

Goodrich Area Schools

August 4, 2020 Bond Proposal

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) What is a bond? Why is this bond proposal needed?

A bond proposal is how a public school district asks its community for authorization to borrow money to pay for capital expenditures. Voter-approved bond funds can be spent on new construction, additions, remodeling, site improvements, athletic facilities, playgrounds, buses, furnishings, equipment, and technology.

Many of our core infrastructure systems (mechanical, electrical, plumbing), along with roofing and blacktop/pavement have outlived their expected life cycles. The district has continued to address preventative maintenance as much as possible; simply to the point where systems can no longer just be repaired.

Safety of our students and staff is critical. This bond will address security improvements that will update building access control, security cameras, and door monitoring.

Improvements will be made district-wide for network infrastructure, phone systems, classroom AV and student/teacher devices.

In addition, the Bond will address the changing needs of our students inside the classroom, with renovations for collaborative, hands-on learning program development at all buildings. These areas will promote critical thinking, creativity, and communication; skills required of the 21st century work force.

By updating our core infrastructure systems, providing safer facilities and the latest in technology, and introducing modern learning environments for our students, this bond will make a **Safer, Smarter, Stronger...GOODRICH AREA SCHOOLS!**

2) What process was followed to develop the upcoming ballot proposal?

In Spring 2019, the Board of Education hired Auch Construction Management and IDS Architectural Firms to conduct a Facility Conditions Analysis (FCA). The FCA revealed needs across the district which exceeded \$64 million. It was decided that the best plan of action, that would place the least financial burden on our tax paying community, was to spread this amount over a series of bonds.

We are approaching nearly 10 years since the 2011 Bond and we need to maintain the community's investment in the infrastructure of the district. The scope of the May 5 bond proposal, which is the first phase of our master plan, was based on what we have identified as critical needs, not wants. These needs have been shared and affirmed through a variety of initiatives over the past year including the comprehensive facilities study, meetings with our teachers, administrators, and support staff members, public forums, and extensive reviews and discussions at regularly scheduled open board meetings.

3) Does the Board of Education support the proposal?

The Board of Education unanimously supports the size and scope of the proposed bond.

4) Are the proposed improvements in alignment with the District's overall Mission and Goals?

Every decision we make regarding this proposal will be premised on:

- Being in alignment with our district's clearly defined goals and comprehensive Strategic Plan
- Making recommendations based on the very best interests of our students and the community we serve

- Maintaining the current school tax rate (No tax rate increase)

5) Will passage result in an increase in our school debt millage?

We currently levy 7.75 mills annually on all school properties. The bond proposal will not increase the 7.75 mil annual debt levy that the district currently collects for previous building projects, but it will extend the number of years that the levy will be collected. Projections indicate that the current debt levy will start to decline in 2027. If voters approve the proposed bond, the debt levy is not projected to decline until 2032.

6) Can the school tax be reduced to a lower rate, such as 7.5 or 7.25 mills, as a part of this bond proposal?

The current school debt tax rate of 7.75 mills was established when the school first entered into the State of Michigan School Bond Loan Fund. The school district must continue to levy 7.75 mills until all the outstanding loans from the School Bond Loan Fund are repaid.

7) What are the major features of this proposal?

Bond components include security and technology upgrades, a new district gymnasium, building and site infrastructure upgrades, and flexible and collaborative hands-on learning spaces.

8) Why do we need a new gym at Oaktree?

When Oaktree's student population grew, with the addition of 2nd grade, it created a strain on the existing space for scheduling PE classes as well as accommodating the breakfast and lunch programs. With PE classes held in the morning, students must take their breakfast back to their classrooms. The time needed for PE classes also forces Oaktree's lunches to start later in the day resulting in the final lunch period not ending until 1:40 p.m. A new gymnasium would allow for greater scheduling flexibility as the existing multipurpose room would become a permanent cafeteria during the school day.

The new full-size gymnasium will also provide additional practice space for all district student athletes.

9) Will approval help to retain current students and attract new ones?

We know parents choose to live in Goodrich because of the schools. Public schools in Michigan receive their funding from the State on a per-pupil basis. Simply put, the more students that attend schools in our district, the more programs and classes we can offer. Since parents have choices regarding where their children go to school, we need to make Goodrich Area Schools as attractive as possible to prospective homebuyers. We also must maintain the exceptional quality of teachers and staff and instruction opportunities on which our District's positive reputation is based.

10) Will money from the bond proposal be used to pay teacher salaries and benefits or operational costs?

No. By law, school districts are not allowed to use funds from a bond issue for operating expenses such as teacher, administrator or employee salaries or other operational costs. Bond funds must also be kept separate from operating funds.

11) How will passage improve the quality of our students' learning experiences?

The current plan is to include infrastructure for enhanced student learning:

- Security improvements to building and classroom access control
- New secure entrances at Goodrich Middle School and Central Office
- New gymnasium and Maker-space at Oaktree Elementary School
- Cafeteria, Media Center and Hands-on learning renovations at Goodrich High School

- The first wave of interactive smart classroom technology devices will be rolled out
- Collaborative hands-on learning enhancements such as flexible seating and maker-space upgrades will be included at each school
- Furniture replacement and space enhancements for collaborative and flexible learning spaces

12) How will this proposal benefit residents who don't have students in the district?

There are numerous benefits for residents without school-aged children. District facilities and sites are regularly used by community members who do not have children attending District schools. Goodrich Area Schools takes pride in its role as an important community resource and partner. The value and vitality of our community significantly depends on the quality and marketability of our schools. Great schools help to maintain local property values. It is in our community's best interests to protect its investments and to attract families and businesses to our area.

13) What are the key dates leading to the Tuesday, August 4, 2020 vote?

Final day to register to vote in-person (with proof of residency)	August 4, 2020
Request by mail for an absentee ballot received by clerk	July 31, 2020 (by 5:00 p.m.)
Final day to pick up an absentee ballot in person	August 4, 2020 (4:00 p.m.)
Absentee Ballots Returned in person to clerk	August 4, 2020 (8:00 p.m.)
Election Day	August 4, 2020 (7 a.m.-8 p.m.)

Absentee ballots are available 45 days prior to the election.

14) Where and when do I register to vote?

To register to vote, a person must be:

- a U.S. citizen
- a resident of Michigan (at the time you register) and a resident of your city or township for at least 30 days
- At least 18 years of age (when you vote)
- Not currently service a sentence in jail or prison

You may obtain the application at one of the following:

- Your local Secretary of State branch office
- Your local county, city, or township clerk's office
- Offices of several state agencies, like the Department of Human Services, the Department of Community Health, and the Department of Labor and Economic Growth
- Military recruitment centers
- Voter registration drives
- Online at www.Michigan.gov/sos

To vote in the August 4, 2020 School Election, a person must be a resident of the Goodrich Area Schools District and registered to vote.

15) If approved, when will construction begin?

Once the bond passes, the design team will begin working with the district to prepare designs for the various projects listed within the bond application. After the design phases are complete and approved by Goodrich Area Schools Administration, construction documents will be prepared for use by the construction manager for bidding and actual construction. While some security and technology upgrades can be completed during the school year, major renovation and new construction projects will begin during the summer of 2021, when they will cause the least interruption to the school day.

16) If I have questions or wish to request a district representative to speak at a neighborhood, service club or business organization meeting, who do I contact?

Please contact Superintendent Mr. Wayne Wright at wwright@goodrichschools.org or call him at 810-591-2201.