

# WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

53 Liberty Place Weehawken, NJ 07086 201.422.6126

**Eric Crespo, Superintendent of Schools**



March 14, 2023

Dear Weehawken Families,

In the Spring of 2022, the Weehawken School District began investigating a multitude of ways to maximize space throughout the district. After conducting a thorough process, the Board of Education in conjunction with the school administration, decided our only course of action would be to return Woodrow Wilson School to active use by the district.

Woodrow Wilson School is a 94-year-old building that resides on Hauxhurst Avenue. The School was used by the district for the majority of its existence. During the period between the 1980s and 1990s, as district enrollment declined, the school was not used by Weehawken and was leased to the Union City Board of Education for almost 20 years. Over the last several years, the building has been vacant, only used for performing arts and athletics activities. The progress of our educational system now requires the return of this building to the district for daily educational services.

In early Fall of 2022, we announced our intention and answered the question, "Why Now?". The district has been experiencing a trend of increasing enrollment in all three of our schools. Furthermore, following enrollment studies completed by the district, this trend is predicted to continue, which would require a continued need for additional space.

The return of Woodrow Wilson School will provide the district with an opportunity to meet our enrollment needs while allowing us to eventually add Pre-K 3 to the school district. In addition, the district will realign grade levels to maximize the space in our existing elementary schools.

The referendum is not solely focused on Woodrow Wilson School but also on critical repairs on our three existing buildings, Daniel Webster School, Theodore Roosevelt School, and Weehawken High School, which need health and safety upgrades. The schools are severely in need of new roofs, upgrades to multipurpose rooms (gymnasium and cafeteria), heating systems, and additional security measures.

An application to the State of New Jersey's Department of Education was submitted in October 2022 and recently received approval. To obtain the available state funding, the application must be submitted to the state for final approval. As a result of this approval, the state will be providing 40% of the funding needed to complete projects in our three existing schools. Our Woodrow Wilson project will be receiving financial assistance from our township government by providing 21% of the total cost of the project. The funding provided by the state is available now but cannot be guaranteed in the future. We need to secure this funding now.

Next month you will have the opportunity to vote on the school funding bond referendum during the annual Board of Education election, which will be held on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, from 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM. During this election, you will have

the chance to vote on two ballot questions regarding the 2023-2024 Annual Budget and the bond referendum question on capital improvements district-wide.

The Weehawken Township School District has been recognized for a variety of awards and accolades over the years while being known as the top school district in the county and one of the best in the state of New Jersey. To maintain our commitment to excellence academically and provide the cutting-edge safety and security our students need, the referendum is being proposed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the continuous support of the Weehawken Township School District.

Sincerely,  
Eric Crespo



@WeehawkenTSD



facebook.com/WeehawkenTSD



@WeehawkenTSD

14 de marzo de 2023

Estimadas familias de Weehawken,

En la primavera de 2022, el distrito escolar de Weehawken comenzó a investigar una multitud de formas de maximizar el espacio en todo el distrito. Después de llevar a cabo un proceso minucioso, la Junta de Educación junto con la administración de la escuela decidieron que nuestro único curso de acción sería devolver la Escuela Woodrow Wilson al uso activo del distrito.

La Escuela Woodrow Wilson es un edificio de 94 años que reside en Hauxhurst Avenue. La escuela fue utilizada por el distrito durante la mayor parte de su existencia. Durante el período entre las décadas de 1980 y 1990, a medida que disminuía la inscripción en el distrito, Weehawken no utilizó la escuela y fue arrendada a la Junta de Educación de Union City durante casi 20 años. Durante los últimos años, el edificio ha estado vacío, solo se ha utilizado para actividades de artes escénicas y atletismo. El progreso de nuestro sistema educativo ahora requiere la devolución de este edificio al distrito para los servicios educativos diarios.

A principios del otoño de 2022, anunciamos nuestra atención y respondimos la pregunta "¿Por qué ahora?". El distrito ha estado experimentando una tendencia de aumento de matriculación en nuestras tres escuelas. Además, luego de los estudios de inscripción completados por el distrito, se pronostica que esta tendencia continuará, lo que requeriría una necesidad continua de espacio adicional.

El regreso de la Escuela Woodrow Wilson brindará al distrito la oportunidad de satisfacer nuestras necesidades de inscripción y, al mismo tiempo, nos permitirá agregar Pre-K 3 al distrito escolar. Además, el distrito realinearé los niveles de grado para maximizar el espacio en nuestras escuelas primarias existentes.

El referéndum no se centra únicamente en la Escuela Woodrow Wilson, sino también en reparaciones críticas en nuestros tres edificios existentes, la Escuela Daniel Webster, la Escuela Theodore Roosevelt y la Escuela Secundaria Weehawken, que necesitan mejoras de salud y seguridad. Las escuelas tienen una gran necesidad de techos nuevos, mejoras a los salones de usos múltiples (gimnasio y cafetería), sistemas de calefacción y medidas de seguridad adicionales.

En octubre de 2022 se presentó una solicitud al Departamento de Educación del Estado de New Jersey y recientemente recibió la aprobación. Para obtener los fondos estatales disponibles, la solicitud debe presentarse al estado para su aprobación final. Como resultado de esta aprobación, el estado proporcionará el 40 % de los fondos necesarios para completar proyectos en nuestras tres escuelas existentes. Nuestro proyecto Woodrow Wilson recibirá asistencia financiera del gobierno de nuestro municipio al proporcionar el 21% del costo total del proyecto. Los fondos proporcionados por el estado están disponibles ahora, pero no se puede garantizar en el futuro. Necesitamos asegurar estos fondos ahora.

El próximo mes tendrá la oportunidad de votar sobre el referéndum de bonos de financiamiento escolar durante la elección anual de la Junta de Educación, que se llevará a cabo el martes 25 de abril de 2023, de 2:00 p. m. a 8:00 p. m. Durante esta elección, tendrá la oportunidad de votar sobre dos preguntas de la boleta con respecto al Presupuesto Anual 2023-2024 y la pregunta del referéndum de bonos sobre mejoras de capital en todo el distrito.

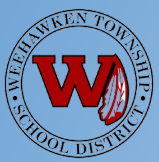
El Distrito Escolar del Municipio de Weehawken ha sido reconocido por una variedad de premios y elogios a lo largo de los años, además de ser conocido como el mejor distrito escolar del condado y uno de los mejores del estado de New Jersey. Para mantener nuestro compromiso con la excelencia académica y brindar la seguridad y protección de vanguardia que necesitan nuestros estudiantes, se propone el referéndum.

Me gustaría aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecerles por el continuo apoyo del Distrito Escolar de Weehawken.

Atentamente,  
Eric Crespo

Weehawken Township School District  
Planning for the Future of Our Students





# Who we are

## Board of Education Trustees

Ildefonso Acosta

Giovanni Ahmad

Jennifer Bolcar, *Vice President*

Linda Cabrera

John Cannata, *President*

Meg Carson

Marissa Dennis

Julian Brian Mera

Richard Pinal

## District Administration

Eric Crespo, *Superintendent*

Francesca Amato, *Assistant Superintendent*

Al Orecchio, *Assistant Superintendent*

Matthew Whitford, *Business Administrator*

## Our Schools

Daniel Webster School (DWS)

1700 Palisade Ave

Weehawken High School (WHS)

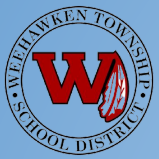
53 Liberty Place

Theodore Roosevelt School (TRS)

1 Louisa Place

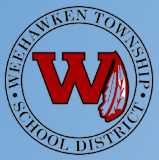
Woodrow Wilson School (WWS)

80 Hauxhurst Ave



# “Why are We Here”?

- Update to our October presentations
- 100+ year old buildings are in need of health and safety repairs/upgrades
- Anticipated population growth will push classroom size and/or creates need for new space
- Opportunity to add Prek 3 to our district
- Reorganization of the District to maximize capacity in DWS & TRS
- The Return of Woodrow Wilson School
- Opportunity for State Funding Exists Now



# “Why are We Here”?

- See letter from Superintendent of Schools, Eric Crespo



# Weehawken Township School District Reorganization

## Daniel Webster School

- ★ Pre-K 3
- ★ Pre-K 4
- ★ Kindergarten



## WILSON

- ★ Grade 1
- ★ Grade 2
- ★ Grade 3

## Theodore Roosevelt School

- ★ Grade 4
- ★ Grade 5
- ★ Grade 6



## Weehawken High School

- ★ Grades 7-12

\*Pre-K 3 program

\*Expand STEAM DWS/TRS/WWS  
\*Increase Capacity



# Improvements to Each Building



## Daniel Webster School

- ❖ Roof Replacement
- ❖ Security System Cameras
- ❖ Safety upgrades in Multipurpose room
- ❖ Addition of STEAM rooms
- ❖ Pre-Kindergarten 3 Year Old Program

## Theodore Roosevelt School

- ❖ Roof Replacement
- ❖ Security Entrance Upgrades
- ❖ Security System Cameras
- ❖ Air Ventilation & Climate Control upgrades Multipurpose rooms (2)
- ❖ Designated STEAM rooms

# Improvements to Each Building



## Woodrow Wilson School

- ❖ Security Entrance Upgrades
- ❖ Security System Cameras
- ❖ ADA Compliance throughout building
- ❖ Complete safety improvements - fire, electrical, plumbing code upgrades
- ❖ Air Ventilation & Climate Control
- ❖ Roof Replacement
- ❖ Classroom and Restroom renovations

## Weehawken High School

- ❖ Security System Camera Enhancements
- ❖ Roof Replacement
- ❖ Security System Cameras
- ❖ Air Ventilation & Energy Efficient Climate Control upgrades
- ❖ Safety upgrades in Gymnasium

# Financials



## Cost by School Building

Theodore Roosevelt School: \$1.4 million

Daniel Webster School: \$1.4 million

Weehawken High School: \$3.4 million

Woodrow Wilson School: \$12.5 million

District Total: \$18.7 million

District must bond for the full amount, of which the State will reimbursement \$ 2.1 million, leaving the district's responsibility of \$16.6 million. The cost of the new bonds will be partially offset by two previous bond issues which will be fully paid at the time of any new bond issues, further reducing the costs.

<u>State Aid</u>	<u>Township Contribution</u>	<u>Net District Cost</u>	<u>Estimated Net Projected Tax Impact for Average Household (\$771,389)</u>
\$2.1 million	0.00	\$16.6 million	\$140 - \$175 Annually OR \$12- \$15 Monthly
\$2.1 million	\$2.5 million	\$14.1 million	\$80 - \$120 Annually OR \$7 - \$10 Monthly



# Referendum Timeline

1

**Early 2022**

Identify student needs, district trends, and facility areas of improvement

Evaluate all possible resources to satisfy those needs

Create and Recommend a plan to achieve the goal of meeting those needs

2

**Early 2022**

Begin process with Professionals

Building walkthroughs w/ Architects to create scope of work.

Public Safety, Fire, Police, EMS Departments involved in discussions

Discuss possible financial impacts with school Financial Advisors and Bond Counsel

3

**October 2022**

Submit Project Application to State Dept of Education

Application to seek financial support for school construction and approval of overall plan

Board of Education approved submission of the application

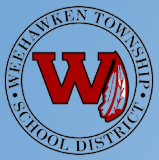
Non-binding application

4

**March 2023**

State Dept of Education approves Project Application & provides information on the financial assistance the state will give for the projects (Debt Service)

This information is presented to the Board of Education



# Referendum Timeline (cont)

5

**March 2023**

Board of Education has the opportunity to approve moving forward with Referendum once all information is presented

The County is notified

6

**April 25, 2023**

Referendum / Special Election is held.

The referendum will seek voter approval to bond (obtain a loan) for the funds to complete the projects.

If voters approve, the district will bond in the Summer of 2023 and obtain State financial assistance.

7

**Summer 2023**

Construction begins in Summer of 2023.

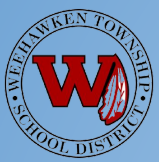
Timeline of projects is created for all district buildings over the course of 2-3 years.

8

**2023 -2026**

September 2025 Woodrow Wilson School Building is projected to open and realignment of school district begins.

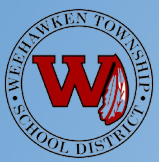
Other projects are completed or continue to progress.



# Election Information

The annual Weehawken Board of Education election will be held on Tuesday, April 25, 2023 from 2:00pm-8:00pm.

- 3 Board seats open, which are being sought by 4 candidates.
- There will be 2 ballot question in addition to the Board candidates:
  - 23-24 Annual Budget
  - Referendum question on capital improvements district wide



Please contact us if you have  
any questions.

We will put up your question and answer for public  
review.

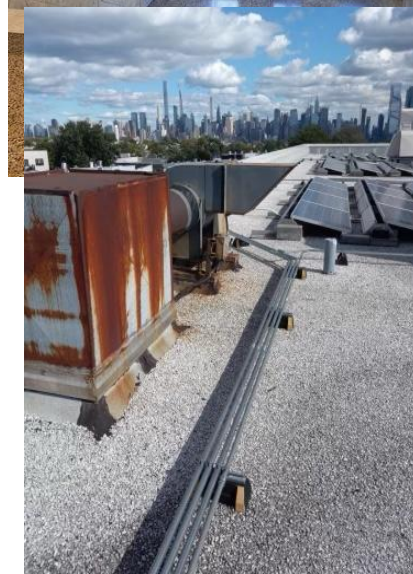
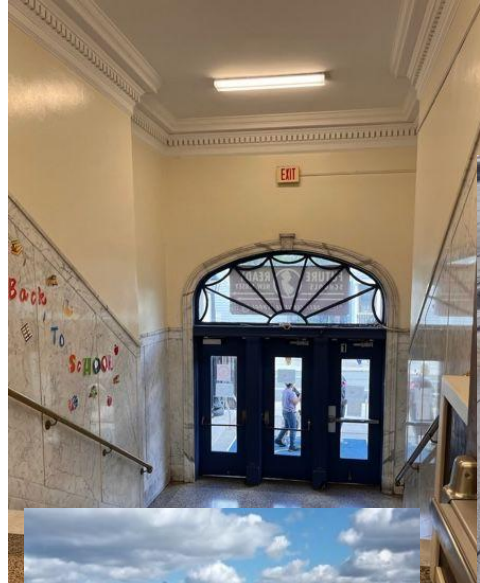


# WHS



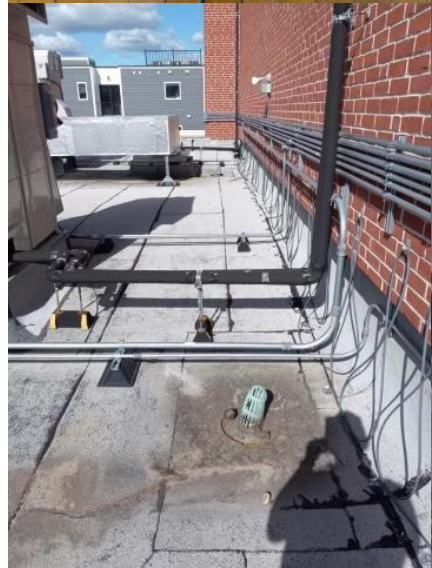
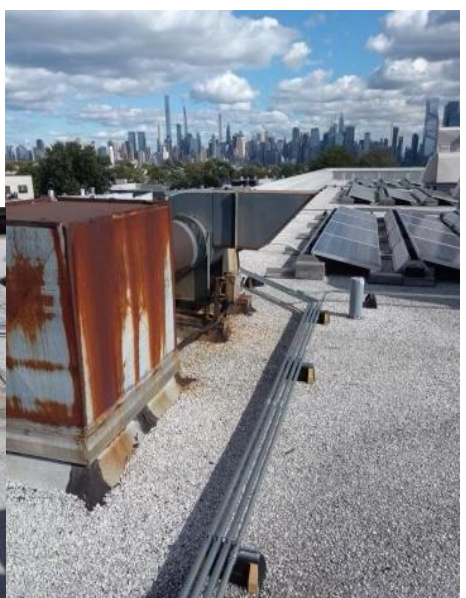
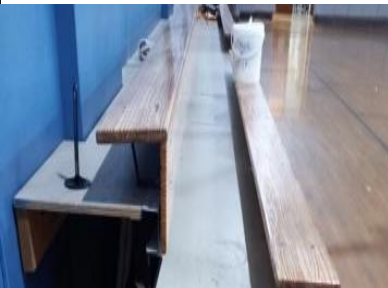


# TRS





# DWS



WWS

