



Questions & Answers

WHAT IS EXCEL AID?

Expanding Our Children's Education and Learning (EXCEL) is a form of state aid available to school districts for a limited time that covers the cost of certain repairs and improvements to facilities, including projects related to health and safety, energy management, accessibility, physical capacity expansion or school construction. Approved by the New York State Legislature in April 2006, EXCEL Aid provides \$1.8 billion in infrastructure repairs for New York City schools and \$800 million for districts throughout the state. Districts have been awarded specific amounts based on enrollment. EXCEL funding totaling \$1.8 million has been earmarked for North Colonie, while another \$57,000 has been designated for Maplewood.

THE EXCEL PROJECT MAY BE COMPLETELY COVERED BY NYS, BUT DOESN'T THAT MONEY REALLY COME FROM MY POCKET?

Yes, it does. Similar to other state funds, EXCEL aid ultimately comes from income and sales tax paid by New York residents and businesses. EXCEL funding was set aside in the 2006-07 state budget and will be spent whether or not North Colonie's proposed referendum is approved. If the proposed project is approved on March 3, it will mean that more of your state tax dollars will be spent locally to make improvements to your schools.

IF STATE FUNDING IS GOING TO COVER THE COST OF THE PROJECT, WHY IS THE DISTRICT HOLDING A REFERENDUM?

Under state law, a district must receive voter approval before receiving aid on construction projects. As a condition of EXCEL funding, the district must first incur the cost of the work and will later be reimbursed by the state.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS BUILDING PROJECT?

The proposed project addresses critical needs throughout the district including many infrastructure repairs and improvements, such as replacing roofs, boilers, inefficient heating systems and antiquated equipment. Some of the equipment is original to the buildings, making it both expensive and difficult to find replacement parts. The current availability of EXCEL funding and enhanced state building aid would allow the district to be proactive and make these necessary renovations before having to make repairs on an emergency basis, which is often more expensive. In addition, most of the proposed work would have to be done anyway within the next few years in order to keep our school buildings safe, efficient and up to code requirements, as well as to provide students with a healthier and more comfortable learning environment.

WHO ASSESSED THE NEEDS FOR THIS PROJECT?

Nearly all of the 75 improvements identified in the proposed capital project were driven by the district's 5-year Capital Facilities Plan, as required by the New York State Education Department. The plan, completed by district officials, architects and engineers and reviewed by the Board of Education, prioritizes facility infrastructure improvement needs on a district-wide basis, focusing on health and safety issues. It is reviewed and updated annually, re-prioritizing needs as necessary. Additionally, some of the projects planned as part of the \$32 million bond project, approved by voters in May 2001, were deferred due to some other unexpected repairs encountered during construction. EXCEL funding now provides the opportunity to fulfill the entire vision of the 2001 project.

WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSAL?

For more information, visit the district Web site at www.northcolonie.org for a list of public presentations, voter information, questions and answers and more. Please also watch your mail in February for a special edition district newsletter.

Please remember to vote on Monday, March 3, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

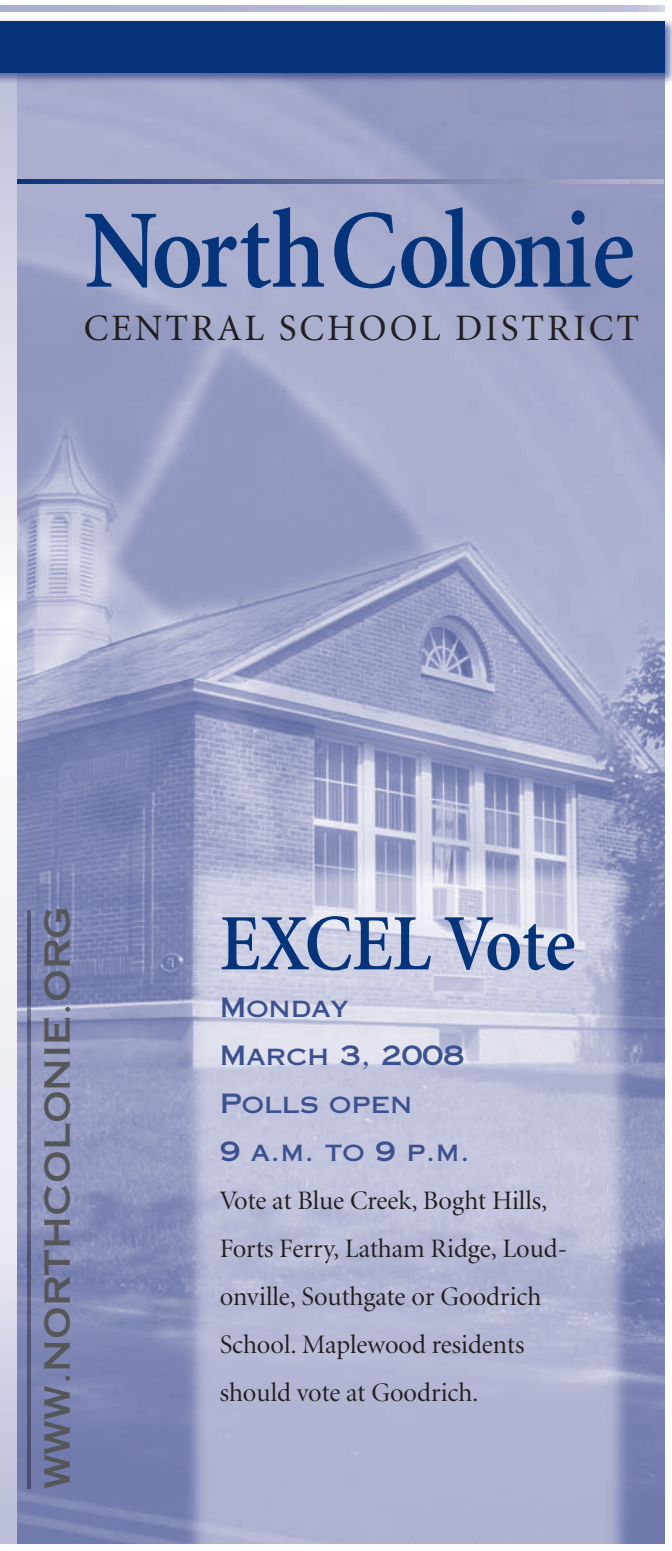
Randy A. Ehrenberg, Superintendent
David Rosenthal
Mary-Ellen Raup
Jaqueline Orr
Theresa Joslin
Linda Harrison
Ann Foster
Paula D'Orazio
Mary Nardolillo, Vice President
Joan Hart, President



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EXCEL Vote

MONDAY
MARCH 3, 2008
POLLS OPEN
9 A.M. TO 9 P.M.

Vote at Blue Creek, Boght Hills, Forts Ferry, Latham Ridge, Loudonville, Southgate or Goodrich School. Maplewood residents should vote at Goodrich.



“WE ARE VERY PLEASED AT THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET SUCH A LARGE AMOUNT OF NEEDED WORK DONE AT VERY LITTLE, IF ANY, COST TO OUR TAXPAYERS,” SAID SUPERINTENDENT RANDY EHREMBERG.

Voters to consider **EXCEL** project on March 3

EXTRA STATE FUNDING PLUS ENHANCED BUILDING AID TO PAY FOR MAJORITY OF \$7 MILLION CAPITAL PROJECT

District residents will go to the polls on Monday, March 3, to decide on a proposed \$7 million capital project referendum that would provide infrastructure repairs and improvements throughout the district’s eight school buildings, including Maplewood.

About 75 projects, many included in the district’s 5-year Capital Facilities Plan, have been identified by district officials, including, among others, improvements to building security; the installation of new, more efficient heating and ventilation equipment; and the replacement of roofs that have exceeded their useful life.

If approved, district residents can expect taxes to increase minimally, if at all, for the proposed project, thanks to the availability of state funding and current district reserves. The official annexation of Maplewood-Colonie Common School District on July 1, 2008, will provide North Colonie with an increase in traditional state building aid, from 48 to 68 percent for approved building projects. EXCEL funding and current reserves would pay for the

balance of the total project.

“We are very pleased at the opportunity to get such a large amount of needed work done at very little, if any, cost to our taxpayers,” said Superintendent Randy Ehrenberg.

If approved by voters on March 3, the proposed renovations would be completed in 3 to 4 years.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS...

SAFETY & SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ◆ INSTALL PROXIMITY CARD READERS AT SEVERAL SCHOOLS TO ALLOW STAFF ACCESS TO BUILDINGS WHILE ENHANCING BUILDING SECURITY
- ◆ BUILD A PRE-ENTRY SECURITY AREA OUTSIDE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL TO BETTER CONTROL BUILDING ACCESS
- ◆ COMPLETE THE BUILDING CAMERA PROJECT AT THE HIGH SCHOOL BY INSTALLING ADDITIONAL SECURITY CAMERAS, WIRING AND HARDWARE

ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

- ◆ CONVERT BUILDING VENTILATION EQUIPMENT ACROSS THE DISTRICT FROM PNEUMATIC TO ELECTRONIC CONTROL FOR MORE EFFICIENT OPERATION, AS WELL AS TO MAXIMIZE SAVINGS AND COMFORT

- ◆ REPLACE AIR HANDLING UNITS ACROSS THE DISTRICT THAT ARE APPROACHING OR BEYOND THEIR USEFUL LIFE TO ENHANCE AIR QUALITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY
- ◆ CONVERT SLOW, UNRELIABLE DIAL-UP ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO A MORE EFFICIENT WEB-BASED SYSTEM
- ◆ INSTALL BACK-UP GENERATORS AT THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS TO ENSURE ELECTRICAL POWER DURING EMERGENCIES

ACCESSIBILITY

- ◆ PROVIDE POWER IN SELECTED CLASSROOMS FOR WINDOW A/C TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS
- ◆ IMPROVE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AT MAPLEWOOD BY INSTALLING AN ELEVATOR AND MAKING OTHER UPGRADES

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF PROJECTS, VISIT THE DISTRICT WEB SITE AT WWW.NORTHCOLONIE.ORG.

Vote at-a-glance

▼ VOTER INFORMATION

Polls will be open Monday, March 3, 2008, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Vote at Blue Creek, Boght Hills, Forts Ferry, Latham Ridge, Loudonville, Southgate or Goodrich School. Maplewood residents should vote at Goodrich.

▼ VOTER ELIGIBILITY

To vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, age 18 or older and a resident of North Colonie or Maplewood for at least 30 days prior to the vote. Proof of residency such as a driver’s license may be required at the time you vote.

▼ ABSENTEE BALLOTS ARE AVAILABLE

Qualified voters who will be out of town or unavailable to vote in person on the vote date should call 785-8591 or stop by the District Office at Goodrich School from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., to request applications for absentee ballots. Applications for absentee ballots will be received until 9 a.m. on Feb. 25.