

# BOND Proposal FAQs - Election Date April 25, 2023



**Updates on our website:**

<https://www.sw.wednet.edu/our-district/bond-2023>

*Homeowners who are 61 years or older or disabled, and who meet income requirements may qualify for a property tax exemption. For information regarding exemptions, call the Island County Assessor at (360) 679-7303.*

Questions:	Answers:
<b>When was the last SWSD Bond Proposal?</b>	The last approved bond proposal was in 1992.
<b>What is a bond?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A bond is for physical building improvements.</li> <li>● It provides immediate funds for long-term capital projects such as modernization of buildings or new construction.</li> <li>● It is a special tax upon property voted by the community and provides a <u>specific dollar amount</u> used to pay principal and interest payments.</li> <li>● A bond is financed over a longer period of time, up to 20 years (like a mortgage).</li> <li>● The bond requires a supermajority to pass (60% + 1) and must meet validation requirements (40% - last general election).</li> <li>● Bonds help districts maintain schools and provide a safe environment for students to support learning by funding renovation of aging schools and replacing or updating building infrastructure.</li> <li>● All of the bond tax funds collected will stay in our school district to update schools.</li> </ul>
<b>What is the difference between a bond and a levy?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A bond receives the funds upfront and is repaid over multiple years (20), with interest. It operates similar to a home mortgage.</li> <li>● Levies provide funds on a semi-annual basis with collections in the spring and fall. The district is not “borrowing” funds so there is no interest and repayment plan.</li> <li>● The district’s last bond was repaid in 2010. Taxpayers have not paid property taxes towards a bond for the past 12 years.</li> <li>● The district does currently have a capital projects/technology levy. Approximately, \$2.25 million a year is used from this levy to support technology and smaller scaled capital upgrades.</li> <li>● By law, Bonds/Capital Project Levy funds can only be used for facility construction, facility renovation, technology, and major capital improvements. Neither bond nor capital project levy can be used to pay for instructional personnel.</li> </ul>
<b>Why is this bond being requested?</b>	The district has identified major renovation projects designed to protect the integrity of the facilities, improve appearance, functionality and to extend the building life cycle for another 30 years.
<b>What is the purpose of this bond? OR Why does the district need a bond?</b>	The district hasn’t had an approved bond since 1992. Major projects such as replacing the high school/middle school roof and siding are too expensive to accomplish through our capital projects levy.

<p><b>What projects would be funded by this bond?</b></p>	<p>Projects included in this bond fall under these 6 categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refresh school appearance, articulate entries, and enhance spaces of pride that invite students and community in for learning and gathering. Create distinct identities for the middle school and high school under one roof.</li> <li>2. Modernizations throughout to improve student and community experience, perception and pride. Re-envisioning existing indoor and outdoor spaces to better serve young learners and expanding usable outdoor space.</li> <li>3. Update classrooms to improve student learning experience and integrate the latest technology. Creating classrooms that are age appropriate and supportive of multi-modal learning to enhance the success of all our learners.</li> <li>4. Improve flow outside and inside the schools and enhance safety at entrances and perimeters for a better student experience during and after school hours.</li> <li>5. Upgrade mechanical and electrical infrastructure for reduced environmental impact, improve performance, reduce maintenance costs, and increase student comfort and wellness.</li> <li>6. Improve ADA compliance and access to single use restrooms to support all students. Add inclusive and covered areas to provide a vibrant and engaging outdoor experience for all and to support athletics and community use.</li> </ol> <p>Identified projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exterior building improvements</li> <li>● Inclusive playground</li> <li>● ADA compliant/restrooms update</li> <li>● Heating/cooling system upgrades</li> <li>● Reconfiguration &amp; re-pavement of parking lots</li> <li>● Covered outdoor educational structure</li> <li>● Covered walkway at Elementary</li> <li>● Upgraded control systems</li> <li>● Interior flooring upgrades</li> <li>● Siding &amp; window replacement - MS/HS</li> <li>● Structures to identify MS &amp; HS entrances</li> <li>● Locker room upgrades - MS/HS</li> <li>● Roofing replacement - MS/HS</li> <li>● Stadium/field/track upgrades</li> <li>● Classroom re-configuration</li> <li>● Student support spaces</li> <li>● Courtyard upgrade - MS/HS</li> </ul>
<p><b>Why is renovation being considered over new construction for HS/MS?</b></p>	<p>Renovation of the <b>high school/middle school facility</b> is approximately \$61,000,000. To build a new facility the cost would be approximately \$242,000,000.</p>

<p><b>Why is artificial turf being considered for the stadium field at the high school?</b></p>	<p>There is great demand for use of the stadium field throughout the year by district PE programs, athletics programs, sports leagues, and other community programs.</p> <p>The current natural turf field is overused and overscheduled, resulting in poor conditions, and limits those that can use the field, resulting in the district having to deny requests.</p> <p>A synthetic turf field would extend usable hours of the field for the district and community, lower maintenance costs, limit watering needed for periodic cleaning only, be usable in any weather condition, eliminate divots and mud and allow the district to host district sporting events.</p>
<p><b>How was the bond recommendation developed?</b></p>	<p>A facility bond committee was formed in 2019 to identify instructional facilities that needed improvement. The committee viewed all facilities, enrollment trends and changes in instructional uses. Based on this work, the committee identified a list of potential projects. The district procured professional architectural and engineering services to help more clearly define these projects.</p>
<p><b>How was the bond amount determined?</b></p>	<p>Based on the project list developed the architects enlisted professional construction estimators to determine the current cost of each project. Once the project cost was calculated, additional funds for inflation and soft costs were added to come up with the \$80,000,000 request.</p>
<p><b>How much revenue would the bond create?</b></p>	<p>The bond would generate \$80,000,000.</p>
<p><b>When is the election?</b></p>	<p><b>April 25, 2023</b></p>
<p><b>What would the added cost of this bond be to taxpayers over the current total local school tax rate?</b></p>	<p>The <b>current</b> local school tax rate is \$.99 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The cost of the bond would increase this by \$.70/\$1,000.</p>
<p><b>What are the <b>projected</b> total school tax rates?</b></p>	<p>The <b>projected ( future projection 2024+)</b> local school tax rate, if the bond is approved, would consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bond - \$.70</li> <li>● EP&amp;O Levy - \$.48 (expected to decrease from current rate .60)</li> <li>● Capital/Tech Levy - \$.31 (expected to decrease from current rate.39)</li> </ul> <p>Total Local Tax Rate - \$1.49/\$1,000 of assessed value</p>

<b>Compare surrounding school district Bond requests with SWSD?</b>	<b>2022 Total Tax Rates</b>																																																																																																					
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<b>Will the district collect more money as assessed value increases?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No, voters are asked to approve <u>a maximum amount of debt</u> the district can use for construction purposes (\$80,000,000).</li> <li>As the assessed value rises, the rate per \$1,000 decreases.</li> <li>(Rate per 1,000 are informational estimates only – school districts <u>do not</u> collect on a rate/1,000 basis)</li> </ul>																																																																																																					
<b>What is the length of bond, are there bonds expiring or being replaced?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The length of the bond proposed is 20 years.</li> <li>There are no bonds expiring or being replaced, the 1992 bond was paid off in 2010.</li> </ul>																																																																																																					
<b>Does the district have blueprints or plans for the projects identified?</b>	No, the design process would occur after the bond is approved by the voters.																																																																																																					
<b>Questions from Community Forum:</b>																																																																																																						
<b>Enrollment projections</b>	Enrollment is headed downhill, the effect is how enrollment plays into the plans. Two facilities are being addressed in this Bond proposition due to decreased enrollment and to meet the planned student configuration. In the next 10 years, we expect to see the same pattern - a reduction in enrollment. We expect that there will be a drop to approximately 950 FTE over time. The Board has decided to keep the facilities (not sell off) in case they are needed for future enrollment.																																																																																																					
<b>If vote is positive, when will construction start?</b>	We expect the following 6-12 months to be in the design phase. We expect to break ground by April, 2024. The goal is to be finished by 2026. We plan to do work in the summer for the least amount of student disruption and use other facilities when needed.																																																																																																					
<b>If all bond is not used, it will not be returned or cash, the money comes out in portions.</b>	If work is done for less, we wouldn't see all the bonds. The money would not come to the district.																																																																																																					

<b>Bonding capacity dies if not used? Is this a remodel? Or new construction? Art requirements?</b>	Depends how the remodel is phased. Discussion will start to determine disruption and costs. Art requirement is 1.5% .
<b>Integration of curriculum?</b>	NO - the bond can only be used for facilities. Not books. We can modify classrooms to meet curriculum needs- modify theater, shops, art, CTE needs etc.
<b>Covid relief programs</b>	ESSER funds were received and used. Largely used on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● commercial air cleaners for the classrooms,</li> <li>● staffing to reduce class sizes and to give attention to students who needed it,</li> <li>● and for nursing support</li> </ul>
<b>State or renovations covered by Clean Action Bill</b>	\$4million can possibly come from the state, however it is not guaranteed. These funds would be added to the \$80mill bond funds.
<b>Artificial turf- what it's made of?</b>	Chemicals. Consultation will be provided. Lots of options will be reviewed. In the end, the District will balance performance to health and environmental issues. Lots of research has been done. However, we can dig deeper. Supporting factors are the limitation on soft tissue injury and ongoing maintenance. Currently, the pros outweigh the negatives.
<b>Resurfacing tennis courts - 2023 summer plans</b>	Pickle ball court lines will be added to the tennis courts. A new retaining wall and fence will be added. These projects are not waiting for the bond approval.
<b>Carbon footprint will be less?</b>	Yes, however how much is not certain. We have to go green, state requirement. Some plans in the works are the electric bus, solar panels. Bond plans include new siding, roofing, and hvac on the SWHS/MS building. This will reduce the operational carbon footprint. Remodel vs new construction also reduces our carbon footprint..

For any further questions, please contact SWSD Assistant Superintendent [Dan Poolman at dpoolman@sw.wednet.edu](mailto:dpoolman@sw.wednet.edu).