

Q: What is on the November 7, 2023, ballot?

Westwood Community School District's (WCSD's) Board of Education is proposing a bond issue on the November 7, 2023, ballot. The proposal asks voters to consider a **\$24.5 million** bond for a wide range of projects, including security and facility upgrades, improved classroom environments, athletic and site improvements, and building upgrades.

Q: Why is the district proposing this bond?

The last bond program was passed in 1958 to build Robichaud High School in 1960. WCSD is committed to improving district-wide facilities while continuing the district's mission to create a 21st-century education experience for our students.

Q: How was this plan developed?

WCSD conducted a facility assessment, and after creating a detailed list of needs, requirements, and suggested improvements by the administration and the school board, WCSD met with its operations committee. The district reviewed the assessment with the school board and concluded that a bond proposal would be needed to fund improvements to each building in the district. WCSD met with the state of Michigan and reviewed the bond with its professional teams to ensure the district would be using taxpayer money wisely.

Q: How would our students and community benefit?

The bond proposal would help ensure our school facilities provide opportunities for our students and the community with access to 21st-century education and improved facilities for student, staff, and community use.

Q: How are Michigan schools funded?

The state of Michigan provides funding to school districts on a per-pupil basis, based on the cost to educate the average pupil per year. The state of Michigan **DOES NOT** provide funding to address facilities; instead, facilities are typically funded through local property taxes. There are primarily two ways that school districts can raise money for facility improvements: levying sinking funds and selling bonds.

Q: What is the difference between a bond proposal and a sinking fund?

Bond proposals are used to finance major capital projects. The district is able to borrow money upfront and pay back the bond amount over time with a debt millage that may be approved by voters.

Sinking funds are **millage _____** that may be approved by voters and levied on an annual basis to address the immediate needs of school buildings, facilities, and surrounding school

sites. This is usually intended for smaller improvements rather than major renovations and upgrades. Also, sinking funds can only be used to equip schools in limited ways.

Q: What if the bond proposal doesn't pass?

Bond proposal failure will mean the district will have to delay much-needed improvements and enhancements. In addition, emergency improvements will have to be paid for with general operating funds that would otherwise go to support student educational programs. It is also likely that program enhancements would be put on hold, potentially impacting the opportunities and programs available for our students.

Q: What can proceeds generated by the bond program be used for? And what can they NOT be used for?

Bond proceeds **CAN** be used for the following items:

- Construction and remodeling of facilities
- Purchase of technology equipment and infrastructure
- Purchase of equipment and furniture
- Site improvements

Bond proceeds **CANNOT** be used for the following items:

- **Staff salaries and wages**
- General operating expenses, repairs, and maintenance
- Classroom supplies and textbooks
- **Administrative costs**

Q: When and where can I register to vote?

To vote in the November 7, 2023, election, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- At least 18 years of age by election day
- A resident of Michigan and WCSD for at least 30 days (when you vote)
- Registered to vote
- Not currently serving a jail or prison sentence

Absentee ballots have been available to voters since September 28, 2023. Online or by mail voter registration ends October 23, 2023. From October 24 through November 7 at 8 p.m., registration will be open in person **ONLY** at your local clerk's office.

Voter registration forms and absentee ballots are available online at www.michigan.gov/sos.

Q: Where do I vote?

To find your voting precinct, visit mvic.sos.state.mi.us/ or contact your city clerk.

Dearborn Heights City Clerk

Lynne M. Senia

313-791-3430

Inkster City Clerk

Verna Chapman

vchapman@cityofinkster.com

Q: Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

For more information, visit www.westwoodschoools.net or email westwoodbond@wvschools.net