



Newport School Committee

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To: The Honorable Jeanne-Marie Napolitano, Mayor and the Newport City Council
From: School Building Co-Chairs Rebecca Bolan and Louisa Boatwright
Copy: Joseph Nicholson, City Manager; Laura Sitrin, City Finance Director
Newport School Committee; Colleen Burns Jermain, Ed.D., Superintendent; Ronald
Gonsalves, Director of Administrative Services
Re: School Building Funding Request
Date: February 1, 2022

The Co-Chairs of the Newport School Building Committee respectfully request that the City Council grant access to the maximum allowable funding from the premium bond sales for the construction of the Pell addition and Rogers High School new build. This is pending approval by the Newport School Committee at our February 8th meeting. Significant COVID cost escalation up to 25% has caused the new high school's original scope and programming to exceed the bond amount, as is happening in other communities throughout Rhode Island. At the suggestion of the School Building Authority, as a strategy to address this challenge, it has been recommended that school districts reach out to their local governments to request the full funding allowable from the sale of these bonds. We are making this request to help preserve the current programming, and to provide quality facilities and fields as cited in our plan.

In the last three months SLAM, our architects, have redesigned the new Rogers into a highly efficient building. Even with these efficiencies some programs and basic amenities have had to be placed on an alternative list in order to continue to move forward. Several items, including automotive technology, athletic fields, cosmetology, central office, parking, and landscaping have had to be moved to a category called "add alternates" to be set aside at this time until we secure additional funding. Working with our owner's project manager, Downes Construction, architect SLAM and the construction team of Gilbane, the Newport School Committee, Administration, and our Building Committee, we will continue to seek additional funding sources, through grants, private donations, and foundations to support these alternates.

Granting access to the eligible bond premium dollars at this time, will ensure that we are able to move items from the add alternate list back into the project. We appreciate your consideration at this time.