

BUFFALO NEWS

Grand Island school upgrade OK'd

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Grand Island schools will get a \$51 million-plus upgrade.

Island residents gave overwhelming approval Tuesday to a pair of propositions that will result in renovations and improvements to all five of the school district's buildings.

In balloting in the high school gymnasium, voters passed the first proposition -- \$46.8 million for a long list of repairs and renovations, as well as improvements to the science and technology classrooms. The vote was 1,610 to 292.

The second proposition, which would not have been considered unless Proposition One was approved, involves a \$4.6 million project to build a "state-of-the-art" athletic field, which could host sectional competition, and renovating the high school auditorium. It was passed by a vote of 1,362 to 516.

Proposition One carries no increase in property taxes. Funding will come from state aid and school district reserves. Proposition Two will be assisted by a 0.2 percent tax hike.

Superintendent Robert W. Christmann said Tuesday night that construction work on the projects is not likely to begin before spring 2013.

Architectural designs will have to be drawn up first, he said. The plans will be submitted to the state Education Department, which usually takes six months to approve projects. Then the project will be put out for bids.

Major structural work will be done during the summer, when classes are not being held, Christmann said. Other construction will take place during school breaks, at night and on weekends.