

**Allendale Public Schools
Aug. 6, 2024 Bond Proposal
Frequently Asked Questions & Answers**

Looking to the future of Allendale Public Schools, our community will have an opportunity to vote on a school bond proposal on the Aug. 6, 2024 election ballot. If approved by voters, this bond proposal would provide \$88,270,000 for district-wide improvements with an expected **ZERO tax-rate increase**.

BOND BASICS

What is a bond proposal and how can funds from a bond be spent?

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 projects identified in the proposal. Funds raised through the sale of bonds cannot be used on operational expenses such as employee salaries and benefits, school supplies, textbooks or general maintenance. Bond funds must be kept separate from operating funds and must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

What was the process to determine what is in the bond proposal?

The District has methodically studied the current and projected needs of school buildings and educational programs to determine a facility master plan. Using this information, supplemented with staff and community input, district leaders and the Board of Education are now asking voters to consider a school bond proposal on the Aug. 6, 2024 ballot to address: safety and security, aging facilities and athletic improvements. For a detailed list of projects, see the district website.

Why are we considering this now?

In 2017, the Allendale community approved a bond to build the Early Childhood Center, agreeing to pay 12 mills in taxes until 2043. Thanks to careful fiscal management, including refinancing bonds and benefiting from community growth and rising property values, Allendale Public Schools has reduced the bond's term by nine years. This allows the district to propose a new bond on August 6, 2024, without increasing the 12 mills.

Delaying these improvements by five to ten years could significantly increase costs. By acting now, the district can make enhancements in 2025-2026 using funds that would otherwise be needed in 2035, thus maximizing APS' buying power. The district's goal is to continue being good stewards of taxpayers' money and further reduce the bond's lifespan.

How is a no tax-rate increase possible?

The current debt millage tax rate of 12 mills is expected to remain the same. The overall debt millage rate of 12 mills is projected to be extended until 2043; thereafter, it is expected to decrease.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

How would the bond proposal impact my property tax rate?

If approved by voters, the Allendale debt millage rate is projected to remain the same as the current levy with no **tax-rate increase** to property owners.

Would the approval of the bond proposal have any impact on our current operational budget?

While funding from this bond proposal is independent of district's general fund operating budget, the bond would have a positive impact on the district's general fund by allowing the district to reallocate some of the operating funds that are currently being spent on aging facilities, mechanical systems and technology. The operational savings generated from new and cost-efficient facilities could be redirected to student programs and resources.

Would money from the bond proposal be used to pay teachers' salaries and benefits?

No. School districts are not allowed to use funds from a bond for operating expenses such as teacher, administrator or employee salaries, routine maintenance or other operating costs. Bond proceeds can only be spent for purposes approved by the voters. Bond revenue must be kept separate from operating funds and all bond expenditures must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

How can voters be sure the bond funds would be spent the way they are supposed to be spent?

Michigan law requires that expenditure of bond proceeds be audited. The bond proceeds can only be spent for purposes approved by the voters. The bond proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses. An audit would be completed and filed with the Department of Treasury to ensure compliance.

Are businesses and second homes (non-homestead property) and primary homes (homestead property) treated the same regarding bond millage?

Yes, businesses and second homes (non-homestead) and primary homes (homestead) are treated the same regarding bond millage. All properties are assessed for debt millage based on their taxable value.

BOND PROJECT INFORMATION

The Early Childhood Center was built in 2019, why do we need additional classrooms?

The demand for high-quality early childhood education has increased significantly, leading to a need for more learning spaces at the Early Childhood Center. This bond proposal would allow for the addition of eight classrooms. Since being built, we've already grown out of the ECC. This past year, four preschool classes had to be held at Evergreen Elementary. This proposed expansion would allow all pre-K through second grades to be under one roof, creating a sense of community from the beginning of their educational journey.

Why are we investing in our athletic facilities?

Allendale's wide range of sports programs has increased the need for year-round, modernized facilities. The bond would address space constraints and expand athletic and educational opportunities for the district and community. The bond includes the construction of an indoor turf fieldhouse for school and community use. The facility will feature team rooms, weight room, as well as storage and collaboration areas to provide year-round indoor space for athletic, music, educational and community programming. The expanded facilities will not only promote additional opportunities for student athletes, but also create a safer environment by alleviating overcrowded spaces.

Will the field house only be used for high school athletics?

No. The new turf field house will be available for both district and community use. In Allendale, especially during the winter, there are limited spaces for groups to practice, train, stay active, and collaborate. The construction of this new field house will provide a versatile space for a variety of activities, including marching band practice, youth sports (ASYO, Little League, etc...), physical education, exercise classes for all ages, and more.

Why tennis courts?

Allendale Public Schools remains the only district in its current athletic conference without a tennis team, simply because we do not have tennis courts. Consequently, some students have transferred to other schools to play tennis. Additionally, some of the new courts will feature lines for pickleball, which is growing in popularity in our community.

What oversights would hold the district accountable?

If approved by voters, the district's Architect/Engineer would design the proposed projects and prepare construction documents and specifications for the projects. Once the projects are designed, the district's Construction Manager will assemble bid packages and publicly advertise to solicit competitive bids for all work. This process is required by law as outlined in the Revised School Code. This process ensures that the district selects the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. All qualified contractors will have an opportunity to attend a pre-bid meeting to obtain additional information and project clarification. All qualified contractors will have the opportunity to participate in the competitive bid process.

At what point would the State of Michigan, as well as the local fire and police departments, provide input into the bond projects?

Each project will be required to be submitted to both the Bureau of Construction Codes (BCC) and the Bureau of Fire Services (BFS) for both plan review and permitting. These agencies will review the projects to ensure they comply with applicable codes, before any building permits are issued. Building

plans and specifications must be signed and sealed by a Licensed Architect/Professional Engineer before submission. Michigan law also requires school districts to consult on the plans for the construction or major renovation regarding school safety issues with the law enforcement agency that is the first responder for that school building. This consultation would happen after a bond proposal has been approved by voters, before construction documents are finalized prior to project commencement.

VOTING INFORMATION

Am I eligible to vote?

To be eligible to register to vote you must be:

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

How do I register to vote?

- Visit [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote) to register to vote online.
- It is recommended by the Secretary of State to register by mail by July 22, 2024 to participate in the Aug. 6, 2024 election.
- Individuals may also register in-person at their local clerk's office through Aug. 6, 2024 with the required documentation. For assistance in obtaining the address of your local clerk, visit [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote).

If I rent a house, can I vote?

Yes, if you rent a house you can still vote. You must be a registered voter in the city or township you are living in and live within the school district's boundaries.

How is an absentee voter ballot obtained?

- Registered voters must complete and submit the application to receive their absentee voter ballot.
- To vote by mail, fill out the application and sign it, and then return it to your local clerk.
- For assistance in obtaining the address of your local clerk, visit [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote).
- When filling out the application, if you check the box to be added to the permanent absentee voter list, you will get an application mailed to you before every election.
- If you registered to vote after absentee voter ballot applications were mailed, applications may be obtained at [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote).
- Absentee voter ballots are available to the general public by June 27, 2024 through Election Day, Aug. 6, 2024

What are the key dates leading up to Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024, election day?

Registering to vote:

- The last day for voters to register by mail is **July 22, 2024**
- Voters may register in-person through Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024 (Election Day) with the required documentation

Absentee Voting:

- Absentee voter ballots are to be made available by **June 27** until Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024
- Contact your local clerk with questions

Where and when will the vote occur?

- Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024, is Election Day, but registered voters may vote early using an absentee ballot.
- Early in-person voting also will be available at some polling locations from July 27-Aug. 4. Visit michigan.gov/vote to identify which polling locations will be open and at what times.

- On Election Day, polls will be open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm on Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024.
- If you have questions or do not know where you vote, please contact your city/township office.

BALLOT VERBIAGE PROPOSAL

Shall Allendale Public Schools, Ottawa County, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Eighty-Eight Million Two Hundred Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$88,270,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor, in one or more series, for the purpose of:

erecting additions to, including security improvements for, remodeling, furnishing and refurnishing, and equipping and reequipping school buildings; erecting, furnishing and equipping a field house and school support buildings; acquiring and installing instructional technology and instructional technology equipment for school buildings; purchasing school buses; and equipping, developing, and improving playgrounds, play fields, athletic fields and facilities, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas, and sites?

The following is for informational purposes only:

The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2025, under current law, is 2.04 mills (\$2.04 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a 0 mill net increase over the prior year's levy. The maximum number of years the bonds of any series may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is thirty (30) years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 5.64 mills (\$5.64 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation).

The school district expects to borrow from the State School Bond Qualification and Loan Program to pay debt service on these bonds. The estimated total principal amount of that borrowing is \$13,174,930 and the estimated total interest to be paid thereon is \$19,562,570. The estimated duration of the millage levy associated with that borrowing is 18 years and the estimated computed millage rate for such levy is 10.06 mills. The estimated computed millage rate may change based on changes in certain circumstances.

The total amount of qualified bonds currently outstanding is \$56,975,000. The total amount of qualified loans currently outstanding is approximately \$20,031,759.

(Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited and the proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)