

# Greece schools pitch stadium

## Voters to decide on three plans March 24

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STAFF WRITER

Greece is the ninth-largest school district in New York, and the town is splintered into four high schools: Arcadia, Athena, Odyssey and Olympia.

Assistant Superintendent Romeo Colilli sees a new district athletic stadium on the Greece Arcadia campus as a way to bring the community together.

"It would be a meeting place and something we can be proud of," he said. "We aren't asking for the Taj Mahal, but a new stadium is long overdue."

Colilli directed a one-hour slideshow to about 20 members of the Greece Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday morning at Odyssey, outlining the three propositions that will be put up for public vote on March 24.

**Proposition 1:** Make building repairs and renovations to 17 Greece schools as well as transportation and professional learning centers. It would include upgraded ventilation and exhaust systems; heating, cooling and pool system upgrades; and flooring, window, lighting and roof replacements. The cost is \$35 million with an aggregate cost of \$48 million including interest expense. State aid and capital reserve contribution would lower the remaining local share estimate to \$4 million.

For an owner of a home valued at \$100,000, that would mean a tax increase of no more than \$5 per year.

**Proposition 2:** Build a 2,600-seat, lighted, artificial turf facility on the

See **STADIUM**, Page [10A](#)

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An artist's rendering of a proposed artificial turf athletic field on the Greece Arcadia campus.

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### Article Continued Below

[See STADIUM on Page A10](#)

### Stadium

Continued from Page 3A

Greece Arcadia campus to be shared by all four high schools and made available for community use. The cost is \$8.5 million (about \$12 million with interest), with \$2.8 million coming in state aid and no capital reserve contribution. The remaining local share estimate would be \$9.7 million.

For an owner of a home valued at \$100,000, there would be an annual rise in the tax bill of no more than \$12.

**Proposition 3:** Use fund balance money from the 2014-15 school year to purchase approximately four acres of land at 1862 Latta Road, adjacent to the existing transportation facility. The land purchase would have no impact on residential taxpayers. Cost: \$207,450.

Colilli stressed that Proposition 2 is contingent on Proposition 1 passing. If voters support the athletic facility but not the building upgrades, the stadium proposal will not proceed. If approved, improvements in Proposition 1 would begin in the summer of 2018. That delay is because of in-depth designs, multiple state approvals and the need to work around the academic year to avoid disrupting students.

Ground-breaking on a new stadium could begin as early as spring 2016, with an estimated completion time of six to eight months.

Polls will be open at each Greece elementary school from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. March 24. For more information, voters can go to the district website at [greece.csd.org](http://greece.csd.org) and click on the vote icon.

Colilli says voter turnout has traditionally been low, and he urged people to show up.

"I hope they don't assume that because this friend or that friend is voting 'yes' that they don't have to vote," he said.

Colilli said the Greece district has 50 buildings among its 17 schools, and the average age of the schools is 53 years. The oldest was built in 1928, the newest in 1993.

The athletic facility would include a ticket booth, a concession stand, team rooms, restrooms, a press box and an equipment storage room with wheelchair accessibility throughout.

Colilli stressed the need is more than just community pride — and a chance to host Section V football, soccer and lacrosse games and local and regional marching band competitions. Up to 10 percent of home games and practices were canceled last year due to wet field conditions at the grass fields at each Greece high school.

Field maintenance labor and materials cost Greece \$15,900 last year on their natural grass venues. Maintaining an artificial turf field would cost \$2,190.

An artificial turf field would allow events to take place in all weather conditions. Lighting would cost \$1,800 per year — "about \$15 per hour because of LED lighting," Colilli said.

Colilli said not every home game for every team would be played at the new facility, which likely would have a generic name such as "Greece Sports Stadium."

"A soccer team in the fall might get three games there, and maybe two would be under the lights," he said.

To alleviate traffic concerns of residents near