



Western School District

1400 S. Dearing Rd. Parma, MI 49269 • 517.841.8171

March 8, 2023

Good Afternoon Western Parents & Community Members,

There is a lot happening as we prepare for spring break and then the sprint to the end of the school year. While more information will be coming soon, I want to keep you in the loop by providing some quick snapshots of things on the horizon.

Elementary School Design & Construction:

The design of the new elementary school is progressing nicely. We are excited about the concept that every grade level will have their own “neighborhood” within the larger building. The Young 5’s, Kindergarten and 1st grade neighborhoods will be located in a single-story structure at the north end of the building. The 2nd-5th grade neighborhoods will be located in a two-story structure at the south end of the building. The middle of the school will house the gym, activity room, media center, cafeteria and welcome center, connecting our elementary community together. Here are some [preliminary drawings and elevations](#). Some of the site clearing began this week. We anticipate bidding and construction to begin late summer 2023.

Non-Homestead Millage Renewal:

Western School District has a Non-Homestead Millage **renewal** on the May 2, 2023 ballot. A Non-Homestead millage (18 mills) is assessed on non-primary residences, such as rentals, second homes, businesses, industry and non-qualified farmland. Western’s Non-Homestead millage is necessary in order for the school district to receive full per pupil funding from the State of Michigan. For 2024, the Non-Homestead property tax would generate about \$2.2 million towards district operating revenue. To learn more, please visit the [informational page](#) on our website.

Special Education Millage Renewal:

The Jackson County Intermediate School District has a Special Education Millage **renewal** on the May 2, 2023 ballot. This special education millage generates revenue that is returned to local school districts to help them pay for special educational services. For Western, the special education reimbursement from this millage is about \$1.1 million. Please visit the JCISD website for more on the [Special Education Millage renewal](#).

Strategic Planning:

It has been several years since our last strategic planning process. Recently, the Board of Education selected MASB (Michigan Association of School Boards) to help develop

a new 3-5 year strategic plan. The purpose of this initiative is to create a vision for Western's future that will help make the district an even better place for our students to learn and prepare them for life after high school. Students, parents, community members, staff and board members will be part of this process. You are welcome to participate by completing a [short survey](#) or attending one of our community meetings on *April 10th and 13th at 6:00 p.m. in the Western High School library.*

I realize there is a lot of information contained in this letter. Over the next several weeks, we will send additional information and some gentle reminders. If you have questions, please feel free to visit our website or contact me at mike.smajda@wsdpanthers.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Smajda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Smajda" clearly distinguishable.

Michael R. Smajda
Superintendent