

# **Bethlehem Smart Schools Investment Plan Phase I**

## **About the Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA)**

In January 2014, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo called for New York State to invest \$2 billion in its schools through a Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA). Voters approved the Smart School Bond Act in November 2014 and as a result the Bethlehem Central School District was allocated to receive \$2,039,178.

The purpose of the Smart Schools Bond Act is to improve learning and opportunity for public and nonpublic school students by funding capital projects to:

1. Install high speed broadband or wireless internet connectivity for schools and communities;
2. Acquire learning technology equipment or facilities, including but not limited to interactive whiteboards, computer servers, and desktop, laptop, and tablet computers;
3. Construct, enhance, and modernize educational facilities to accommodate prekindergarten programs and to provide instructional space to replace classroom trailers; and/or
4. Install high tech security features in school buildings and on school campuses, including but not limited to video surveillance, emergency notification systems, and physical access controls.

## **SSBA Phase I Investment Plan Goals**

After examining the District's technology needs and reviewing our Smart Schools Bond Allocation, through collaboration with the Bethlehem community, it was determined that it would be best to break up our funds into different projects. In Phase I, we will use the initial portion of the available funds to replace classroom interactive boards in the Middle School and High School, as they are becoming obsolete and are increasingly difficult to repair. This funding will help us to accelerate the replacement of these aging classroom interactive boards, which have served as important instructional tools.

Phase II will include replacing aging boards and projectors in the Elementary Schools and possibly funding additional security initiatives. Phase II planning will begin in September 2018.

## Phase I Budget

SSBA Budget Category	Allocations
<b>BC Classroom Technology</b>	
(100) Interactive Boards for the Middle School	\$550,000
(100) Interactive Boards for the High School	\$550,000
<b>Non-Public Classroom Technology</b>	
<b>St. Thomas the Apostle School</b>	
• Chromebooks	\$10,950
• Interactive Boards	\$12,600
• 3D Printer	\$1,800
• Desktop Computer	\$3,488
<b>Mt. Moriah</b>	
• Acer Laptop/Tablet	\$3,951
• Promethean AB10T78D ActivBoard Touch	\$1,054
<b>Bethlehem Children's School</b>	
• Chromebook	\$1,345
• VOIP Phone	\$280
• Laptop	\$1,274
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$1,136,742</b>
<b>Unallocated Funds available for Phase II</b>	<b>\$902,436</b>

### Professional Development

Bethlehem Central School District has an established support structure for all technology deployed to teachers and students. Support personnel include the IT Staff, high school and middle school teachers employed on a stipend as Tech Coaches, and a half-time K-5 instructional technologist. BC is seeking to hire a full-time instructional technologist for grades 6-12 to begin in the summer of 2018.

The venues that are available for professional development include department meetings, faculty meetings, Continuous Improvement meetings, after-school drop-in sessions, annual edTechTeam Capital Region Google Summit, and a two-day Tech Bootcamp in August.

It is also our hope that by installing a consistent technology in all classrooms, teachers will be able to assist one another on a regular basis.

### Sustainability of Assets

Bethlehem employs a full-time technology support staff that is responsible for maintaining all district technology. The average lifespan of an interactive board ranges from 8-10 years, which will be taken into account as we develop a replacement schedule and incorporate the expense into the hardware allocation of the Technology budget.

## **SSBA Timeline**

All districts will be required to submit a Smart Schools Investment Plan to demonstrate how Smart Schools Bond Act funds will be used to provide the educational tools and opportunities that students throughout New York State will need to succeed in the 21st century economy.

- ❑ September 2017 - May 2018: Met with school community groups to gather information and develop a plan
- ❑ February-March 2018: Met with nonpublic school representatives to gather their requests
- ❑ April 2018: Draft Smart Schools Investment Plan (SSIP) presented to community and Board of Education.
- ❑ April-May 2018: 30-day comment period on draft plan
- ❑ May 2018: Final plan presented to Board of Education
- ❑ May 2018: SSIP submitted to NYS for approval

## **SSBA Planning**

Pursuant to the requirements for the Smart Schools Bond Act, the planning process for developing and submitting a Smart Schools Investment Plan to the State Education Department must include consultation with parents, teachers, students, and community members. The following are ways that this requirement has been met:

- Both building-level and district-level technology committees have discussed the need to refresh our classroom interactive boards. Pilots are being conducted to determine the teacher's choice.
- An initial pilot was conducted in February through April 2018, where ten high school and ten middle school teachers each used an LCD Interactive Panel for two weeks and a Short-Throw Projector for two weeks. These teachers provided feedback in both written form and in tech committee meetings.
- Additional pilots are being scheduled to resume at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year.
- A presentation and Q&A session was conducted in the following venues:
  - Bethlehem President's Council in April 2018. The President's Council is comprised of parents from the community
  - Instructional Leadership meeting in April 2018
  - Elementary Principals meeting in April 2018
  - HS PTA meeting in May 2018
- Based on the published document "2014-15 Nonpublic District of Attendance Enrollment Record", three non-public schools are identified as being a part of the Bethlehem School District. St. Thomas the Apostle School with enrollment of 196, Mt. Moriah Academy with 31, and the Bethlehem Children's School with 16 students. Each school was given the opportunity to submit requests for classroom technology based on their enrollment with a budget of \$225 per pupil.

**Public Comments**

Community members can send their comments on the SMART Schools Investment Plan to Ray Nardelli, Director of Information Technology, 700 Delaware Avenue, Delmar NY 12054, or by emailing them to [rnardelli@bethlehemschools.org](mailto:rnardelli@bethlehemschools.org).

**References**

To learn more about the Smart Bond Act Guidelines go to:

- <http://www.nysed.gov/edtech/smart-school-bond-act>
- [http://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/smart\\_schools/home.html](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/smart_schools/home.html)