

Voters in Four of Five School Districts Approve Construction Proposals

Voters approved construction proposals in four of five New Jersey school districts that held special elections on Tuesday, Dec. 10, approving \$51.5 million worth of bonds that would fund items ranging from security improvements to school expansions.

The sole project defeated was in Garfield, where the school board was seeking approval of a \$5 million project to overhaul the city high school's athletic complex.

A total of \$56.5 million in construction was proposed in the five districts. The special elections took place in Weymouth Township in Atlantic County; Garfield and Rochelle Park in Bergen County; Secaucus in Hudson County; and Point Pleasant Borough in Ocean County. In four of the five proposed projects, state debt service aid is available to help cover at least 40 percent of eligible costs.

The Garfield project was the only one that was not slated to receive debt service aid from the state.

The second Tuesday in December is one of five dates during the year on which a school district can present construction bond issues to voters. The next special election date will be January 28, 2014.

In 2013, a total of 24 school construction proposals have been presented to voters. Of those, voters approved 18, or 75 percent, of the proposals. Last year, voters approved 11, or 55 percent, of the 20 bond issues proposed statewide.

New Jersey School Construction Referendum

Tuesday, December 10, 2013

STATEWIDE

Total amount requested: \$56,550,751. Amount eligible for state reimbursement:
\$16,605,808

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Weymouth Township – Approved – Improvements to Weymouth Township Elementary School and additional site work. The Dec. 10 bond issue supersedes and adds improvements to a \$980,000 bond issue that was approved last year. The previously approved amount is being proposed again to voters to enable the school district to secure state debt service, which was not available last year. The state funding would amount to 42.6 percent of the project costs and would result in no increase in the amount of debt service approved last year, according to the proposal.

Total amount: **\$1,689,126**

Amount eligible for state reimbursement: **\$716,358**

BERGEN COUNTY

Garfield – Defeated – New high school athletic complex, including new fields, track, tennis courts, synthetic turf, bleachers, locker facilities and more, is not eligible for state facilities construction and financing, according to the district.

Total amount: **\$5,000,000**

Not eligible for state reimbursement

Rochelle Park – Approved – Facilities upgrades and security enhancements at Midland School. Proposal includes roof and window replacements, restroom upgrades and other renovations. The security element addresses exterior door replacement, an access and surveillance system, and other enhancements.

Total amount: **\$6,513,325**

Amount eligible for state reimbursement: **\$2,605,330**

HUDSON COUNTY

Secaucus – Approved – Middle-High School renovation and expansion project to accommodate growing enrollment. The project includes new classrooms, technology lab, greenhouse; also expansion of the media center and construction of a new high school gymnasium and related training and support spaces.

Total amount: **\$27,400,000**

Amount eligible for state reimbursement: **\$6,904,800**

OCEAN COUNTY

Point Pleasant Borough – Approved – Improvements to four schools: Point Pleasant High School, Memorial Middle School, Nellie Bennett Elementary and Ocean Road Elementary.

Total amount: **\$15,948,300**

Amount eligible for state reimbursement: **\$6,379,320**