

# Montoursville Area School District

## Montoursville Area High School – Additions and Renovations Project

### How did the school district determine the need for a project?

- In November 2013, the school district hired Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates Architects to conduct a facilities study. The goal of the study was to examine all facilities within the school district. The content and sequence of the study followed the requirements published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, which must be met in order for the district to submit for state reimbursement through the PlanCon process.

### What is PlanCon?

- When a school district undertakes a major construction project and seeks reimbursement from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a process known as PlanCon is initiated. PlanCon, an acronym for Planning and Construction Workbook, is a set of forms and procedures used to apply through the PA Department of Education for Commonwealth reimbursement. The PlanCon process is designed to: (1) document a local school district's planning process; (2) provide justification for a project to the public; (3) ascertain compliance with state laws and regulations; and (4) establish the level of state participation in the cost of the project.

### How was the Architect selected?

- In November 2013, the school board interviewed three architectural firms; Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates Architects, Foreman Architects and The Hunt Group Architects. Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates Architects were selected. This firm has an extensive K-12 education portfolio in Pennsylvania and has been named a top 250 firm by Architectural Record and a top 500 design firm by Engineering News-Record.

### How does this project benefit the education of our students?

- Provide students a learning environment that is full of natural light, in adequately sized classrooms, that can be properly temperature controlled with adequate air quality.
- Provide enough science labs to deliver science curricula in Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Physics.
- A new library/media center to provide technology and space for group projects in all subject areas.
- A new auditorium/black box theater to accommodate growing programs in band, chorus, and theatre arts.
- A black box theatre within the auditorium to provide a drama classroom for students.
- Auxiliary gymnasium to combine the wellness center, weight room and floor space to deliver a complete physical education program. This space will also be utilized after school hours for athletic practices.
- Flex classroom space such, as a cyber café, to provide areas for students to work together outside of a traditional classroom environment.
- Computer labs to provide the necessary technology to deliver foreign language classes, multiple business classes, writing instruction and technology education.
- Updated family and consumer science lab to provide students with life skills for after high school.

**Is it true that some areas of the district will pay more?**

- All regions of the school district pay the same millage rate. The assessed value of your particular parcel determines the amount you pay. As an example, the “average” assessed property in Cascade Township is \$68,120 which is less than the average assessed value of a home in the Borough of Montoursville at \$127,601, so the 2015 tax impact for the “average” Borough of Montoursville property is \$43.38 and the 2015 tax impact on the “average” Cascade Township property is \$23.16.

| Municipality    | Total Taxable Assessment | Taxable Parcels | Average Assessment | Tax Increase at 0.34 mills for FY ending 2016 |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Cascade         | 24,114,530               | 354             | 68,120             | \$23.16                                       |
| Eldred          | 114,540,500              | 928             | 123,427            | \$41.97                                       |
| Fairfield       | 210,062,050              | 1,437           | 146,181            | \$49.70                                       |
| Gamble          | 49,677,770               | 553             | 89,833             | \$30.54                                       |
| Montoursville   | 257,116,940              | 2,015           | 127,601            | \$43.38                                       |
| Plunketts Creek | 47,781,100               | 654             | 73,060             | \$24.84                                       |
| Upper Fairfield | 99,127,050               | 907             | 109,291            | \$37.16                                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>802,419,940</b>       | <b>6,848</b>    | <b>117,176</b>     | <b>Average \$39.84</b>                        |

*(Assessment data provided by the Lycoming County Assessment Office on 1/28/2015)*

**How will this project affect taxes?**

- The overall millage needed to fund this project is 1.9 mills phased in over a 6 year period. The average assessed home value in our district is \$117,176. The proposed millage increase for the fiscal year ending 2016 (school real estate taxes issued on July 1, 2015) needed to fund the project are 0.34 mills, which equates to a \$39.84 increase for the average assessed property. Below is a chart showing the millage phase-in structure. *(Assessment data provided by the Lycoming County Assessment Office on 1/28/2015)*

| <u>Fiscal year ending:</u> | <u>Millage increase</u> | <u>Note:</u>     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 2015                       | 0.36 mills              | Already in place |
| 2016                       | 0.34 mills              | Year noted above |
| 2017                       | 0.32 mills              |                  |
| 2018                       | 0.32 mills              |                  |
| 2019                       | 0.32 mills              |                  |
| 2020                       | 0.24 mills              |                  |

**How will this project impact my taxes?**

To determine the impact of the proposed high school construction on your individual real estate tax use the tax calculator below.

1. Locate your Assessed Value on your School Real Estate Tax notice (the school real estate tax notice is issued in July and looks similar to the picture below).

|  |  |  |                  |           |                                     |
|--|--|--|------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:<br>MONTOURSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT                        |  | TAX PAYER COPY   |                  |           | Bill No: 001                        |
|  |  |  |                  |           | Duplicate No: 0001                  |
| PAYABLE TO: MONTOURSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DIST<br>PO BOX 4456<br>LANCASTER PA 17604-4456 |  | Control No: 340-000000   |                  |           | 2014 Statement of Real Estate Taxes |
| DESC: ASSESS.NO -000000<br>MAP NO: 34-0000-0000 - 000                                |  | Assessed Values  | Land Improvement | Mineral   | Total                               |
| ACRES .200 DEED 00000/00000<br>100 N ARCH ST   |  | 22,490   | 95,370           | 0         | 117,860                             |
| 34+,000.0-0000.00-000+<br>RESIDENTIAL BUILDING                                       |  | Homestead Exclusion  |                  |           | 9,537-                              |
| TAX PAYER: SAMPLE TAX BILL<br>100 N ARCH ST<br>MONTOURSVILLE PA 17754-2503           |  | MONTOURSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DIST   |                  |           | Discount                            |
|  |  | Rates  | .01387000        | .01387000 | Face                                |
|  |  | SCHOOL   |                  |           | Penalty                             |
|  |  | Homestead Credit   |                  |           | 10 %                                |
|  |  | <b>TAX AMOUNT DUE -----&gt;</b>  |                  |           | 1,602.03                            |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 1,634.72                            |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 1,798.19                            |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 132.28-                             |
|  |  |  |                  |           | <b>\$1,472.39</b>                   |
|  |  |  |                  |           | <b>\$1,502.44</b>                   |
|  |  |  |                  |           | <b>\$1,652.68</b>                   |
|  |  | If Paid On or After  |                  |           | 7/01/2014                           |
|  |  | If Paid On or Before   |                  |           | 8/31/2014                           |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 9/01/2014                           |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 10/31/2014                          |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 11/01/2014                          |
|  |  |  |                  |           | 12/31/2014                          |
|  |  | FOR INFORMATION CALL 570-368-7564  |                  |           |                                     |
|  |  | TAXES WILL BE RETURNED FOR COLLECTION IF THEY ARE NOT PAID IN FULL BY DECEMBER 31, 2014. FOR A RECEIPT, ENCLOSE THIS COUPON AND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE. |                  |           |                                     |
| 141510041201401600000063300014723900015024400016526818                               |  |  |                  |           |                                     |
| <Detach Here>  |  |  |                  |           |                                     |

2. If your property qualified for a Homestead Exclusion, this will be listed under the Total Assessed Value. The Homestead Exclusion amount should be subtracted from the total assessment as noted in the tax calculator below. If your property did not qualify for a Homestead Exclusion, an amount will not be listed under the Total Assessed Value and you should enter 0 in the Homestead Exclusion line of the tax calculator.

|                                | SAMPLE<br>CALCULATION | ENTER YOUR<br>INFORMATION |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Total Assessed Value:          | 117,860               | _____                     |
| LESS: Homestead Exclusion      | - 9,537               | - _____                   |
| Taxable Assessment:            | = 108,323             | = _____                   |
| Tax Rate Increase (0.34 mills) | X 0.00034             | X 0.00034                 |
| 2015-2016 Tax Increase         | = \$36.83             | = _____                   |

**Does our district have the highest or lowest millage rate in our area?**

- Our district falls in the middle when compared with other school districts located all or partially in Lycoming County.

| <b><u>District</u></b> | <b><u>Millage</u></b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jersey Shore           | 15.9869               |
| Williamsport           | 15.2600               |
| Southern Tioga         | 14.9421               |
| South Williamsport     | 14.3000               |
| Canton                 | 14.0273               |
| <b>Montoursville</b>   | <b>13.8700</b>        |
| Muncy                  | 13.6300               |
| Wellsboro              | 13.6200               |
| Loyalsock              | 13.2500               |
| Montgomery             | 12.8500               |
| East Lycoming          | 12.3700               |

**How was information about this project made public?**

- Beginning in the fall of 2013, project information was made public through our website at [www.montoursville.k12.pa.us](http://www.montoursville.k12.pa.us), and at public board meetings, public work sessions and in numerous media outlets, including newspaper articles, TV news stories, district newsletter and the advertised Act 34 public hearing held on February 20, 2015.

**What is the Black Box Theater?**

- The black box theater is a portion of the auditorium seating area that incorporates flexible, retractable seats and a moveable divider wall to create a multifunctional space for the High School and community. The auditorium seats retract and can be repositioned around an area on the floor for smaller performances. The black box theater is just one use for this space. This area will also be used as a large classroom, open multi-purpose room, practice performance space, and many other general purpose educational uses. Utilizing a “black box” design will allow the auditorium space to be utilized as part of our everyday instructional program and not just a space that is utilized for concerts and theater programming.

**What is the cost of the Black Box Theater?**

- Since the space designated as the black box theater is located within the footprint of the auditorium seating space, no additional square footage is added for this function. The only additional costs are for an operable partition dividing the auditorium into two spaces, retractable audience seating versus fixed audience seating, and theatrical rigging for the performance space. The costs of these items are estimated at \$265,000. The cost to build a separate black box theater separate from the auditorium is estimated at \$850,000 and would be cost prohibitive.

### **What is the purpose of the Auxiliary Gymnasium?**

- An auxiliary gymnasium is a small gym utilized for physical education classes and athletic practices. It does not include spectator seating and is not meant to hold competitions.
- The Montoursville Area School District recognizes that adequate space for Physical Education classes and athletic teams are essential in providing our students and community with opportunities to stay physically healthy and physically active. Participation in extra-curricular activities provides our students with life lessons and skills that the everyday classroom cannot provide. In addition, over the years, the number of athletic teams and number of students participating on those teams have dramatically increased. In 1971, we had approximately 8 athletic teams, today we have 17. The need for an auxiliary gym has been present for many years, but until now a solution has never been provided.

### **What is the cost of the Auxiliary Gymnasium?**

- The major renovations slated to occur would convert the existing library and fitness center into an Auxiliary Gymnasium include demolition of existing walls and ceilings, replacement of flooring, and addition of Physical Education equipment (3 basketball goals, 2 retractable batting cages, and a divider curtain). The costs of these renovations are estimated at \$245,000.

### **The plans show a cyber café, what is that?**

- The plans show a flexible learning space labeled “cyber café”. This is a space designated for students to gather for collaborative discussions and project work. This space simply has seating in a common area with wireless internet capability. The only cost associated with this space is student seating.

### **Does the State favor new construction over renovations of existing buildings?**

- No. 80% of school construction projects that are reimbursed by the Commonwealth involve work on existing buildings.

### **What type of project receives greater reimbursement from the State: renovations or new construction?**

- The Commonwealth provides 10% additional reimbursement for projects that renovate existing buildings, in whole or part.
- The current High School plan will receive the additional 10% reimbursement since it is renovating part of the existing building.

### **How is reimbursement calculated?**

- Reimbursement is based on the student capacity of a planned school, which can be justified by current or projected student enrollment.
- Classroom capacity is calculated on the basis of 25 students per regular classroom (other values are assigned to laboratories, gymnasiums, art rooms, music rooms, etc.)

### **Why does the Student Capacity exceed the Student Enrollment?**

- For the purposes of reimbursement, the student capacity of the existing school is 1,091 and the planned school is 1,040.
- The quantity of educational spaces and the resultant student capacity calculation is used as a basis for reimbursement; it does not represent realistic student capacity since it is based on every educational space being 100% full. This is the reason why the student capacity of most schools typically exceeds the student enrollment.
- For example, many advanced placement classes have significantly less than 25 students, not all classrooms are 100% full, therefore more classrooms are required to house a given number of students. The more classrooms, the higher the student capacity since the state reimbursement calculation only recognizes 25 students per classroom.

### **Is there a recommended square footage for a typical classroom?**

- To receive reimbursement, classrooms must be 660 square feet or larger. Any room smaller than 660 SF is considered sub-standard and does not receive reimbursement from the state.
- For a High School, 800 SF is considered an acceptable standard in most states.
- One-third of the classrooms in the existing school are less than 800 SF
- All new classrooms in the planned school are approx. 800 SF

### **What is the size of our existing and planned schools?**

#### **What is the percentage of Educational Space in both?**

- Existing School size = 199,390 SF
- Planned School Size = 214,118 SF (7% increase)
  
- Existing School net educational space = 69,725 SF
- Planned School net educational space = 129,629 SF (86% increase)
  
- The planned school is 7% larger than the existing building but provides 86% more educational space. The efficiency of the planned school provides significantly more educational program opportunity in a building that is approx. 15,000 SF larger.

### **What did the \$22 million Renovation-Only option include?**

- This option included major mechanical, electrical and plumbing system replacement and or repair and architectural upgrades to flooring, ceilings, windows, casework, hardware, limited roofing replacement, limited structural repair and very limited space reconfiguration.
- This cost estimate did not include any space or educational configuration changes.
- This cost estimate did not include any changes to the site plan and did not allow for additional parking or on-site bus loop.

**Did any options include keeping the original 1931 stone structure?**

- The facility study provided two options that would keep the original stone building. Option 1 at an estimated cost of \$37,872,746. This option required moving the football stadium and track to a different location on the same site, at an additional cost of \$3,864,672 for a total cost of \$41,737,418. Option 2 at an estimated cost of \$42,674,841. This option required renovations of the stadium to include a new track and synthetic turf at an additional cost of \$1,932,336 due to this option using the current practice fields and outdoor physical education space, for a total cost of \$44,607,177. Details regarding all 5 options can be found on our webpage under the district info tab, drop down building project, July 8, 2014 Final Study Presentation.

**If the District changes direction and plans for a different project, what are some potential outcomes?**

- **Loss of \$3.6 million of state reimbursement.** The budget proposed by Governor Wolf implements a moratorium on reimbursement for school construction projects starting on or after July 2015. Changing the project now would potentially take enough time to miss the July deadline.
- **Loss of \$2 million state grant.** The currently planned project is designed to be LEED Gold in order to qualify for an Alternative and Clean Energy Program grant. A lesser project will not achieve the gold status and result in a loss of grant eligibility.
- **Loss of current construction cost advantage.** Based on historic construction cost escalation, projects completed in the future will cost more. The average of the past 4 years is 3.1%. Using this average cost escalation, the current project cost would increase by \$1.1 million if bid one year later. (\$36 million X 3.1% = \$1.1 million)

| Construction Cost Increase per year * |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Year                                  | Increase |
| 2014                                  | 2.9%     |
| 2013                                  | 2.4%     |
| 2012                                  | 3.9%     |
| 2011                                  | 3.3%     |
| 2010                                  | -0.7%    |
| 2009                                  | 6.5%     |
| 2008                                  | 4.0%     |
| 2007                                  | 5.8%     |
| 2006                                  | 6.5%     |
| 2005                                  | 12.1%    |
| 2004                                  | 1.9%     |

\* source: RSMMeans

- **Loss of current low interest rates on financing.** According to recent news reports, interest rates are predicted to increase during the latter part of 2015. If construction is delayed, the result will most likely cause an increase in the total financing cost.