



# BUTLER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## The BULLDOGS

Butler Board of Education

Field Upgrade Referendum September 2007

### A NOTE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



*Deteriorating bleachers were removed from Hempsted field in June.*

On September 25, 2007, the board of education will ask Butler residents to vote on a field upgrade referendum. The proposal calls for the installation of bleachers and a new multi-purpose turf field as well as lighting, a six-lane, all-weather track, and concession stand with rest room facilities at the Memorial Field location.

Bleachers at Hempsted Field were removed in June, at no cost to the district, due to deterioration and overwhelming safety concerns. This field will continue to be used for varsity baseball and as a practice field for fall sports and for junior varsity games as needed.

Recently, the district received exciting news regarding state funding being

committed to offset some of the costs to make these much-needed field upgrades. These funds will only be provided if the referendum is successful. Additional details about costs are included in this newsletter.

There are several opportunities to learn more about the proposed referendum before the September 25 vote. We encourage residents to attend one of these events to learn more.

Please vote September 25. Every vote counts!

Sincerely,

The Butler Board of Education

**The state promises to fund 18.34 percent of the proposed project if the referendum is successful.**

### HOW WILL THE QUESTION BE WORDED ON THE BALLOT?

#### BOND PROPOSAL

The Board of Education of the Borough of Butler in the County of Morris, New Jersey is authorized (a) to provide for improvement of athletic facilities at Butler High School, including construction of new bleachers, field building, track, drainage improvements, field relocation, acquisition and installation of equipment, site work and related work; (b) to appropriate therefore \$3,372,600; and (c) to issue bonds of the school district to finance the project in the principal amount of \$3,372,600.

The final eligible costs of the project approved by the Commissioner of Education are \$1,546,732. This project includes \$1,825,868 for school facility construction elements in addition to the facilities efficiency standards developed by the Commissioner of Education or not otherwise eligible for State support pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-5(g). The State debt service aid percentage will equal 40% of the annual debt service due with respect to the final eligible costs of the project.

### What's Inside

- p 2. Project overview
- p 2. Funding details
- p 2. Project rendering
- p 2. Frequently asked questions
- p 2. Voting information

## Please

# Vote

**September 25, 2007**  
**2:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
Carey Avenue Firehouse

# MONEY MATTERS



The budgeted cost of this project is \$3,372,600. The state will pay 18.34 percent or \$618,693 of that amount. Facilities aid is payable from the state through debt service aid annually appropriated by the legislature.

The tax increase for the average assessed home at \$252,706 will be \$91.41. Bear in mind that assessed valuation is not market value - market value, the price that you could sell your home for, is typically higher than the assessed value.

State aid will only be provided if the referendum is approved by voters.

## Projected Cost Per Household

Tax increase per \$100,000 of Assessed Value	Average Assessed Home Value	ANNUAL Tax Impact of Average Assessed Home	MONTHLY Tax impact of Average Assessed Home
\$36.17	\$252,706	\$91.41	\$7.62

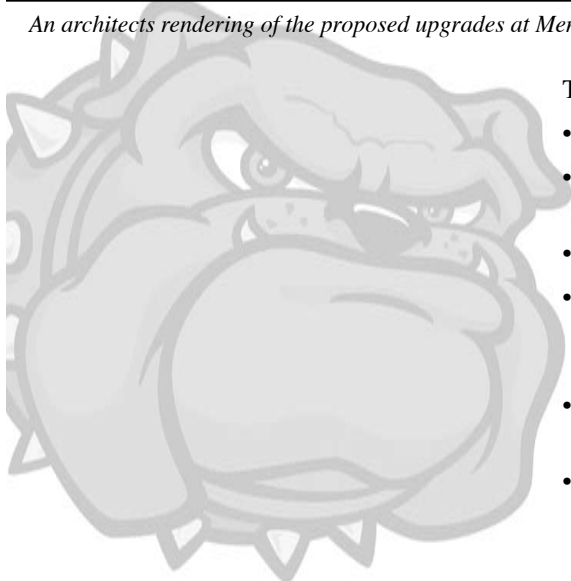
Note: The estimates indicated above are based on the following assumptions: receiving 18.34 percent debt service aid from the state, a 15-year bond, and an interest rate of 4.75 percent. Interest rates are subject to the market conditions at the time of the sale of the bonds.

# FIELD UPGRADE PLAN

If the referendum is successful, the field will be ready for play in fall 2008.



An architects rendering of the proposed upgrades at Memorial Field.



The Memorial Field upgrade plan includes the following:

- New bleachers
- New multi-purpose turf field: Provides the functionality and flexibility to play different sports during the same season and in less-than-ideal weather conditions.
- New lighting with low-level features for after-dark community use.
- Regulation size, six-lane, all weather track: Used by middle and high school students in physical education programs, access for track teams, Butler recreation programs and community use.
- Concession stand/rest room facility adjacent to the Mabey Lane entrance to the field.
- Parking and improved access to events: provides ADA compliant accommodations for handicapped patrons and visitors.

# TOP 10 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## 1. Why is the district undertaking this project?

In May of 2006, the board of education became aware of significant deterioration to the foundation and footings of the Hempsted Field bleachers. The bleachers were installed in 1964. Significant water draining through the area and the accompanying freezing and thawing, coupled with several major hurricanes, had caused the concrete under the bleachers to heave and shift. The board received a determination from two separate engineering firms that major repairs or removal of the bleachers were required before any further use. The engineer's report stated that many of the angle column posts in the front two rows of the bleachers were no longer bearing on the concrete piers or had been shimmed to provide bearing. The piers had settled due to the erosion of the soils under the piers and under the concrete slab. The concrete slab had significant cracking and settling throughout

## 2. Why not just fix the Hempsted bleachers?

Repairing the bleachers would have required that they be brought up to current code in terms of safety and ADA compliance. The bleachers did not have proper ramped handicapped access and did not have "risers" that prevent someone from slipping through the bleachers. Making these modifications would have been quite expensive. More importantly, the board still had a concern that the problem would reoccur due to unresolved issues with the drainage in that area. The cost to replace the Hempsted Field bleachers in

their current location, including site work, architect and engineering expenses, permits and state fees was estimated to be \$1,016,000. The board would not be able to afford such a project through the general operating budget. The bleachers, which were no longer usable in their existing condition, have been removed. Referendum funding is necessary to install new permanent bleachers.

## 3. What are the benefits of a turf field?

The turf surface would provide more opportunities for school, community and regional access to a quality playing field. Field turf means greater utility and use in all weather conditions for multiple sports.

## 4. Who will be able to use the upgraded athletics facilities?

High school sports teams and physical education classes from both the high school and Richard Butler School will get the most use out of the facility. When baseball and softball fields are wet, teams may use the turf field for modified practices. Youth sports programs through Butler Recreation, Butler Junior Bulldogs and Butler Junior Soccer will have the opportunity to play on the field. Community residents would be able to use the track until 10:00 p.m. daily. A facility like this would also enable the district to host county, conference, and state level playoff and championship games.

## 5. What type of maintenance is associated with a turf field?

When a district installs a turf field, a grooming machine is included in the installation price. The grooming of a turf field is done about once a

month and it takes two to three hours. On occasion, leaf blowers are used to clear the field of leaves or litter, but this is very infrequent. While no athletic field is truly "maintenance free," a turf field would require considerably less manpower than currently needed to mow, seed, and line grass fields.

## 6. What about the lights on Hempsted Field donated by the Let There Be Light Foundation?

The school district is most grateful for the generous donation of the lights. The lights have allowed the district to host night games for football, boys' and girls' soccer, field hockey and baseball. Because Hempsted Field will continue to be the home field for Butler's varsity baseball team, some of the lights are still needed at that location, so the baseball lights will not be moved. The board is still exploring the possibility of relocating the football lights to the new Memorial Field. If it is practical and cost effective, those lights will be moved.

## 7. Does Bloomingdale contribute since their students will benefit from the fields?

Current state law and code only permit a sending district, like Bloomingdale, to contribute to the interest on the bonds, not toward the cost of retiring the bonds themselves.

## 8. I heard that the Borough of Butler will complete the project if the referendum is defeated. Is this true?

The school district did lease property to the borough for \$1.00 that allowed the recreation center to be built near the field complex. This took place after Butler voters defeated the school district's referendum proposal for a recreation center. The Borough had money at the time and was

willing to take on this project because it also created space to run recreation programs. District officials have discussed our current project with the Borough Administrator, the Mayor and Council representatives. We understand that the borough does not have funding to take on this project. In addition, a borough-built project would not be able to qualify for the debt service aid that the school district would receive from the state to offset the cost to the taxpayers.

## 9. If the useful life of the turf field is 12 years and the referendum bonds will be for a 15 year term, will we need to have another referendum to resurface the field before we are finished paying for the first referendum?

The board intends to set aside money on an annual basis in the Capital Reserve account in preparation for the eventual resurfacing of the turf surface at the end of its useful life, approximately 12 to 14 years. Through the use of Capital Reserve monies, the district will avoid the need to put forth a referendum question to the voters to obtain additional tax dollars to do that work.

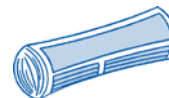
Replacement of the turf surface is considerably less expensive than the initial installation of a turf field as there is no excavation required.

## 10. What are the field dimensions and what sports can be played on the field?

Memorial Field will be a regulation size field for football, girls and boys soccer and field hockey. While final architectural drawings and specifications will not be completed unless the referendum is approved by the voters, the architect has reasonable expectations that the site will accommodate a field with dimensions of 110 yards by 65 yards.

# WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION BEFORE I VOTE?

**Read:** Local newspapers for updates.



**Attend:** Board of Education meetings and workshop sessions on September 17 and 24.



**Click:** Visit the district website for information and updates at [www.morris.k12.nj.us/butler](http://www.morris.k12.nj.us/butler) or email your question to: [referendum@butlerboe.org](mailto:referendum@butlerboe.org)



**Hotline:** Call the hotline to have your questions answered. 973-492-2000 ext. 270



# Vote

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

2:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Carey Avenue Firehouse

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**BUTLER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
The **BULLDOGS**

Butler Board of Education

Field Upgrade Referendum September 2007

H.S. Annex Building, 38 Bartholdi Avenue, Butler, NJ 07405  
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