

Woodstown, Pilesgrove voters must act now to secure important school funds: Letter

By [South Jersey Times Letters](#) on October 29, 2014 at 11:15 AM

To the Editor:

This letter is directed to the residents of the Borough of Woodstown and Pilesgrove Township.

On Tuesday, Nov. 4 you will be asked to vote on a school facilities bond question posed by the Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional School District. The board is very cognizant of the fact that this referendum comes only two short years after we asked for your approval in 2012. The board and administration are very proud that the educational vision posed to you in 2012 has fully come to fruition in 2014 and we thank you for your support.



While the projects approved in 2012 were underway, the board was preparing for the next phase of improvements to the aging buildings of the district. In 2012, we informed you that vital infrastructure needs of our existing schools still needed to be addressed and that the Board would seek your approval for those improvements when the State of New Jersey once again offered grant money to assist in funding. In February 2014, the district received a grant of \$7.9 million dollars toward meeting those infrastructure needs. The total cost to restore and preserve our buildings equals \$19.8 million dollars less the grant of \$7.9 million dollars resulting in a local taxpayer cost of \$11.9 million. The district will receive those grant monies, which represents 40 percent of the total cost, only upon the approval of this referendum.

The infrastructure needs proposed in this referendum include electrical upgrades, windows, doors, and roofs, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, handicap accessibility mandates, and vital security upgrades. The board reviewed the scope of work for our aging buildings very thoroughly. There are no "extras" or luxuries in this proposal. Every single item in this referendum is approved for 40 percent grant funding, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining fiscal responsibility. But we must act now; this grant money available to our district will expire in August 2015 if we don't take advantage of it!

The board believes that we have been prudent and responsible by bringing this proposal to you only when grant money was available. With the passage of this bond question, in just a few short years, the board will have successfully met our district curricular *and* infrastructure needs. The board would like to thank each of you for your many years of support.

On behalf of the Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional Board of Education,

CHAPMAN VAIL, President
Woodstown