



# Joseph D. Sharp Elementary

December 2018 EDITION BULLDOG



## December 2018

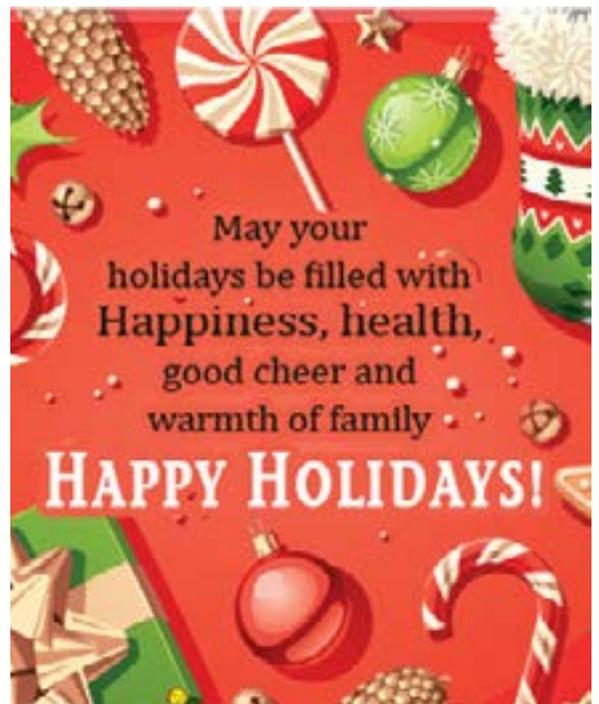
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
					Five Below Weekend	
9	10 PTA General Meeting featuring w/ Dr. Meloche	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Sharp Winter Concert	19 McDonald's Night	20 Winter Breakfast for Teachers	21 Classroom Parties	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29
Winter Recess						

### Event Detail:

- December 7-9: Five Below Weekend
- December 7 : Attitude Assembly of Acceptance performed by Mrs. Shaub's and Mrs. D'Alessandro's students
- December 10 : PTA General Meeting featuring "Last Minute Info on Bond w/ Dr. Meloche"
- December 12 : Sharp Basketball Player Eval Night
- December 18 : Sharp Winter Concert for Families 2:00pm
- December 19 : McDonald's Night, 4-8pm
- December 20 : Winter Breakfast for Teachers
- December 21: Classroom Parties
- Dec. 24-Jan 1 : Winter Recess

### Additional Dates:

- Bulldog articles for next month are due to [Christy Kam](#) by Tuesday, December 18 via email at [sochristy@hotmail.com](mailto:sochristy@hotmail.com)



Dear Sharp Community:

Each month that I sit down to write this letter, I am more and more amazed at how quickly the time passes. At this time of year, I usually find myself reflecting back on Decembers in the past, when we celebrated this time of year in our family and my own daughters were babies, then toddlers and kindergarteners. Now they're 8 & 10...which is still so young, but my goodness. I could've never imagined the past decade would pass in the blink of an eye that it has.

I reflect on all that they've learned since they've entered school. Yes, academically, which on some nights this year, my 5th grader's homework reminds me more of what I was doing in high school. They have GROWN academically. But, I am so thankful for the social growth they've had, for the relationships they've formed both at this school and others in the district, and for the community of folks they're surrounded by daily--a diverse community of wonderful people, both children and adults alike.

Cherry Hill is a special place. It really, truly is. I am more than grateful to have called this place "home" for the last decade—we bought our home here thinking we'd be here no more than 3 years but we bought in an excellent school district because we knew our home value would hold tight when it came time to sell...because great schools equal higher home values. Yet here we sit, just a little more than 10 years later.

In that past decade, though, as my own family's roots have deepened in this community, infrastructure in our schools has weakened. CHPS has been underfunded by nearly \$150 MILLION dollars from the state in the past 10 years. And, while great, incredible and important strides have been made by Fair Funding advocates, both community and district advocates, as Dr. Meloche stated at the most recent Zone PTA meeting, **THOSE FUNDS WILL NEVER BE RECOVERED FROM THE STATE.** We will NOT be getting that money back. So, our district has been forced to make decisions a school district shouldn't have to. Do we put our financial resources into our students, teachers, staff and programs, or do we put it into infrastructure? Our district has made the decision to put the money into the former. Our class sizes are SMALL. Our teachers are top notch. Our programs grow and improve. Our children are positioned to graduate from East or West more than ready to face the world that will be in front of them.

On December 11th you, the stakeholders in this community, will be asked to vote on a 3 question Bond Referendum that contains multiple projects to improve our schools...some security improvements, mostly infrastructure improvements, and some projects that are wants-that-really-are-more-of-needs.

This is a once in a generation undertaking. Please, as parents, as home-owners, as stake holders in this town, spend some time educating yourselves (and then encourage your neighbors to do the same!) on this Bond Referendum. Tax impact calculators, project breakdowns by school, FAQ's and more can be found here: <https://www.chclc.org/bond-referendum>

Do you have any questions on this referendum? Please, ask them. We are more than happy to answer them! You can email me, [SharpPTAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:SharpPTAPresident@gmail.com) or you can email our advocacy chair, Ben Ovadia, [ben1721@aol.com](mailto:ben1721@aol.com).

Gratefully,  
Kristen Viglietta [SharpPTAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:SharpPTAPresident@gmail.com)

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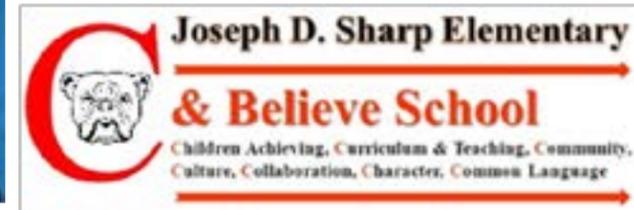
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**Please join us for our Sharp PTA General Membership Meeting on  
DECEMBER 10th at 7:00pm in the APR.**

Our program will be:  
LAST MINUTE BOND REFERENDUM  
INFORMATION SESSION WITH DR.  
MELOCHE, SUPERINTENDENT



\*The program portion of the meeting will run for approximately 45 minutes, followed by the business of the PTA meeting. Duration of the entire evening is anticipated to be 1 hr. 15 minutes. Babysitting will be available.



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[sharp.chclc.org](http://sharp.chclc.org)  
Ric Miscioscia, Principal: [rmiscioscia@chclc.org](mailto:rmiscioscia@chclc.org)

Dear Sharp Community,

This time of year is always a great opportunity to reflect upon time spent together thus far in addition to planning for work in the near future. There is much to be thankful for! The first three months of the year have been exciting ones, filled with well-attended community events. These community events give all of us an opportunity to again connect with our students' interests and the greater Sharp community. It was also terrific to see so many family members attend our Classroom Visitation Day in November. Both personally and professionally, I greatly appreciate the Sharp experience from a principal's perspective. The positive and collaborative community environment fostered by you and our staff makes this school a caring learning environment where students have countless adult role models to learn from and emulate.

The upcoming months will continue to be filled with challenging work undertaken by both students and staff alike. Students continue gaining fluency skills in math operations while developing deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and problem solving. We continue to increase our capacity for and integration of technology within the academic setting in grades 1-5, as there are currently over 250 Chromebooks available for these students. Our interactive and student-centered Science units continue to engage our young learners us-

ing the learning by doing model. Sharp students have been lucky to have a terrific and talented Encore staff over the past several years. Students look forward to these classes each day and their Encore teachers focus on harnessing that enthusiasm in both creative and constructive activities.

I greatly appreciate your guidance and support of our young learners, and of the dedicated teachers that strive to both challenge and support them throughout the year. Simply put – we need you! You are your child's first teacher, and a valued partner in their learning experiences throughout their time spent here. Your time and dedication, as a willing participant and especially as an engaged volunteer, help make Sharp a welcoming place for all of our students.

Wishing you a peaceful winter break and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,  
*Ric Miscioscia*  
Principal



# Frequently Asked Questions



## Bond 2018 Questions & Answers

*Please see below for questions that the community has asked, along with our answers. Some questions may be a compilation of similar questions on the same topic. Questions may be edited for brevity.*

**Why does the District keep saying all of the schools will get new security vestibules with this Bond, when my sample ballot says only Harte, Kingston, Stockton, Carusi and Rosa will get them?**

We apologize for the confusion! The schools you named are listed in Proposal #1 of the Bond because they are the schools that require new construction with vestibules added on to those buildings. The remaining schools have layouts that allow the vestibules to be configured within those buildings' original footprint. You may see the list of projects and the schematic drawings for the construction plans at each of our school buildings under the [Bond Referendum Building Improvements Listed By School link](#).

**Does the Bond impact the State's allocation of aid to the Cherry Hill School District in any way?**

The Bond would have no impact on annual general fund state aid that is received by the District from the State.

**Page 63 of the September 25, 2018 bond presentation outlines costs. Can you confirm the bond cost is \$306 million before the reimbursement of 40% and the \$212 million is the cost to the community? What percentage of the cost is contingency?**

The cost for the bond, which includes principal and interest costs, over 20 years, is estimated to be \$306,000,000. The final cost will be contingent upon the interest rate at the time of the bond sale. Debt service aid, which the District will receive annually from the State, will be used to pay a portion of the principal and interest costs and is estimated to be between 35% and 38%. (Exact percentage per proposal is listed in the ballot question.) The net cost over 20 years to the District is estimated to be approximately \$212,300,000. Of the \$210,772,000 in bond costs, approximately 7% is dedicated to contingencies for the projects.

**Why was the Alternative High School left off the Bond Referendum?**

The Alternative High School is a valued program in the Cherry Hill Public Schools, serving roughly 40 students. It is

housed in the Malberg Administration Building, and takes up only a fraction of the building's square footage. Because of this, no improvement projects for the school are eligible for state funding under the Bond. Improvements for the Alternative High School will be addressed using other monies.

**What about the roof repairs listed in Question 2? If that question fails, we are again short on money to repair roofs. And the vestibule/office reconfigurations in Question 1 aren't really security, in my opinion.**

The Cherry Hill School District anticipates that all three questions in the upcoming Bond Referendum will be passed by the voters. In the event that any do not pass, they will be put out again for another vote.

The projects listed in the Bond questions are all important projects which have been designated as high priority. They do not fall under the category of emergent projects ("emergent" referring to being in an emergency situation).

Our physical security improvements focus on limiting access to our buildings – as currently configured, many of our buildings' offices are located down hallways and around corners, allowing visitors access to the building at large upon entry. To correct this, we are following the best practices advice based on years of analysis work and collaboration among our District Director of Security, Director of Operations, the Cherry Hill Police Department, and the Assistant Superintendent – Board Secretary/Business Administrator, as well as recommendations for School Preparedness and Emergency Planning by the New Jersey Department of Education. Also fundamental to these plans is the District wide security assessment completed by Ronin Security. Ronin Security offered input regarding our current practices, policies and procedures and how we can improve them. Their guidance also is integral to structural changes related to security in our buildings, some of which will be funded by the bond referendum, while other

security-related building upgrades will be paid for out of the General Fund Budget.

**Why is Question 1 the security construction portion of the bond, and why must we approve Question 1 in order to pass Questions 2 and 3? It seems to me that certain projects in Questions 2 and 3 should take priority in**

**Question 1.**

The bond referendum questions were determined based on a community wide survey conducted from September through March of 2016-2017. The results of that survey determined the top desires of the community to be safety and security in our buildings. As the board and administration agreed that these areas should be our primary focus, they are included in Question 1, which not only does not increase our community members' property taxes, it decreases the amount homeowners currently pay. Our decision to build secure vestibules for each building came from the culmination of advice from our director of security, the Cherry Hill Police Department, the New Jersey School Security Task Force Report and Recommendations. The vestibules are part of a larger, comprehensive, building wide security upgrade in all of our schools, which includes:

- \* Security cameras throughout the interior and exterior of each school (40+ cameras at the Barclay Early Childhood Center, with many more planned for our larger schools).
- \* Motion-sensor activated lighting on all exterior walls of our schools.
- \* Blinking blue-light systems on all building exteriors, indicating when a lockout or lockdown is in progress.
- \* Swipe-card entry for staff only at all exterior doors, with customized entry times according to staff hours and responsibilities.
- \* Locked entry doors from the vestibules to the interior of the school buildings, opened remotely only by office personnel.
- \* Sliding-window drop-off areas within the vestibules, for parents dropping off items for their students.

Question 1 encompasses a much larger scope of work than the security improvements, as you will see detailed on the "Bond 2018 Question Summary" page of the District web site. Questions 2 and 3 will expand our ability to address additional important projects, allowing every school building in the District to benefit from the bond.

The configuration of a bond into three questions is not unusual for school districts seeking to borrow a large amount of money via a bond. While community members will have different opinions on the projects included in each question, the projects were chosen and placed in each question based upon exhaustive, hands-on research by a team of 36 engineers and architects led by Becica Associates, all of whom have decades of first-hand knowledge working in the 1.7 million square feet of space in our school buildings, the oldest of which was built in 1955 and the youngest which was built in 1970. Their recommendations, along with the professional budgetary analysis of our business administrators, guided the organization of the work into the three proposals that make up the bond referendum.

**In looking over the bond questions, it's not clear which questions the non-eligible and non-funded projects will be in. Would you please explain?**

For the most part, ineligible costs are found in Question 3. Total ineligible costs are \$5,115,543, or 2.43% of the total referendum. Examples of ineligible costs are paving and site work, athletic field improvements and auditorium upgrades. Unfunded costs can be found in Questions 1 and 2 and relate to any new construction that is being done. The state will only provide funding on \$143 per square foot for new construction. Typical new construction costs approximately \$300 per square foot. Of the \$24.8 million dollars of new construction, \$9.5 million dollars or 38% is considered eligible for funding by the State based on the \$143 per square foot rule. Overall, of the \$210 million dollars in project applications, total unfunded or ineligible is \$20,408,031 or 9.68% of the total project.

**With regard to the upcoming bond referendum, please explain why asbestos abatement is listed in some schools and not others.**

All of our schools have asbestos, and some level of asbestos abatement will need to be done in every school as part of these projects. Asbestos can be typically found in floor tiles, pipe wrapping and the glue that is used to mount blackboards. Sometimes it can be found in plaster walls as in Rosa School and the ceiling as in Carusi School. The District has reports that outline where asbestos is located in each building. Asbestos becomes problematic when it has to be broken up or cut into in order to complete a work project. If asbestos is located in areas that are being renovated, removal of the asbestos will need to be done prior to the renovations beginning. All abatements will be conducted while the buildings are unoccupied.

\*The above information was taken directly from <https://www.chclc.org/bond-referendum/faq> on 11/30/18.



*THANK YOU!*

Colleen Corcoran...THANK YOU for organizing the Candy Drive for Ronald McDonald House! Under your direction, we were able to collect so much candy to be donated!

Pat's Night was a smashing success thanks to the members of the 5th grade committee who planned it! And thank you to Jen Fisher and Stephanie Connors for working to get the 5th grade tee shirts designed, signed and handed out to our 5th graders!

Thank you to Jenny Santana for coordinating the PTA's involvement in Educational Assistants' Day. We were thrilled to help celebrate this amazing group of people!

Thanks to Alana Witkowski and Eileen Chung for running our Spirit Wear campaign! They put in countless hours designing, choosing and then selling our super Spirit Wear. You two are awesome!  
A Special Thank You



THANK YOU TO NANCY ANDRISACK of Nancy Elizabeth Photography for her generous giveback of family photo sessions in November with all donations received going directly to the PTA. Her work is absolutely beautiful and all families were so thrilled with their photos. THANKS, NANCY!

Interested in checking her photos out or to book her? Visit her website at: <http://www.nancyelizabethphotography.com>

**Do some Holiday Shopping at Five Below**



**December 7 ~ 9**

At TWO Locations! Cherry Hill at Ellisburg AND Rt. 73 in Marlton!  
Shop 'til you Drop and 10% of your purchase will come back to us!



Start collecting those Box Tops! Please ask your friends and family to collect as

well; they really add up to help our school. In the Spring, we will be springing into action on our Box Top campaign – start saving now!



Join "Eat Well, Do Well" loyalty club today if you do not already have a card. Note: those who already have a card can keep their exist-

ing card or get a new one via the app. You will want to enroll in Silver Diner's loyalty club to earn benefits for you (including special savings and a free entrée and dessert on your birthday) and benefits for Sharp School (5% of every transaction). Simply download the Silver Diner app on your phone (you will need to enter a username and password). Then, to link your card number, you will need to use your computer to go to [silverdiner.com/ewdw](http://silverdiner.com/ewdw) to register and link your card to Joseph D. Sharp School. Done! Thereafter, anytime you visit the Silver diner just use your app and Sharp will receive 5% of every time you visit the Silver Diner. See you at the diner!