



# DIRECTIONS



*The four communities of M.S.A.D. No. 75 are united in our dedication to develop confident, life-long learners. It is our mission to work together to ensure a community of fluent learners, critical thinkers and creative contributors to our society.*

**From the desk of Brad Smith, Superintendent**

Dec., 2016

## **Board Approves MTA Project for Straw Vote No. 2**

The MSAD No. 75 School Board has approved the new Mt. Ararat High School “in concept.” In doing so, the Board set Monday, December 12, 2016 as Straw Vote No. 2. The Straw Vote will be held at 6 p.m. in the High School Commons. Wednesday, December 14 was selected as an alternative date if needed.

Straw Vote No. 2 provides feedback to the Building Committee, School Board, and State Board of Education about the level of support for the project in the community. If the Straw Vote is positive, the District will then seek approval from the State Board of Education in January, with a potential referendum in March.

We have held numerous meetings, including recent forums in each town, to gather community input regarding unfunded components of the school. PDT, the architectural firm designing the school, shared the most recent design which will be finalized in the next two weeks. Nearly 100 attendees gave feedback on which items should be included or not in the project, and identified a preferred source of funding.

At the December 8 meeting the Board will be given the latest revisions to the project as recommended by the Building Committee. This will include adjustments according to what the Maine Department of Education will fund and what items are left for local only funding. As often indicated, those numbers may change, but we are now very close to a final budget.

The recommendation to the Board will contain locally-funded items including an additional gymnasium, six classrooms (five regular classrooms, one additional Science room), synthetic competition field, solar hot water and snow melt at the main entrances and other features recently determined to be beyond state-approved costs. The total of all unfunded local items recommended now stands at \$6,857,354.

The Board will also hear a recommendation to

separate the locally-funded amount into two separate questions for the voters. Question One includes all those unfunded items recommended except the synthetic turf field for a cost of \$6,208,354. If voters approve Question One, Question Two will ask to include the synthetic turf field as a locally-funded item to the project for an additional \$649,000.

The Board will also receive a recommendation to increase the amount raised through donations and fundraising to \$201,780 covering the cost of scoreboards for the competition and baseball field, dugouts, ropes course, and field sprinkler system (only if the synthetic turf is not approved).

It is important that all community members be aware that costs are estimates and will change as the concept and budget are finalized. However, several meetings with M.D.O.E. officials have taken place and we are very near to these being finalized.

We truly hope for a strong turnout so we can accurately gauge the level of support that exists for these important decisions. Additional information about the project is available on the District website, which can be accessed through any of the schools as well. The direct link is: <https://sites.google.com/a/link75.org/construction/home>

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### **Dates to Remember**

#### **Winter Break**

December 23, 2016 - January 2, 2017

#### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

January 16, 2017

#### **Winter Break II**

February 20-24, 2017

#### **Professional Development Day**

(K-8 Comp) March 17, 2017

## Reducing Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a joyful time, offering a chance to reconnect with friends and family. But they can also be stressful. You may feel pressure to buy and give gifts. Maybe you are worried about money. The holidays can also be hectic. There never seems to be enough time to get things done.

Think about the kinds of events that trigger stress for you during the holidays. Then you can focus on one or two things you can do that will help the most to reduce stress. Here are some ideas:

### Preparing for the holidays:

**Know your spending limit.** Lack of money is one of the biggest causes of stress during the holiday season. This year, set a budget, and don't spend more than you've planned. It's okay to tell your child that a certain toy costs too much. Don't buy gifts that you'll spend the rest of the year trying to pay off.

**Give something personal.** You can show love and caring with any gift that is meaningful and personal. It doesn't have to cost a lot. Or use words instead of an expensive gift to let people know how important they are to you. Make a phone call or write a note and share your feelings.

**Get organized.** Make lists or use an appointment book to keep track of tasks to do and events to attend.

**Share the tasks.** You don't have to do everything yourself. Share your "to do" list with others. Spend time with friends and family while you share tasks like decorating, wrapping gifts, and preparing the holiday meal.

**Learn to say no.** It's okay to say "no" to events that aren't important to you. This will give you more time to say "yes" to events that you do want to attend.

**Be realistic.** Try not to put pressure on yourself to create the perfect holiday for your family. Focus in-



stead on the traditions that make holidays special for you. And remember that just because it's a holiday, family problems don't go away. If you have a hard time being around your

### Straw Vote No. 2 — Cont. from page 1

It was nearly five years ago when the M.S.A.D. No. 75 community learned that despite being rated as number seven in the state ranking for school construction projects, only the first six projects would be funded in the first round. There were many in the District who thought, "oh no, here we go again," referencing previous attempts to secure State funding only to find the High School project close, but not approved for funding.

Despite the disappointment, and frankly skepticism of many, we continued to advocate for our project in the belief that funding would eventually be given. We now stand ready to ask voters, in the Straw Vote No. 2, to show their level of support for the project.

This is an incredibly important Straw Vote and will be followed with an even more important anticipated Referendum in March 2017. Countless meetings, including Board meetings, workshops, Public Forums, Building Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings have produced the project that will be considered at the Straw Vote on December 12.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to all who have worked on this project. While not every issue associated with such a major undertaking will have unanimous support, the Building Committee, under the leadership of John Hodge, has worked to reach "substantial consensus" throughout the process. As a result, what the Board will receive, and the community will be asked to vote on, has endured thorough analysis and consideration at many levels!

The professionals at PDT Architect have given us an exciting building that reflects the needs of our students now and in the future. The design has considered input from many points of view, and represents what I believe is the best of all options! It is indeed a joy to present this project to our Board and community.

With appreciation,

**Brad Smith**  
Superintendent of Schools

relatives, it's okay to set limits on your time at events and visits.

\*\* WebMD Medical Reference from Healthwise © 1995-2015

\*\*This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor