lease this property from the Gouverneur and St. Lawrence County Fair. The New York State Education Department has indicated to us that they will not provide funding for the building or repairs of facilities on property that the district does not own.

Q How can a projected \$57.38 million project not lead to an increase in our local school taxes?

- The district has a high New York State building aid rate and has saved \$9.6 million in a Capital Reserve as approved by voters in 2020 to allocate towards the project.

Q Why are we purchasing the buses?

- The district typically takes advantage of its 97% transportation aid ratio and purchases four buses a year to maintain the integrity of our fleet. This year, we purchased one and placed more funds in a transportation reserve. Since adopting the budget for vote in March, a bus accident and an aging fleet has put our ability to meet all routes in jeopardy if additional unfortunate incidents take place. The increased flexibility of a larger diesel powered fleet will also allow the district more leeway as it approaches the 2027 New York State electric bus mandate.

2023 Proposed Project: No Tax Impact

Capital projects are typically funded with state and local tax dollars. Gouverneur's New York state building aid ratio is up to 97.5% — meaning that NYS funds roughly 97.5% of project expenditures. The remaining funding would be drawn from the district's capital reserves. The creation of the reserves was approved by taxpayers in 2020, in anticipation of future infrastructure needs. These reserves were funded gradually using available surpluses from prior budgets.

The project requires voter approval to draw \$9.6 million from the reserve — essentially designated savings accounts to be used for this specific purpose. That approval would ensure there is no local tax impact for residents.



Tennis courts at the high school are extremely worn from years of use.



Sidewalks at the high school are ripped up and a safety concern for pedestrians.



Proposed project would update every building

Scope of project by building

The Gouverneur Central School District is proposing a capital improvement project totaling no more than \$57,380,000 at buildings and facilities throughout the district. The following are highlights of projects by building.

Transportation

- Fuel dispensing system
- Bus wash bay
- Sidewalk upgrades
- Parking lot improvements
- New pole barn
- Interior infrastructure improvements
- Ventilation upgrades

Elementary School

- Parking lot upgrades
- Emergency generator
- Infrastructure improvements

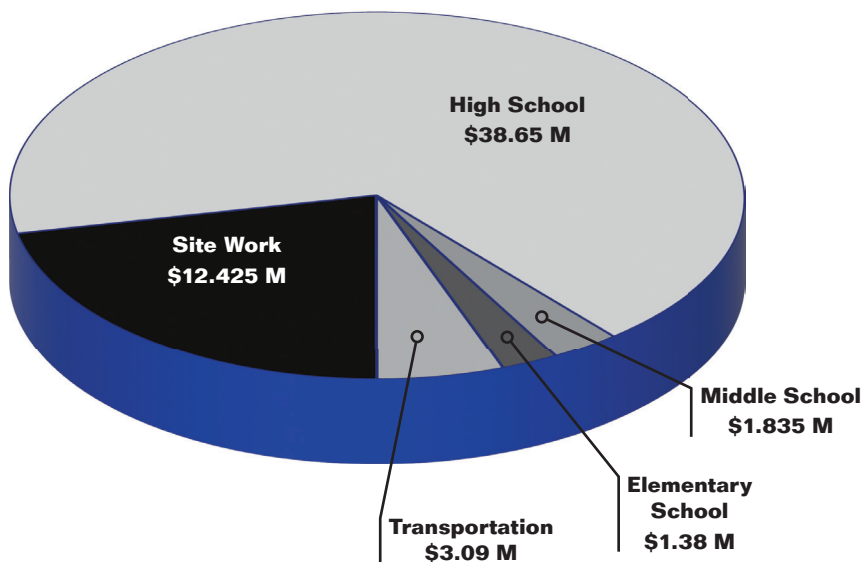
Middle School

- New athletic stadium with lights, concessions, locker rooms and restroom facilities
- Building upgrades
- Parking lot improvements
- Emergency generator
- Playground

High School

- Parking lot improvement
- Swimming pool upgrades
- Tennis court improvements
- Exterior wall repairs
- Multiple room upgrades (choral, music, home & careers, nurse suite and admin wing)
- Secured main entrance
- Infrastructure improvements
- Emergency generator
- Mechanical, electrical and plumbing upgrades

Estimate of Costs



Bathrooms at the high school are outdated, not ADA-compliant and have missing fixtures.



Deteriorating asphalt in the middle school parking lot is a safety hazard to staff, students and community members.



The bus garage has an aging fuel dispensing system that is in need of upgrades.

Ballot also includes school bus purchase proposition

In addition to voting on the proposed capital project on December 12, residents will be asked to consider authorizing the purchase of three diesel-powered 72-passenger school buses at a maximum estimated cost of \$555,520.

The bus purchase is part of an ongoing bus replacement plan designed to ensure students are transported on buses that meet the latest safety standards while allowing the district to phase out older, high mileage vehicles to avoid the cost

inefficiencies related to keeping them in service.

As approved by voters in May 2023, the district purchased one bus and placed more funds in a transportation reserve. An aging fleet and recent accidents have created an urgent need to purchase buses before the May 21, 2024 budget vote. This proposition has no tax impact.

"Better and more usable equipment allows for proper technique to be taught to those who are learning the instruments, as well as a better and more rounded sound for not only the band's practices but also the performances."

– Gavin Davis, Grade 11 musician

What wording will appear on the ballot?

Proposition 1:

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit:

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Gouverneur Central School District is hereby authorized to undertake certain capital improvements consisting of construction and reconstruction of school buildings and facilities, various site and athletic field improvements and the acquisition of certain original furnishings, equipment, and apparatus and other incidental improvements required in connection therewith for such construction and school use, all at an estimated maximum aggregate cost of \$57,380,000; and to appropriate and expend from the existing capital reserve fund \$9,600,000 for such costs, and that the balance of such cost, or so much

thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax to be collected in annual installments, with such tax to be offset by state aid available therefor; and, in anticipation of such tax, debt obligations of the school district as may be necessary not to exceed \$47,780,000 shall be issued.

Proposition 2:

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit:

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Gouverneur Central School District is hereby authorized to expend \$555,520 from the existing Transportation Capital Reserve for the acquisition of three (3) 72-passenger school buses, at an estimated maximum aggregate cost of \$555,520.



The current band and choral suite lacks proper musical sound treatments.



The rendering above represents the proposed upgrades for the band and choral suite, including modernization and sound panel additions.



Board of Education

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Mark Hendrick
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Laurie Roberts
Laura Spicer

Superintendent of Schools

Jacquelyn L. Kelly

Produced in cooperation with
the Capital Region BOCES
Communications Service.

Current Resident

Capital Project Vote Tuesday, December 12

PROJECT TIMELINE:

- If the capital project is approved by voters, design for the project will begin immediately.
- Upon finalization, the plans will be submitted to the New York State Education Department for review and approval.
- The work is expected to begin in the late spring of 2025.
- Construction for the project will be strategically planned to limit interference with any athletic season to the greatest extent possible.

VOTER INFORMATION

Voter eligibility:

- To be eligible to vote, residents must live in the school district for at least 30 days prior to the December 12 vote, be at least 18 years of age and be a citizen of the United States.



Absentee Ballots

Residents who will not be in the area on December 12, or are otherwise unable to vote in person, may apply for an absentee ballot at the district office. If the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, the application must be submitted at least seven days prior to the vote (by Tuesday, December 5). If the absentee ballot is to be picked up by the voter in person, applications will be accepted until December 11. Completed absentee ballots must be returned to the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12. For more information or to request an absentee ballot application, call the district office at 315-287-4870.