

February 4, 2019

LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

MAY 7, 2019 BOND ELECTION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following is a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) and responses regarding the upcoming Lawton Community Schools Bond Proposal on May 7, 2019.

For further information or additional questions, please contact Superintendent Chris Rice at (269-624-7901 ext. 7997).

1. Why are we considering a bond issue now?

The Board of Education has been studying our facilities, specifically Lawton Elementary and the "Old Middle School" building since 2016. The results of architecture firm TowerPinkster and construction manager Owen-Ames-Kimball's subsequent study determined that long term solutions to identified issues in these buildings cannot be addressed through current per pupil allowance general fund alone.

2. What is the district asking for?

While further details of the bond proposal can be found on our website at www.lawtoncs.org. The plan includes the following:

- Safety and security upgrades at Lawton Elementary including a new fire alarm system, secure entry, and office relocation
- Select roof replacement
- Selective demolition of the "Old Middle School" while improving and retaining the existing gymnasium attached to that building
- Relocating early childhood (into Lawton Elementary) and LAAC (into designated High School space with). Both programs are currently housed in the old building
- Select minor renovations to Early Elementary classrooms including doors, flooring and casework

3. Why are we tearing down the Old Middle School?

The Old Middle/High School, built in 1915, requires significant updates and renovations to provide acceptable, code compliant learning spaces. The results of the facility assessment indicate this section of building would cost nearly as much to simply replace as it would to renovate to current standards. The district also has an abundance of space in our current facilities for both current and future needs and a large portion of this building would remain empty, even after renovation. The building is expected to cost the district significant dollars to remain weather-tight and sound and we'd reached a decision point on its' viability.

4. Why not pursue new tenants for the building?

In deciding not to pursue new uses for the OMS building, the Board considered many factors including:

- The fact that this building remains connected to our Elementary and gymnasium to remain. This significantly limits the allowable uses for a facility of this size while keeping our students safe.
- The building will require significant improvements (roof, exterior, code) for anyone who purchases it and is integrally tied to some existing school utilities.
- 100 year old school buildings have limited use / value on the development market, especially on an operating school campus.

5. What is the amount of the proposed Bond Issue and how will it affect my taxes?

The ballot question asks for \$4.5 million and 0.5 mills equates to \$0.50 of tax per \$1,000 of taxable value on your property. Since taxable value is roughly half of market value, the owner of a home valued at \$100,000 would pay roughly an additional \$25 per year or less than 7 cents per day.

Market Value of Home	Estimated Annual Property Tax Increase
\$50,000	\$12.50
\$75,000	\$18.75
\$100,000	\$25
\$150,000	\$37.50
\$200,000	\$50
\$250,000	\$62.50
\$300,000	\$75

6. Why is the district asking for a tax increase?

After studying our financial options, the community committee and board agreed that the 0.5 mill increase was the most fiscally responsible path to the needed funds. This option is also projected to save the district's taxpayers over \$690,000 in interest versus a 0.0 mill note with a longer term.

7. How were these decisions made?

The board engaged TowerPinkster for a facility assessment in 2016. After study and review, the group then engaged Owen-Ames-Kimball to study projected budgets for facility needs in 2018. The board then worked with a community group (open invitation) through the summer and fall of 2018 to determine the appropriate scope and value of the proposal.

8. When is the election?

The Election will be held on May 7th, 2019

9. Who is eligible to vote?

Any registered, eligible voter residing in the Lawton Community School District is eligible to vote. To register or check on your status, visit <https://www.michigan.gov/sos> and select "Elections in Michigan".

10. When would the improvements take place?

If approved by voters on May 7th, architects would begin designing the project immediately. Work would likely begin being competitively bid per the Michigan School Act in Winter 2019/2020 with construction anticipated to take place Spring 2020 – August 2021. The Board, administration, construction managers and contractors will place the highest priority on ensuring student and staff safety throughout the project. All attempts will be made to minimize the impact on the teaching and learning process.