

## Smart Schools Q and A

**Q: What is the Smart School Bond Act?**

**A:** The Smart Schools Bond Act was passed as part of the 2014-15 Enacted Budget. (L. 2014, ch. 56, Parts B and C). The Smart Schools Bond Act authorizes the issuance of \$2 Billion of general obligation bonds to finance improved educational technology and infrastructure to improve learning and opportunity for students throughout the State. The Smart Schools Bond Act must be approved by a state-wide vote before it becomes effective.

**Q: What did the ballot question say?**

**A:** The ballot question read:

The SMART SCHOOLS BOND ACT OF 2014, as forth in section one of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2014, authorizes the sale of state bonds of up to two billion dollars (\$2,000,000,000) to provide access to classroom technology and high-speed internet connectivity to equalize opportunities for children to learn, to add classroom space to expand high-quality pre-kindergarten programs, to replace classroom trailers with permanent instructional space and to install high-tech smart security features in schools. Shall the SMART SCHOOLS BOND ACT OF 2014 be approved?

The Bond Act was approved on November 4, 2014.

**Q: How much funding would my school district be eligible for?**

**A:** Mechanicville is eligible for \$884,252.00

**Q: What types of projects will be eligible for funding?**

**A:** Bond proceeds may be used for capital projects to:

- Acquire learning technology equipment for facilities, including but not limited to interactive whiteboards, computer servers, and desktop, laptop and tablet computers;
- Install high-speed broadband or wireless internet connectivity for schools and communities;

- Construct, enhance and modernize educational facilities to accommodate pre-kindergarten programs and to provide instructional space to replace classroom trailers; and
- 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.

**Q: Will Mechanicville's Smart Schools allocation expire if it is not used within a certain period?**

**A:** No, a district's Smart Schools allocation does not need to be used by a certain date. If the allocation is not used in one school year, it can be carried over to the next school year.

**Q: Can Mechanicville use spending from its Smart Schools allocation as the local share to generate other State School Aids, such as Building Aid?**

**A:** No, expenditures from the Smart Schools allocation may not be used to generate other types of State School Aid.

**Q: How will Mechanicville apply for and receive the Smart Schools funding?**

**A:** As outlined above, each district must submit a Smart Schools Investment Plan to the Smart Schools Review Board for approval. The Smart Schools Review Board may approve the plan, reject the plan, or return the plan to the school district for modifications.

Once the Smart Schools Investment Plan is approved, the school district will be eligible to begin receiving grant funds, up to the amount of its Smart Schools allocation amount, to reimburse costs of the approved projects. The State Education Department will administer the grant funds.

Currently we are awaiting further promulgation providing guidance regarding the application process. As more information is forthcoming we will share that and incorporate it into our facilities and school budget planning.