

Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District

Smart Schools Bond Act

J-D Smart Schools plan focuses on classroom connectivity

Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District administrators have put together a preliminary plan to use state funds to improve district wide classroom connectivity, which will ultimately improve students' learning experiences and basic operational functions, such as attendance and grade reporting.

The Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA) was passed as part of the 2014-15 New York state budget and approved by voters in a statewide referendum held in November 2014. That approval authorized the state to issue \$2 billion in bonds to finance educational technology and infrastructure to improve learning opportunities for students throughout the state.

To access the funds, districts are required to develop a Smart Schools Investment Plan, which must be approved by the New York State Education Department. Plans must detail how a district would use the money in six approved areas:

- Classroom connectivity;
- Classroom technology;
- Community connection;
- Pre-K classroom improvements;
- Elimination of temporary/trailer classrooms; and
- School security and safety.

Districts cannot use Smart Schools funding to hire more teachers, support professional development, purchase software or pay for normal operational costs.

J-D's Smart Schools Allocation

Jamesville-DeWitt was allocated \$1,016,394 under the SSBA, and the state will reimburse the district for 100% of the expenses identified in the district's plan. Administrators worked with the district's architects to establish priorities in the state-approved categories and to ensure that the Smart Schools plan aligns with the district's strategic plan, technology plan and its building condition survey, which identifies facility needs.

The district is proposing to focus its allocation on upgrading the district's network infrastructure for classroom connectivity. Network infrastructure is the backbone of most functions of the district, affecting such areas as telephone services and building security, and so the district is proposing to replace outdated network cabling and construct secured locations for network equipment, J-D Superintendent Peter Smith said. The project would also improve wifi access district wide, directly benefiting the district's instructional programs.

Community Feedback Welcomed

At its June 7, 2021, J-D Board of Education meeting, the board approved the district's preliminary Smart Schools Investment Plan. The board accepted public comments on the plan and held a public hearing on the plan at its July 12, 2021, meeting.

The board adopted the plan at its July 12 meeting, and the district is now waiting for the New York State Education Department to approve the plan. That process could take up to one year.

Once the state approves the plan, the district can move forward with the projects. In conjunction with the Smart Schools plan, the district is also planning to update network hardware and expand wireless access using other funding sources, such as capital project and operational budget funds.

Smart Schools funding does not expire. If the district does not spend all of its allocation in this proposal, it can file with the state an amendment to its plan for how it would use the remaining money.

Questions or comments may be directed to BOEComments@jd.cnyric.org.

Proposed Smart School Investment Plan

Communications Pathways

- Cable trays, sleeves and conduit to support and protect existing CATx cables.

Horizontal UTP Cabling (CATx)

- CAT 6a cables needed as a result of relocating Technology Rooms.

Incidental costs

- Architect, design and project management fees.

Intrabuilding fiber cabling

- This is the fiber between wiring closets inside the schools.

TR AMEP Upgrades

- Rebuild Technology Rooms (MDFs and IDF) to industry standards.