

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Flagship Proud?

Flagship Proud is a capital improvement building project to develop and improve Shippensburg Area High School facilities that are frequently used by our students and the public. Considering that the high school is the flagship of the district, we want to build upon the tremendous pride our community displays in supporting our students' extracurricular activities.

The School Board recently approved \$2.45 million dollars for the three projects: high school stadium, auditorium and entry improvements. Flagship Proud is attempting to enhance these resources with fundraising. With that goal, parents and community members are developing methods to raise funds and utilize in kind contributions to add to the impact of tax dollars.

Will Flagship Proud raise my taxes?

The simple answer is No. The project actually intends to supplement the impact of tax dollars with voluntary contributions to improve the facilities more.

We understand the Board tapped the Fund Balance for the \$2.45 million dollars. Where does Fund Balance come from?

Over years of conservative budgeting and fiscally efficient practices, a fund balance is generated. The Board and district approves a budget anticipating expenses for the fiscal year. The district staff works to live within the budget the Board approves.

In the budget process, the Board anticipates revenues and the receipt of taxes and state resources may exceed anticipated amounts. Additionally, the district staff attempt to use resources as efficiently as possible. At the end of the fiscal year if unused funds exist, they collect into a fund balance.

How is Fund Balance used?

Fund Balance is used for large or unexpected one-time expenses. Examples from 2017-18 include \$2.1 million dollars for roofs at the high school, middle school, and central office. \$200,000 for the purchase of elementary math textbooks; and \$100,000 to purchase Chromebooks. Fund Balance also helps the district to meet unpredictable circumstances around pension costs and unforeseen acts of nature, such as, lightning strikes causing damage to infrastructure.

Unfortunately, revenues supporting district programs can also be impacted by government delays in funding, such as when the state government cannot approve state funding for schools. When this occurs, Fund Balance can help the district avoid borrowing money to meet expenses.

Would there be a better use of these funds?

Throughout the deliberative process, the Board considered the relative merits of the use of resources. The district has employed E.I. Architects to conduct a long-range study of facilities to help prioritize other capital projects, such as what may be needed at other school buildings. Given the student population and facility needs, the district anticipates recommendations from the long-range facility study that far exceed what is available in the Fund Balance. Consequently, for most other capital improvements, the Board will need to consider other strategies to afford the improvement of buildings. This may include debt restructuring or a capital improvement bond.

Who pays for the maintenance of the new stadium?

The stadium will be maintained by district staff and costs will be afforded through the district budget.

How important is school pride vs. good education resources?

Clearly, whenever considering the expenditure of a scarce resource – dollars for education – the Board needs to consider all needs. Annually, the Board approves a budget to afford salaries, books and other expenses that exceeds \$48 million dollars. Pride in schools and Pride in Community go hand in hand. Pride in schools helps with school safety and a sense of efficacy in the school community. These considerations are more a function of “and” and less about division. We need good education resources and school pride.

How will information be communicated?

The district has a place on the website where updates will be provided. Additionally, the district will provide information in email and social media posts.

Why build a new stadium?

When the Board approved funds for a stadium at the high school, it culminated a multi-year process and was the result of different types of input and careful deliberation. Essentially, the Board decided that having a stadium with a turf field on the campus would be a better long-term solution for the district.

What about parking – will there be enough space?

On the grounds, parking will be enhanced through Volvo’s offer to permit use of their lots for overflow.

Why does the entry way need renovated?

Most of the efforts in the front of the school where the majority of students and visitors enter during the school day is to make it more welcoming and distinctive. Currently, a visitor can be confused without clear signage. Security concerns are being addressed with landscaping as well.

Attention will also be paid to the entryway in the rear of the school where people enter for sporting and auditorium events.

What is the current status of the new stadium?

In November, the Board approved hiring the engineering firm that will develop the construction plans, obtain necessary permits, and coordinate the construction elements of the project.