

## **Clarence Bee Article – October 2019**

### **\$27.2 Million Capital Construction Project**

The Clarence Board of Education recently adopted a resolution to put a capital improvement project before the community. A public vote is scheduled for December 3, 2019.

The Board of Education established a Facilities Task Force that met from February 2019 through April 2019 to examine capital improvement needs, determine if a capital project was necessary, and recommend a scope for the project. The thirteen members on the Task Force made their recommendations to the Board of Education on May 6, 2019. The main resource used by the Task Force was the Building Condition Survey, a mandatory document revised every five years that lists prioritized elements in every school building that are past their useful life cycle, need repair or replacement, and/or fail to meet current code requirements.

There are three major elements of the proposed capital construction project. The largest element allocates \$23.5 million for general repair and maintenance items in all six school buildings plus the bus garage. All six schools will have work completed on roofs, flooring, paving, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and masonry. Approximately 100,000 square feet of roofing will be replaced as will a large number of air-handler units that sit on the roofs. The bus garage will have the bus parking lot entirely replaced.

The second element of the project is \$2.1 million upgrades to the high school and middle school auditoriums, music rooms, and locker rooms. A new storage area will be constructed at the high school. In addition, a new space for the Family Support Center will be built.

The third and final element of the project involves spending \$1.6 million on security upgrades in all school buildings. The main entrance to each building will be reconfigured with secured vestibules in order to prevent direct access to buildings without passing through a security check.

New York State will provide state aid for approximately 67 percent of the project. In order to qualify for the 67 percent state aid reimbursement, voters in a school district must approve the borrowing of funds for the capital project, which are then paid back over 15 years. If approved, the District will allocate one million dollars of fund balance and \$700,000 from previous approved NYS Excel aid toward the local share. Due to the expiration of existing debt, the estimated annual property tax impact would be neutral. The proposed project would not result in a tax increase as the older debt expires and is replaced by new debt.