

Voters pass New Trier referendum to borrow \$89 million

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Voters on Tuesday cast ballots overwhelmingly in support of New Trier Township High School District 203's referendum request to borrow \$89 million to help pay for a proposed \$100 million renovation of the [Winnetka](#) campus.

With all 52 precincts reporting, unofficial vote totals on the Cook County Clerk's website on Wednesday showed 65 percent of voters in favor and 35 percent against the measure to increase taxes to pay for the renovation project.

"We thought we had a strong sense of the community's priorities for this project and what could be supported, and it's good to have that affirmed," said District 203 Superintendent Linda Yonke, who said **the results were almost an exact reversal of the numbers from the 2010 referendum request, which was soundly defeated by voters.**

"I want to convey my appreciation to the community for their support, and this will be a great project for New Trier for generations to come," Yonke said.

Reflecting a sharp reduction in cost from a \$174 million referendum request in 2010, the new project is focused primarily on updating academic facilities, including creating 25 additional classrooms and three science labs, new facilities for fine arts programs, as well as replacing the high school's library and 100-year-old cafeteria.

Previous plans from 2010 to build a new gym, field house, fitness facilities and underground parking have been eliminated, officials said.

"Members of our community have taken excellent care of our schools for more than 100 years, and this vote means that we can provide accessible, efficient, safe and modern facilities to support our nationally recognized academic programs into the 21st century," Yonke was quoted as saying in a statement released Tuesday night.

With the New Trier referendum measure poised to pass late Tuesday night, homeowners likely will see a roughly 1.7 percent increase in their property taxes, officials said.

For example, officials said a homeowner who currently pays \$15,000 a year in property taxes would pay an additional \$250 a year if the referendum is approved.

Wilmette resident Mark Weyermuller, who voted "no" to the referendum, said he was disheartened at the prospect of another property tax increase.

"I'm not sure why there was not a more established opposition group," Weyermuller said.