

Manasquan High School/Borough of Manasquan Shared Services Agreement

FAQ

The Manasquan Public School District recently presented its proposal to enter into a shared services agreement with the Borough of Manasquan to upgrade its facilities. The agreement calls for the Borough to issue a bond in the amount of approximately \$4,725,000 to offset costs associated with building a new, 160-foot x 200-foot athletic facility that includes a turf field, wrestling area, weight training and conditioning area, restrooms and storage. The full proposal is available [here](#). This document seeks to address some of the frequently asked questions that were raised during one of our public presentations and discussions or meetings with community members.

1. The presentation states that the project is budget neutral, how is this possible?

The school district has identified and began a number of upgrades to the facilities to create a safe and healthy environment for our students to learn in. Those upgrades include the lower turf field, the renovations of the gymnasium, the creation of a dedicated wrestling facility, the creation of an indoor practice space for field-based sports, and upgrades to the locker rooms.

- Repayment Turf Field: \$146,000
 - Repayment Gymnasium: \$97,963
- } **Less than 1% of the operating budget (.87% in 21-22)**

The district already carries an approximately \$250,000 annual debt payment in its budget to re-pay the gymnasium renovations and lower turf field renovations. The proceeds from the bond issuance would buy out that currently existing debt and simply extend the repayment period from 5 to 25 years. The same annualized payment of \$250,000 that is already budgeted will remain the same, therefore, there will be no impact to the taxpayer.

2. I understand the residents of Manasquan's taxes will remain unchanged, but how will this affect the tuition of sending district students?

By statute, sending districts only pay the interest portion of debt for capital improvements. For the same reason the local taxpayers are not impacted, neither will the sending district tuition rates. Sending district tuition already includes the interest portion of the existing debt for the gym renovations and lower turf field. These payments will just be absorbed into the bond repayment when that short-term debt is called.

3. The project sounds great, but why doesn't the district pass a referendum and issue its own bond?

When the school district issues additional debt through the referendum, it is repaid through debt service which is separate and above the normal operating portion of your property taxes. The district is bound to a 2% increase on its operating budget. In other words, if a referendum were passed, taxes would increase by 2% of the general budget plus the \$250,000 repayment. This project was developed to exist within that general operating budget and subsequently to not add any additional burden to the taxpayers.

4. Why does the district need to partner with the town? Can't it just enter into a 25-year lease purchase for the upgrades and pay back the debt from the general fund as proposed?

By law, school districts are not permitted to enter into lease-financing agreement longer than 5-years. By partnering with the town under the Uniform Shared Services Agreement and Consolidation Act (N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1), the district can increase that repayment period up to the useful life of the capital purchase. Additionally, terms can be established that are agreeable to both parties with regards to access to the facility so that district athletics as well as town recreation and activities can benefit.

5. Won't the additional costs associated with staffing the building increase my taxes?

The District already employs a full-time strength and conditioning coach who will be re-locating to the new facility. During after hours activities and practices,

coaches will be responsible for supervision of the facility. There will be no additional staff necessary to operate the building.

6. How does a building this size remain sanitized, especially during this time of COVID awareness?

The plans for the building call for the AirPHX system to be installed at multiple points throughout the structure. The cleaning agents this technology produces can kill microbes in the air and on surfaces in as little as 60 minutes, all with the flip of a switch. This process also eliminates odors from bacteria as well as outgassing from mats and rubber equipment. The units economically treat 100,000-150,000 cubic feet with enough installed to manage the whole building.

7. Will there be time for community members to utilize the facility?

As with all school facilities, the fieldhouse will be prioritized by the school, then the Borough of Manasquan (including recreation). The district already works closely with the Borough to coordinate facility usage on campus and will continue to do so. The District has also implemented new scheduling software, Facilitron, to efficiently schedule facility use with minimal wasted time.

8. Is this a need or a want for the District?

The District's top priority is keeping our students and staff safe while on campus or participating in school events. We have identified this project as an urgent need for the following reasons:

- Currently, many of our teams' practices and games are displaced to the Sea Girt Army Camp which requires they walk over a mile along busy streets like Route 71.
- Our wrestling program currently practices in the cafeteria, and our weightlifting room is located in a converted maintenance garage behind the elementary school.
- This facility will provide a safe and sanitary environment for our athletes to train that is on campus.
- The fieldhouse will also provide a dry and appropriate indoor space for the band, cheerleaders and other groups to practice during inclement weather.

- This facility creates a large meeting space that the school district can utilize for assemblies and events, and the town can utilize for large gatherings and concerts.

Throughout the planning of this project, we have solicited input from many members of the community and will continue to do so. This FAQ attempts to answer some of the more common questions that have arisen during those conversations, but we are always open for additional feedback. If you have any questions or comments on the project that you would like addressed, please e-mail us at sharedservices@manasquan.k12.nj.us .