

## **2016 Technology and Facilities Bond Proposal Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1) What is a bond proposal?**

A bond proposal is a request by the school district for voters to approve the sale of bonds, which will raise funds to make necessary building improvements, purchase equipment, technology, building security and buses for the district.

### **2) When is the vote?**

Tuesday, May 3rd, 2016.

### **3) What is the benefit to the district if this bond is approved?**

The district will utilize the bond funds to provide classroom technology updates, roof replacements, classroom/facility improvements, bus replacements, safety and security improvements to provide secure entrances at Cherryland Middle School and Mill Creek and energy efficiency projects.

### **4) Is this bond similar to the Technology and Facilities Bond that was approved in 2012? How will approval of this bond impact my taxes?**

This bond is similar to the 2012 Technology and Facilities bond which has provided needed funding over the last 4 years. It would provide funds for Technology and Facility updates over the next 4 years. Approval of this bond would actually reduce the district debt tax rate by 11%, from 1.42 mills to 1.26 mills. See also question #14 which compares Elk Rapids School millage tax rates to surrounding districts.

### **5) Why is the millage rate dropping?**

After determining critical needs for technology and facility improvement items, it was determined the millage rate could be dropped by 11% while raising the needed funds.

### **6) Why are some roofs being replaced? How old are they?**

The roofs were assessed in terms of quality and expected remaining life. The worst roofs, most of which are 25 to 30 years old and experience many leaks throughout the year, will be replaced with this bond. Roofs with at least 5 years of expected additional life are not being replaced with this bond.

### **7) The 2012 Technology and Facilities bond provided One to One computing for all Elk Rapids students. Will those devices be replaced with this bond?**

Yes. One to One computing has become a critical tool for our students in the classroom. The current devices which provide 1:1 computing for all Elk Rapids students will be replaced. They will be 4-6 years old when they are replaced. These original devices are beginning to experience performance issues with some of the latest classroom applications and are becoming a concern for administering state mandated testing as well.

### **8) How often do we replace school buses?**

The school district has an ongoing replacement plan whereby buses are replaced at an age of 12-15 years and normally with over 250,000 miles.

**9) What are the major classroom/facility improvements?**

Classroom furniture and flooring replacements, library books and media furnishing, installation of K-1 lockers at Lakeland, Peterman auditorium improvements, music instruments, science lab equipment, maintenance and custodial equipment and Lakeland parking lot resurfacing.

**10) How will safety and security in our schools be enhanced by this bond?** The entrances at Mill Creek Elementary and Cherryland Middle School will be modified to provide one secured entrance during the school day. The entrances will be locked during the school day. Visitors will be allowed in through a “buzzer” system operated by the office staff who can ensure only authorized visitors have access to the school. This type of entrance was built at Lakeland Elementary School with the 2012 Technology and Facilities bond.

**11) Can money from this bond be used to pay for staff salaries and benefits?**



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

**12) How were the technology and facility needs prioritized and determined?** The list of the district’s critical needs was developed over a 6-8 month process that involved feedback from principals, staff, students, community members, experts and numerous school board meetings. Factors such as student benefit, classroom needs and facility age and condition were taken into consideration during this process. Many requests were removed from the list following a decision that they were not the highest need projects.

**13) What is the maximum bond amount being requested?**

The maximum amount requested is a total of \$4.3 million over 4 years.

**14) If the bond is approved, how will ER school taxes attributable to debt compare to other districts in our area?** Currently ER Schools debt rate is less than 1/3 of the state average. ER Schools is at 1.42 mills and the state average is 4.99 mills. ER Schools has the 4th lowest in the Traverse Bay Area ISD. If this bond is approved, the rate will drop 11% to 1.26 mills, which will make ER Schools the 2nd lowest in the ISD assessing a debt millage.

<b>2015 Debt &amp; Sinking Fund Millage Levels</b>							
<b>2015 Debt Millage - Ranked From "Highest to Lowest"</b>							
			<b>Total *</b>				
1	Buckley Community Schools		5.44				
	<b>State Average - 551 Districts</b>		<b>4.99</b>		<b>2015 State Average</b>		
2	Suttons Bay Public Schools		4.54				
3	Alba Public School		4.33				
4	Mancelona Public Schools		3.75				
5	Kalkaska Public Schools		3.17				
6	Bellaire Public Schools		3.15				
7	Traverse City Area Public Schools		3.10				
8	Kingsley Area Schools		2.90				
9	Forest Area Community Schools		2.40				
10	Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools		2.28				
11	Leland Public Schools		2.11				
12	Benzie County Schools		1.68				
13	<b>Elk Rapids Schools</b>		<b>1.42</b>		<b>2015 Elk Rapids Rate</b> <b>Bond approval would lower</b> <b>this rate by 11% to 1.26 mills</b>		
14	Glen Lake Community Schools		1.15				
15	Northport Public School		0.00				
16	Excelsior District #1 (1 room school)		0.00				
* Includes sinking fund millage and debt millages							
<b>Other Area Schools</b>							
a.	Charlevoix		3.12				
b.	Boyne City Schools		3.35				
c.	East Jordan		3.69				
Statewide average (of 551 districts) school debt millage is 4.99.							
487 districts, or 88%, have a higher debt levy than Elk Rapids.							

**15) How is this bond different than the Facilities bond that failed in 2013?**

The 2013 bond was mainly for new construction of a gymnasium, bathrooms at athletic fields and other construction projects. This 2016 Technology and Facilities bond would fund critical items for ongoing operation of the school. This bond allows the school district to keep current on technology for our students, improve classroom environment, replace old buses and perform critical facility work such as roof replacement.