

PROGRESS

SPECIAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

We're not just building schools. **We're building community.**

Capital Levy 2012: A closer look at the need, the cost and the goals

Federal Way Public Schools has placed a six-year \$60 million capital levy measure on the November 6 ballot. This special edition of the Progress Report to the Community covers the projects on this important measure, and gives more information about the cost.

Our schools play a vital daily role in the lives of our community members, even when they don't have children in them. Neighbors enjoy the school playgrounds. Community groups including youth organizations, local churches and local sports organizations, regularly use school facilities. And modern, secure facilities enhance property values throughout the neighborhood. The entire community can take pride in its schools.

This levy will provide funding for three important district-wide building projects.

1 Replace Federal Way High School with a new building that meets the needs of students and the community.

Federal Way High School has a hallowed place in our community's history. But the school is in desperate need of replacement. Studies show it's less expensive to build a new building than to repair the old, worn out school. *Read more on pages 2 and 3.*

2 Update security cameras to improve security district-wide.

Schools in our district currently have a wide range of security equipment. With funding from the capital levy, the district will make sure all schools have similarly high quality security equipment. It's not only a student and staff safety benefit—it will help keep our communities more secure, too. *Read more on page 3.*

3 Upgrade playgrounds at 19 schools to encourage active play.

Passage of the capital levy on the November 6, 2012 ballot will result in the replacement of playground equipment at 19 elementary schools. Like buildings, playground equipment has a lifespan. Many of our elementary schools have out-of-date play equipment. Some equipment is broken and can't be used. Some doesn't meet current safety standards without daily maintenance. *Read more on page 4.*

The entrance to the original section of Federal Way High School in the 1950s (far right) and today



The need is real and urgent

Projects on this levy affect the safety of students, staff and campus visitors, as well as our ability to prepare students for life after high school.

These are the highest priority capital improvements needed. Our other aging schools are on a prioritized list for construction or improvement. We can't address those projects until all Phase 1 projects are done. Federal Way High School is the only remaining unfinished project from Phase 1.

It will cost about 60 cents a day for the average homeowner. If approved, this six-year capital levy will cost a homeowner approximately \$92 per year for each \$100,000 in home value. The estimated cost for a single-family home appraised at \$240,000 will be 60 cents a day.



Listening and involving our communities

When you set out to rebuild a school that has as much significance as Federal Way High School has for this community, it's important to listen, and we've worked hard to do just that.

Last year, architects and district facilities staff spent over 16 hours in Federal Way High School's library, listening to staff and students tell them all about the school—the good, the bad and the ugly.

Last spring, the district sponsored a forum to talk about rebuilding Federal Way High School and followed up with another on September 27.

In July and August, SRG, the architects in charge of developing initial options for a new FWHS building, held planning charrettes. These daylong work sessions were open to the public and were designed to gather information and encourage participation in brainstorming solutions. Charrettes are a method of organizing information and thoughts into multiple scenarios or rough concepts.

The outcomes of the charrette process begin to define the problem to be solved, identify opportunities and constraints, and start framing future possibilities for, in this case, Federal Way High School.

This is just a beginning. Once the capital levy passes, architects will be engaged to create the plans—about a year-and-a-half, \$4 million process through the completion of full schematics. That work will build on the information and concepts gathered during the summer planning sessions.

2012 Capital Levy

Read more at www.fwps.org/info/levy

Progress Report to the Community is published quarterly by Federal Way Public Schools. Write us at 33330 8th Avenue South, Federal Way, WA 98003; visit our web site at www.fwps.org; or call 253-945-2266.

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I like the package that the district has put together. I think they've done their homework. They have provided us an opportunity to have \$110 million dollars worth of work funded through a \$60 million levy. That's phenomenal and frankly unheard of in this time and age... ultimately, the reason we do it now is that the construction industry is prime. If we wait 3-5 years, we'll pay 20 to 30 percent increased construction costs.

Kelley Tanner, Community Member, Educational Planner and Citizens for Federal Way Schools Vice-President

Federal Way High School—a community grew up here

When Federal Highway US 99 (Pacific Highway) opened in 1928, it stretched from the border of Canada south to Mexico. For the greater Federal Way community, it meant better access to the rest of the Puget Sound area, and a reasonable commute in the ensuing decades to jobs at growing companies like Boeing. In the 1920s though, pioneer-era communities were still served by small, individual school districts. There was a statewide movement afoot to encourage these micro districts to pool resources and the responsibilities of educating their youngsters.

Federal Way School District #210 officially opened on May 22, 1929, consolidating five of those small districts. It served students within what is now the City of Federal Way, as well as parts of Des Moines, Auburn, Kent and unincorporated King County. That fall, the district opened what was known simply as “the Federal Way School” to serve 142 students in grades 1–8. District administrative offices were in the same building.

A dozen major remodels follow

The population continued to grow and the community swiftly outgrew the original school building. In 1938, Federal Way High School opened next to the original building, and in 1944, the two buildings were connected with the new section devoted to junior high students. The building then served over 1,000 students.

By 1963, state experts had advised the district that the original elementary school building was structurally unsound, and not cost-effective to remodel. It was torn down, making way for a new section of the building that now houses the theater and classrooms.

Remodels and additions continued through the following 40 years. In 2002, four classrooms and a lunchroom remodel were done to accommodate the 9th graders that previously would have attended junior high in the district. The expanded lunchroom also resulted in the attractive curved exterior. This was the 12th major remodel or addition since the construction of the original building in 1929.

As the community grew, it adopted the school district's name—Federal Way. Years later, Federal Way formally incorporated as a city, cementing the ties to the school district and the district's first school.

Source: The Historical Society of Federal Way, Federal Way Area School History by Dick Caster, www.federalwayhistory.org/powercms/files/FederalWayAreaSchoolHistoryMay282008.pdf

“We’ve been remodeling FWHS for about 50 years. And it looks like it. It is an odd assortment of old additions. It’s really not a functional campus for a 21st century high school. It’s time for a new Federal Way High School.”

Tom Vander Ark
National educational expert and former FWPS superintendent



Hallways in Federal Way High School are crowded and dark. The worst of them may be the infamous ‘T’, where four separate hallways come together at the south side of the school. During class passing times, students have five minutes to negotiate up to a quarter-mile of hallways to go from one class to another. At the ‘T’—and in locations throughout the school—foot traffic jams form daily as over 1,500 students jostle their way through.

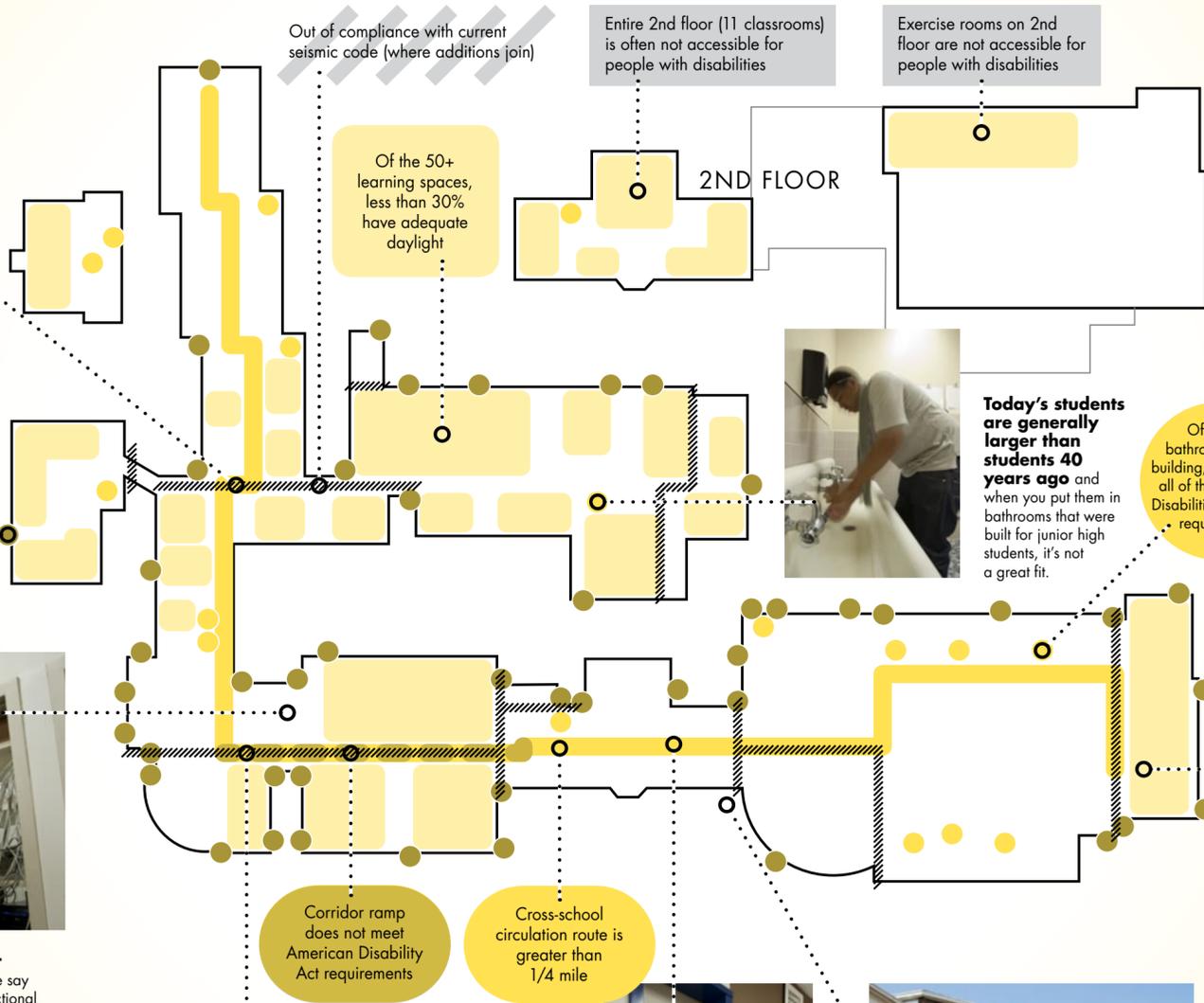
48 entry/exit points present a security challenge



It’s nearly impossible to install wiring for current technology. What do we mean when we say that the building can’t be easily reconfigured for instructional changes? Here’s one example: Throughout Federal Way High School, brick walls restrict wiring for modern technology. Multiple additions have resulted in many interior walls that were once exterior walls. These thick, solid walls add dollar signs to virtually every effort to incorporate modern technology in the school. This room has four brick walls, including one that’s a former exterior wall. When the school decided to convert it to a digital video lab, computers were positioned along the outer perimeter of the room and cables were zip-tied and bundled neatly along the walls. Since then, reconfiguring the room to meet changing instructional needs has proven to be difficult and messy. In new schools, conduit or ‘trays’ are installed along the ceilings. When new wiring/cabling is needed, it is simple and inexpensive to do. Wireless will also work well in a newer building. A separate but related issue is that district cell phones also don’t work well in the cavernous brick school—creating potential safety issues when they need to call emergency personnel.

Rebuild FWHS

Much of what’s wrong with this school is a result of its design through multiple additions. It can be fixed only through new construction.



Standing near the southeast entrance to the school looking north, it’s like looking through a time machine. One section was added in the 60s on the site of the original elementary building. The next was added in the 1940s, and the next in the late 1930s. Beyond that is the cafeteria, enlarged in 2002, and the gym that dates back to the early 1950s.



A significant issue with Federal Way High School is **access to second-floor classrooms for students with disabilities.** Negotiating a small wheel chair into the one small elevator is a tight squeeze for a student. When students need an adult attendant, getting both in the elevator along with the required equipment is especially hard.



Twelve major remodels and additions over 80+ years have created a lot of transition areas in the building. Here, the oldest section still standing, built in 1938, abuts the 2002 addition that expanded the cafeteria. These locations are among the most problematic parts of the school.

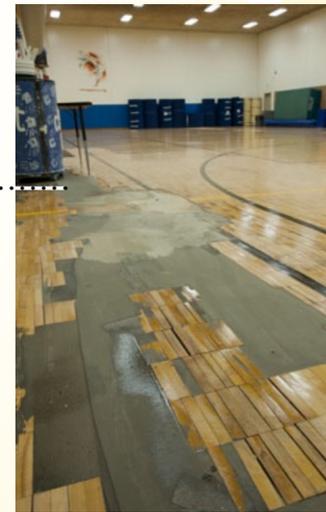
“I could tell you about how the ceiling leaks every time it rains and how the heater broke and pipes burst and it’s in terrible condition... but I’d much rather tell you about the amazing things that go on at Federal Way High School. Not only that, we have a family at FWHS, we deserve and need a school that is conducive to a better learning environment, a building that is modern and safe.”

Emily Johnson
FWHS Junior



Today’s students are generally larger than students 40 years ago and when you put them in bathrooms that were built for junior high students, it’s not a great fit.

Of the 20 bathrooms in the building, only 3 meet all of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements



Here in the small gym, the wood floor is being relentlessly chipped away after every leak. Heavy gymnastics mats often cover the **deteriorating floor**, but they can’t cover the blistered and peeling paint on the wall where water frequently washes down.

2 Update security

Secure schools benefit the entire neighborhood

The capital levy will update and improve security district-wide. Schools in the Federal Way school district currently have a wide range of security camera equipment. Some schools have too few cameras. Others have none at all. Some have old, very low resolution cameras that make it difficult to identify people in the video.

This patchwork security system is the result of separate funding sources over the years. Many schools have paid for security equipment out of their school budgets, with some help from grant programs. Our newer schools are generally better-equipped with security cameras because the 1999 and 2007 bond measures paid for camera equipment.

Installing comparable security cameras at all sites, and sufficient numbers of them, will improve safety for our students, staff and campus visitors throughout the district. Security cameras in the schools also promote security and deter crime throughout the neighborhoods.

With funding from the capital levy, the district will make sure all schools have similar security capabilities.

What we heard

Here are some **common themes** we heard from students, staff and community members at the FWHS charrette in August.

The new Federal Way High School should be:

flexible
versatile **SAFE**
warm **welcoming**
inviting **OPEN**
inspire students
INSPIRE
PRIDE in
history &
traditions
comfortable
adaptable
CONNECTED

3

Upgrade playgrounds

Passage of the capital levy on the November 6, 2012 ballot will result in the replacement or refurbishing of playgrounds at 19 elementary schools across the district.

Playgrounds enhance the whole community

Like buildings, playground equipment has a lifespan. Play structures need upkeep and occasional replacement to ensure that they are safe and meet current industry guidelines. Many of our elementary schools have out-of-date play equipment. Some equipment is broken and can't be used. Some doesn't meet current safety standards without daily maintenance.

Updating our playgrounds will encourage students to be active at recess. It will ensure that our playgrounds meet safety standards and are accessible to all students.

Active play provides many health benefits. Plus, studies show that children who actively play learn better, are more alert and behave better in the classroom. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, free, unstructured play is essential for keeping children healthy, and for helping them reach important social, emotional, and cognitive developmental milestones. Unstructured play also helps kids manage stress and become resilient, leading to better performance in the classroom.

The November 6 capital levy would replace or upgrade playground equipment at 19 elementary schools that need it.

The whole community will benefit from new and improved school playgrounds, which are open for all community members to use. And schools with modern facilities enhance home values throughout the neighborhood.

New playgrounds like the one at Lakeland Elementary (above) feature equipment that stimulates kids' creativity and imagination, and provides plenty of options for safe, active play. Older playgrounds, such as Lake Dolloff Elementary's (right) provide more limited choices.



	Safety Priority	Replacement Needed	Resurfacing Needed	Upgrade Needed
Adelaide	5			YES
Brigadoon	5			YES
Camelot	2	YES	YES	
Enterprise	5			YES
Green Gables	5			YES
Lake Dolloff	1	YES	YES	
Lake Grove	5			YES
Lakeland	5	Playground replaced during school rebuild		
Mark Twain	2	YES	YES	
Meredith Hill	5			YES
Mirror Lake	5			YES
Nautilus	4	YES	YES	
Olympic View	2	YES	YES	
Panther Lake	5	Playground refurbished during school rebuild		
Rainier View	4	YES	YES	
Sherwood Forest	4	YES	YES	
Silver Lake	1	YES	YES	
Star Lake	5			YES
Sunnycrest	5	Playground replaced during school rebuild		
Twin Lakes	5			YES
Valhalla	5	Playground refurbished during school rebuild		
Wildwood	3	YES	YES	
Woodmont	4			YES

2012 Capital Levy

The cost? Less than a cup of coffee a day

Have you seen the television commercial about carpeting your whole house for what it usually costs to do a single room? You could apply the same idea to the district's capital levy on the November 6 ballot.

Passage of the levy will allow the district to do \$110 million worth of facility improvements while collecting just \$60 million from local voters.

There are several reasons. The down economy allowed us to build schools on the last bond measure for less than anticipated. We also received more state match funding than anticipated. Finally, approval of this capital levy and the resulting work will trigger almost \$20 million more in state match funding. Altogether, \$50 million will come from current savings and expected state funding.

Saving an estimated \$29 million in interest

School districts generally run capital bond measures for new construction. Bond measures are similar to home mortgages in that taxpayers pay interest for the use of the money generated by bond sales.

By approving a capital levy instead, taxpayers will save an estimated \$29 million in interest. The school will be completely paid for by the time it's built in around six years.

The levy will cost about 60 cents a day for the average home

If approved, this six-year capital levy will cost a homeowner approximately 92 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value, or \$92 per year for each \$100,000 in home value. The estimated cost for a single-family home valued at \$240,000 will be 60 cents a day.

What does 92 cents per \$1,000 valuation cost you?

Assessed home value (county)	Daily cost	Monthly cost	Yearly cost
100,000	25 cents	\$ 7.60	\$ 91.25
150,000	37.5 cents	\$11.40	\$136.88
200,000	50 cents	\$15.21	\$182.50
250,000	62.5 cents	\$19.01	\$228.13
300,000	75 cents	\$22.81	\$273.75
\$240,000 (average FW home valuation)	60 cents	\$18.25	\$219.00

More about the cost

Your contribution to the levy is based on King County's assessed valuation of your home or business. An estimated tax rate is required to help voters understand the impact on individual homeowners and businesses. When voters approve a levy, they authorize the school district to collect a fixed dollar amount, not a percentage of assessed property value. Your individual contribution to the levy will stay about the same, whether your home's value goes up or down.

Why is Federal Way High School a high priority now?

In 2005, the district brought in outside experts to look at the physical condition of all buildings in the district. From their recommendations, a long-term building plan was established. It categorized our schools in four phases, with phase 1 projects being the most urgent, high priority projects in the district. Federal Way High School was squarely on the phase 1 list.

The district first sought funding to build a new FWHS with a capital bond measure that was defeated in 2006. The bond measure was re-run without FWHS and eventually passed. Most of the other projects in phase 1 were rebuilt or upgraded with funding from that bond measure.

Federal Way High School must be addressed next. The need is real and urgent.

Long-Term (40+ Year) Building Modernization/Replacement Plan

PHASE 1			PHASE 2		PHASE 3		PHASE 4	
Original construction date	Building	Rebuild complete	Original construction date	Building	Original construction date	Building	Original construction date	Building
High Schools			High Schools		High Schools		High Schools	
1938	Federal Way High School	Pending voter approval*	1976	Decatur High School	1968	Thomas Jefferson High	2003	Todd Beamer High School
							2003	Truman Campus
Middle Schools			Middle Schools		Middle Schools		Middle Schools	
1960	Lakota Middle School	2010	1963	Totem Middle School	1971	Illahee Middle School	1994	Saghalie Middle School
			Portables	TAF Academy	1970	Kilo Middle School	2005	Sequoyah
					1968	Sacajawea Middle School	2005	Federal Way Public Academy
Elementary Schools			Elementary Schools		Elementary Schools		Elementary Schools	
1952	Lakeland	2011	1970	Brigadoon	1964	Adelaide	1994	Enterprise
1960	Panther Lake	2009	1965	Lake Grove	1965	Camelot	1993	Green Gables
1965	Sunnycrest	2011	1956	Mirror Lake	1970	Lake Dolloff	1995	Meredith Hill
1967	Valhalla	2009	1962	Olympic View	1968	Mark Twain	1992	Rainier View
			1958	Star Lake	1968	Nautilus	1991	Sherwood Forest
			1960	Woodmont	1968	Twin Lakes	1990	Silver Lake
					1967	Wildwood		