

FROM THE DESK OF PHYLLIS ALPAUGH

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER



REFERENDUM UPDATE WHAT'S NEXT?

I am happy to report that on September 24th, the voters in the Borough approved our proposed referendum. While the total cost of the proposed improvements is \$12.5 million, the project will cost taxpayers approximately \$8.3 million after receiving about \$4.2 in state aid for infrastructure projects. When all votes, including the mail-ins were counted, the YES votes totaled 649 and the NO votes tallied 442, which is approximately 25% of registered voters. Many thanks to everyone who came out to support the district and secure the Safety, Security, and Functionality of our buildings for both students and staff.

After an unsuccessful try last school year, the Board and myself met with citizens and based upon your feedback scaled down the proposal from \$20 million to \$12 million to include essential and much needed infrastructure repairs in both Lincoln Elementary and Thomas Jefferson Middle School. Many if not all of the items included in this revised referendum such as boilers, roofs, fire escapes, bathrooms, etc. target facilities in need of desperate replacement, repair and/or upgrades that we determined could not be covered through our regular working budget. In addition, the referendum will now help finance a three-classroom addition to Lincoln that will eliminate the existing temporary trailers that are over a dozen years old. This proposed addition will also provide for a new main office in the front of the building and a safety vestibule to better monitor visitors to the building in Lincoln as well as Thomas Jefferson.

What's the next step? Now that the referendum has passed, the real work begins. The first step this December is to issue the bonds to acquire the \$12.5 million to fund the projects. Our architects of record Parette-Somjen of Denville will complete necessary paperwork from the state as well concentrate on developing the bid specifications with the hope of going out to BID in the spring. They also will be developing a timeline and scope of work for all construction and renovation projects. If all goes well, contracts will then be awarded with targeted projects started by the summer of 2020. To provide additional oversight for the entire endeavor, the Board of Education looks to form an Ad Hoc Committee to ensure timelines are met and all monies are responsibly spent. Also, the Board will provide monthly updates regarding the progress of all projects at its monthly meetings as well as post relevant information on the district website.