Smith-Green Community Schools 2012 Building Project Plan

Plan Highlights:
- Tax rate kept at 2011 level or below starting in 2013
- No new taxes proposed to complete a $6 million needs-based project for students
- Interest rates are historically low: borrowing for the full project now will save money in the long run
- New elementary cafeteria/multi-purpose space available for students
- Safe and secure entries for both elementary and junior-senior high schools
- ADA compliant stage and seating areas for individuals within auditorium
- Replacement of antiquated heating/cooling units throughout both buildings
- Energy saving light fixtures
- High efficiency water heaters
- Energy efficient windows

Background
Collectively, we said in our 2010-2015 district-wide strategic plan that a building project plan would be identified and presented to the school community to address facility needs of the district. To address this goal area, a community/staff survey was conducted late November 2011. Students, community members, parents, and staff named expanded cafeteria space for the elementary and building safety/security enhancements as top priorities along with replacing mechanical equipment that is energy efficient and cost effective. Some HVAC mechanical equipment is vintage 1973.

The Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of community representatives, parents, teachers, and building administration sifted through all expressed items from the survey to develop a comprehensive list of district needs. Collectively, these key areas represent NEED items that are addressed in the scope of the full project.

The Board of School Trustees heard numerous presentations about the facility upgrade plan through public work sessions; and in fact, heard from several former Board and community members they prefer to move forward with a full project instead of dividing the projects into multiple small plans under $2 million in effort to save money in the long run. The Board has capped the project cost at $6 million to address all needs through a bond issue and use of ongoing capital projects funds generated through property taxes.

Cafeteria/Multi-Purpose Room for the Elementary Level
Having one serving area for over 1,200 students daily is limiting. Our Food Service department does a fantastic job of preparing and serving meals efficiently for our students. However, the lunch schedule needed to accommodate all students, including our full-day kindergarten students this year for the first time, dictates the instructional day for all students. Lunch periods run from 10:45 AM until 1:45 PM daily. This schedule is too early for some and too late for others. We need to double the serving line capacity and seating space for lunches to allow both elementary and junior-senior high school students to be served lunch at the same time and at a time closer to the noon hour. Educational and instructional needs should drive the daily school schedule – not a limited cafeteria space and availability.

Constructing a new cafeteria for the elementary will provide needed space for large group instruction for entire grade levels at one time. Students are learning to work collaboratively and in group settings through project-based learning as a learning strategy. Churubusco Elementary School does not have space that allows entire grade levels to meet comfortably together for whole group instruction for the entire grade. Having space available that could double as a large instructional space would allow teachers flexibility in instruction
throughout the day instead of cramping all students into two classrooms or using the commons area subject to passing periods at the junior-senior high level when desk space or technology is needed to complete lessons. This multi-purpose room will also provide valuable space at the end of the day for enrichment groups. During the day, the space can also be used by special education itinerant staff as they work with students needing physical or occupational therapy activity.

New Classrooms Needed
All available classrooms were used this year to accommodate full-day kindergarten classrooms. This caused our two special education classrooms to be consolidated into one classroom and our special needs pre-school program to move into the junior-senior high school. Two new classrooms are needed to allow our special education students space for programming unique to their individual needs. Pre-school belongs back within the walls of the elementary. The new classroom space proposed will move the three classrooms taken for the cafeteria/multi-purpose room to the new classroom area along with two classrooms that will allow for special education and pre-school programming needed at the elementary level.

Energy Rebates/Green Savings
It is estimated for our proposed projects the school district could expect to save on average about 25% on the new replacement of HVAC, water heaters, and lighting. Energy rebates will be pursued once the energy efficient items are decided.

Demographics – looking ahead
Demographic studies convened by the Board of School Trustees in past years project our enrollment to increase somewhat. In fact, the most recent demographic study from 2006 projects our enrollment to increase slightly by 37 students or 2.4% during 2010-11 to 2015-16. (McKibben Demographics, 2006)

Financial Graphs/Impact
Attached is the estimated tax rate impact graph based on a 17 year level repayment.

Project Cost
Based on a $6 million project, the amount is reduced by bond-related soft costs (capitalized interest, bond and local counsel, trustee, rating, printing, underwriting, and miscellaneous fees) of $245,340. This remaining amount of $5,754,660 is further reduced by architectural fees and 6% for construction contingency.

Listing of Projects within Facility Upgrade Plan/Timeline
Attached is a visual representation of the facility upgrade plan. Numbered items match descriptions below.

Based on the timeline for implementing the project, without referendum triggered for the project, actual construction could begin as early as the end of May 2012. As many of the projects would be completed when students are not present, most work would be completed during the summers of 2012 and 2013.

A petition for application of referendum process being filed could result in the project being placed on the general election ballot in November 2012. This would subject the project to approval by a majority of registered voters within the district. The Board of School Trustees would examine its options of moving forward with a general election ballot or dropping the project for one year as statute requires if this situation occurs. As the projects identified are NEEDS, the Board and staff are confident our community will view the project positively so projects can move forward for benefitting our students.
The attached facility upgrade plan includes items identified by number. These numbers are listed below. The sequence of the numbers is not in true numeric order due to the fact several projects were dropped from the original list when determined those could be funded through capital projects funds or were not true NEEDS for students and the district at this time.

1. New cafeteria/multi-purpose room space. This space would be set up for two serving lines for elementary students. The space includes a new warming kitchen area and serving lines. Tables would accommodate 240 or more students allowing two elementary grades to eat lunch at the same time. Lunch time would not be a “rush in, rush out” for students. Space could also be divided into two large group areas for grade-level activities.

2. Relocation of junior-senior high school administrative offices to the front on the entry. Existing location of offices would be transformed into teacher-student meeting space. Redesigning the entry near the secondary commons space requires visitors to be met and greeted prior to secure entry into the building. Replacing the rusted canopy with an upgraded canopy will keep weather elements away from bus riders entering into the building.

3. Redesign of elementary school entrance to create a vestibule where visitors are seen and buzzed into the building creating safe access for students and parents into the commons area. Replacing the rusted canopy on the building entry with a much-needed upgrade will match the inviting entry of the elementary building.

4. Replace ceiling tiles over 54,375 square feet of the junior-senior high school. The grid and ceiling tiles are not made anymore – we have to have cut custom tiles to replace tiles as needed. This adds several dollars to the expense of just replacing one tile when needed. Ceiling tiles would be replaced with item #23 (below) when HVAC units in the ceiling are replaced.

5. Locker rooms upgraded and made safe for students. Replace ill-sized, rusted, broken lockers and shower room and fixtures. Address ventilation issues in locker rooms, new paint and lights.

6. Renovate elementary bathrooms with new fixtures for student use. We currently have sufficient ADA-compliant restroom facilities available throughout both buildings. This project would be to replace sinks and stools along with ceilings and lighting.

8. Renovation in the auditorium will include installing a lift allowing individuals in wheel chairs access to the stage. Select seats would be replaced for wheel-chair designed space. Currently, individuals in wheel chairs have no access to the stage area.

9. Security cameras would be installed to focus on parking lots, building entrances, and athletic fields to the north of the building. This is aimed to reduce acts of vandalism that have occurred in these areas over time.

11. Existing pole lights and circuits would be updated with new, energy-efficient wall pack lighting that ties into existing circuits.

12. Purchase and installation of an emergency back-up generator that would supply circuits for the building. Currently, we do not have availability of a generator to perform this function. In the event of emergency or disaster, this would allow power to be supplied to necessary circuits to maintain limited operations of the building.

13. Replace 16 out-of-date HVAC units in the elementary building with energy efficient vertical units within classrooms. These new units would reuse outside air intake from the roof and relief air to above ceiling corridors. New controls and piping for hot water and chilled water in the tunnel below the classroom space will be installed. Substantial energy savings would result from this project.

14. Replace the second floor HVAC units with operational cost savings units. New duct work and installation along with chilled water piping/insulation would be used to save the district resources over time.

16. Water heater high efficiency replacements would be installed at locations when instantaneous type water heaters are needed to reduce the energy loss at the storage tank during unoccupied hours. Other similar water heaters would be replaced using capital projects funds instead of facility project funds to reduce the over-all cost of the project.
17. Retrofit rooms 100, 101, 102, and 103 in the junior-senior high to chilled water cooling. Replacing units with floor mounted units with TemSpec type units located on the wall and ducted to the space would allow better control and efficiency of the space temperature in the classrooms.

18. Damaged frames and windows replaced in the elementary commons and courtyard area. The new type of windows available today are very efficient in keeping heat and cool inside when needed based on outside temperatures.

20. Replace up to 30 heating systems valves and reinsulate pipes in the boiler room. This cost-savings measure will pay dividends in reducing utility cost immediately.

23. Replace 22 HVAC units in the junior-senior high school as a total project resulting in a cost-savings instead of doing work over multiple years. Most of these units date from 1973. Current units are located above the ceiling of the corridor. Access is very difficult and units have multiple controls that must be adjusted individually. High efficiency units would slash utility costs and provide a quiet, comfortable learning environment for students. Indoor air quality would be elevated to new indoor standards from the Indiana Department of Health.

27. Move existing special needs playground to area near intensive needs classroom at the elementary school. Remove out-of-date swings and replace with fixtures in locations suggested by Indiana Insurance as meeting current playground necessities. Replace pea gravel as funds allow throughout playground.

**Tax rate drop in 2012 – coming back up in 2013 to 2011 level only – not increasing from 2011**

The 2012 debt service tax rate will drop due to the transition period between debt payments. Since the current debt payments for the roof project will be paid off this year, property tax owners will experience a decrease in the debt service taxes for 2012. For 2013, the plan is to not raise the debt service tax rate and to keep it at or below the rate in 2011. By spreading out the payments over several years, it allows us to keep the debt service tax rate the same. The debt payments for the proposed new project will be paid over approximately 17 years while locking in low interest rates.

**Area tax rates – comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area District</th>
<th>Debt Service</th>
<th>Pension Debt</th>
<th>Capital Projects</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
<th>Bus Replacement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Noble Community Schools</td>
<td>0.3086</td>
<td>0.0362</td>
<td>0.2607</td>
<td>0.2138</td>
<td>0.0528</td>
<td>0.8721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitley County Consolidated Schools</td>
<td>0.3783</td>
<td>0.0554</td>
<td>0.3012</td>
<td>0.1400</td>
<td>0.0286</td>
<td>0.9035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith Green Community Schools*</td>
<td>0.3196</td>
<td>0.0930</td>
<td>0.3095</td>
<td>0.1527</td>
<td>0.0758</td>
<td>0.9505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Noble Community Schools</td>
<td>0.4946</td>
<td>0.0247</td>
<td>0.2832</td>
<td>0.1508</td>
<td>0.0410</td>
<td>0.9943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrett-Keyser-Butler Community Schools</td>
<td>0.4274</td>
<td>0.0698</td>
<td>0.2996</td>
<td>0.1772</td>
<td>0.0810</td>
<td>1.0250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Noble Community Schools</td>
<td>0.4280</td>
<td>0.0866</td>
<td>0.3559</td>
<td>0.3977</td>
<td>0.0858</td>
<td>1.3320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitko Community Schools</td>
<td>0.6599</td>
<td>0.1070</td>
<td>0.3739</td>
<td>0.1852</td>
<td>0.0457</td>
<td>1.3716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Allen County Schools</td>
<td>1.0145</td>
<td>0.0164</td>
<td>0.2788</td>
<td>0.1586</td>
<td>0.0360</td>
<td>1.5043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cross county schools – tax rates are the average combined 2 county rates.