



## **Waterford School District Bond Election 2016 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **When is the election?**

Tuesday, March 8, 2016. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

### **Why do we need a bond election?**

This bond issue will allow us to continue to develop the District by completing projects identified that assist in advancing student achievement. These projects are necessary to provide Waterford students with facilities and tools to further their knowledge and skills needed to complete and to ensure our students, District, and community will remain competitive with all students, districts, and communities in Oakland County.

Since the passage of the 1999 and 2003 bond issues, our schools have undergone major renovations and construction toward improving our facilities for our students, staff, parents, and community, but there is much more to accomplish. Our newest school building, Waterford Mott, was constructed in 1969 and we need to continue to make capital improvements to all buildings which include replacing boilers, roofs, heating, cooling, and electrical systems. We need exterior improvements such as parking lot improvements and expansions, sidewalk paving, masonry restoration, fencing, and site development at all schools. Our technology must remain competitive with the expansion of technology opportunities for all our students. This bond issue will ensure that we provide quality opportunities for our students and community and will allow us to continue our strategic plan for improving our facilities.

### **How will the bond proposal benefit students and the community?**

The bond proposal will support continuation of the school district's long-range facilities plan, assuring that the learning environment is updated and the schools and school facilities are upgraded, renovated, and kept in good repair.

All bond proposal projects are designed to maintain the community's investment in its school district and to reflect positively on homeowner property values.

### **What will the bond proposal cost?**

If voters approve the bond proposal request, there will be no increase to current property taxes.

## **What will happen if voters do not approve the bond proposal?**

The majority of the bond projects cannot be completed as planned. However, the capital improvements such as roofs and boilers will remain a critical need. Funding for these projects will need to come from the District's general fund, impacting our classrooms and ultimately our students.

## **Will all bond proposal revenue stay in the Waterford School District?**

Yes. All revenue from the bond proposal will stay in the Waterford School District. None of the revenue will go to Lansing or to any other school district.

## **If the bond proposal is approved by voters, will property values be affected?**

Real estate values tend to be higher in communities with school districts that offer a quality education program and have up-to-date school facilities. Property values tend to be lower in communities that have schools that are out of date and poorly maintained.

## **Why are buses included in the bond proposal?**

Identifying the replacement of worn out buses in the bond proposal relieves pressure on the general fund operating budget and assures that Waterford's bus fleet will be systematically upgraded as buses reach the end of their useful life.

School buses are typically considered worn out when they are 10-12 years old or have odometer readings of 175,000 or more miles. Waterford has 80 school buses. They range in age from one to 15 years, averaging seven years of age. About one-half the school bus fleet should be replaced in the next three years. Waterford's buses travel over one million miles a year transporting an average of 5,500 students per day to school and school-related activities.

## **What technology is included in the bond proposal?**

All technology upgrades included in the bond proposal are designed to support classroom instruction and enhance the learning environment. A primary focus is to establish and implement a process that assures standard technology is available in every classroom. School district technology upgrades in the bond proposal include:

- ✓ Classroom technology enhancements
- ✓ Elementary computer station hubs and sound amplification
- ✓ Additional computer lab in each elementary
- ✓ High speed wireless infrastructure and District owned high speed fiber network

## **Can any of the bond proposal funds be used for employee salaries or operating expenses?**

No. Bond sale revenue cannot be used for salaries or day-to-day operations for the District. These types of expenditures are prohibited by State law. All bond issue projects are audited by the Department of

Treasury, State of Michigan, to ensure compliance. All past bond issues have received the highest rating possible by the Treasury Department and external auditors.

Bonds cannot be used for:

- Repairs, maintenance, or maintenance agreements
- Supplies, salaries, service contracts, lease payments, installment purchase contracts Automobiles, trucks, or vans
- Portable classrooms purchased for temporary use
- Uniforms
- Textbooks
- Upgrades to an existing computer operating system or application software
- Computer training, computer consulting, or computer maintenance contracts.

## How are Michigan's schools funded?

The bulk of the funding to operate Michigan's schools comes from a *foundation allowance* paid by the State of Michigan. The State collects 6.0 mills from every homeowner in Michigan. For businesses and people with second homes, the State collects an additional 18.0 mills. This revenue is then divided among public schools in Michigan. The amount returned to each public school is called their *foundation allowance*.

## Who can vote in this bond proposal election?

Anyone can vote who resides within the Waterford School District boundaries, will be 18 years of age or older on Election Day, and is registered to vote by February 8, 2016.

## Where can I register to vote?

You can register to vote at any Secretary of State office or at the Clerk's Office where you reside. You can download a voter registration application at [www.michigan.gov/documents](http://www.michigan.gov/documents).

## Do I need to update my voter registration?

You need to update your voter registration if you have changed your name or address since the last time you voted. You can do this at any Secretary of State or at the Clerk's Office where you reside.

## Where do I vote?

You will vote at your regular school district precinct. If you are unsure of your precinct, you may visit Waterford Township's website at <http://waterfordmi.gov/158/Voting-Precincts-Locations> or call 248.674.6266 for more information.

## Can I vote by absentee ballot?

Registered voters can vote by absentee ballot if they meet one of the following requirements:

1. They expect to be out of town on Election Day;
2. They are 60 years of age or older;
3. They are unable to vote without assistance at the polls; or,

4. They cannot attend the polls due to religious reasons.

Absentee ballots applications are available to voters on Waterford Township's website at <http://waterfordmi.gov/161/Absentee-Ballots> or call 248.674.6266 for more information.