



A Letter from Board President Tom Keith

Dear Spackenkill Community,

The Martha Lawrence building has been in the district since 1926. Some of you went to grades K-8 in that building. Since 2014, we have leased the building to Westchester Medical Center for use as a preschool. This preschool provides early childhood education and directly benefits future students of our district.

The district no longer needs to use that space due to declining enrollment and updated buildings. Westchester Medical Center no longer wishes to lease the building, as they want a permanent home for their preschool. This structure requires significant capital improvements and they don't want to spend money to improve a building they do not own, which makes good financial sense.

We have been talking about selling the Martha Lawrence building to Westchester Medical Center over the last 18 months. We think it is in the best interest of our district and taxpayers to sell the building and not assume the responsibility of putting more money into an older facility that we no longer use. Because one of the parcels on the property has deed restrictions, it must be used for educational purposes.

If you have any questions or concerns as taxpayers, please attend the September 10th Board meeting. We hope that you will mark your calendar for September 24th to come out to vote.

Sincerely,

Thomas Keith, Jr.
SUFSD Board President

Board of Education

Thomas Keith, Jr., President
Herman Lo, VP
Dr. Richard Horvath
Dr. Mary Sawyer
Daniel Koehler

FAQS on Sale of Martha Lawrence

Q: Who was Martha Lawrence?

Martha Lawrence (right) was an esteemed teacher and principal in the district from 1928 to 1958.



Q: Why do we have to hold a vote?

In accordance with New York Education Law §§ 402 and 1709 (11), the Board of Education must obtain voter approval before selling any school district property no longer needed for school purposes.



The Education Law authorizes the Board to sell the property "at such price and upon such terms as [the] voters shall prescribe."

Q: How did the district determine a fair price?

The district commissioned an appraisal from McGrath & Company. The appraisal came in at \$2 million, and the purchaser is paying for full value. Please visit: <https://www.spackenkillschools.org/departments/martha-lawrence>



HISTORY OF MARTHA LAWRENCE

1865 The SUFSD was chartered by the NYS Legislature

1866 The first building was constructed (site of present-day fire house)

1920 One-room school house becomes overcrowded

1926 New two-room school house built (later named Martha Lawrence School)

1930s Martha Lawrence adds two wings due to enrollment

1940s IBM expansion creates the need for further enlargement of Martha Lawrence

1979 Martha Lawrence merges with Hagan Elementary and subsequently closes

1980s-present Building is leased by Dutchess Community College, St. Francis Hospital, and Westchester Medical Center

VOTING
September 24, 7 am to 9 pm
Spackenkill High School
Auditorium Lobby
112 Spackenkill Road
Poughkeepsie, NY

