

Money approved to upgrade, install new seats in LHS auditorium

- By MICHAEL MORTENSEN, The Laconia Daily Sun
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Principal Mike Fredericksen sits in the Laconia High School Auditorium, which the School Board recently voted to refurbish. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun photo)

LACONIA — The Laconia High School Auditorium will get a major upgrade after the Laconia School Board approved spending almost \$120,000 for a renovation.

The board approved the expenditure of \$118,500 Tuesday evening, and also authorized money for roofing projects at Laconia High School and two of the city's elementary schools.

The condition of the 420-seat auditorium has been in a state of decline for some time, Superintendent Steve Tucker said. The paint is peeling and the seats are falling apart.

“It’s the most needed project in the district,” said School Board member Bob Champlin.

The work is scheduled to begin on April 5, immediately after the Streetcar Company production of “The Wizard of Oz.” The target completion date for the project is May 20.

A Putnam Fund program which had been scheduled to take place in the auditorium will instead be held at the Gilford High School auditorium.

Work will include repainting the auditorium, putting in new seats, modifying and rebuilding the stage and installing a new audio-video system.

The cost of the project will be covered by stabilization aid money which the School District received from the state under the budget compromise reached between the Legislature and Gov. Chris Sununu last fall.

The present high school auditorium was constructed as part of a renovation at the school which took place in the mid-1970s.

The roofing projects approved included replacing the high school gymnasium roof. The current roof leaks in places, Tucker said. In addition, a third of the roof of both Pleasant Street and Elm Street schools will be replaced.

The cost for repairing the high school gymnasium roof will be \$45,000, and \$35,000 for work on each of the elementary school roofs. Tucker said the plan is to do work on one-third of the roof at each of the two schools, in each of the next three years, putting the cost to reroof Pleasant Street and Elm Street schools at \$210,000.

Funds for this year’s roof work will come from \$100,000 that is contained in the budget for unexpected building projects.