



# STRONGSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

## What is the Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan?

The Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan is Strongsville City Schools' long-term elementary facilities plan. It is the result of a multi-year process involving facility assessments, enrollment analysis, financial modeling, and community input.

The plan focuses on addressing aging elementary buildings, long-term facility sustainability, and operational efficiency while maintaining neighborhood-based schools where possible.

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## What does the Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan include?

The plan outlines a future elementary configuration that includes:

- Three newly constructed K–5 elementary schools, each serving approximately 700 students
- Continued use of Kinsner Elementary as a K–5 school, with targeted renovations
- A renovated and expanded preschool facility at Muraski

This approach combines new construction and strategic renovation based on facility condition data, standardized cost thresholds, and long-term planning considerations.

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## What is the estimated cost of the Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan?

At its meeting on January 22, 2026, the Strongsville Board of Education approved a Resolution to Proceed, placing a \$147,650,000 school improvement bond issue on the May 5, 2026 ballot for voter consideration.

The bond issue is projected to carry an estimated millage rate of 3.43, which equates to an annual cost of approximately \$120 per \$100,000 of appraised property value. For the average home in Strongsville, this will cost homeowners approximately \$1 per day (\$1.15 per day for a \$350,000 home).

If approved, the bond would be repaid over a period of 36 years.

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## When would voters consider the bond issue?

The Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan is scheduled to appear on the May 5, 2026 ballot, allowing time for continued public review and information sharing.

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## Why is the district reviewing elementary facilities now?

Many of Strongsville's elementary schools were constructed in the 1960s and were designed for different enrollment patterns, educational practices, and safety standards. While the buildings have been carefully maintained, aging infrastructure creates challenges related to:

- Safety and security
- Mechanical system reliability
- ADA accessibility
- Space limitations for instruction and student services

Over time, increased maintenance and repair costs have required operating funds that could otherwise support instructional programming and student services.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### **What facility conditions are currently impacting elementary schools?**

Some students are currently learning in mobile classrooms, which were originally intended as temporary solutions. Mobile units now exist at all elementary buildings except Whitney Elementary, creating 14 additional instructional spaces.

Additionally, existing buildings often lack adequate space for:

- Art, music, and band/orchestra instruction
- Media centers
- Small-group and collaborative learning environments

These limitations affect daily operations and instructional flexibility.

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### **Why not build fewer, larger elementary schools?**

The district studied multiple configurations, including building two larger elementary schools serving approximately 1,000 students each. Available sites could not accommodate schools of that size, and larger buildings raised concerns related to:

- Site capacity
- Traffic flow
- Neighborhood impact

The current plan reflects the greatest level of consolidation that could be achieved responsibly while maintaining neighborhood compatibility and site functionality.

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### **Why has our district reduced the number of elementary schools from eight to five?**

Many of Strongsville's older elementary buildings were constructed in the 1960s. While they served generations of students well for 70 years, some buildings are no longer sustainable due to age, maintenance needs, and the changing demands of modern instruction. Over time, buildings such as Allen and Drake were retired due to safety, functionality, and structural issues.

The reduction in the number of schools reflects decades of careful planning that balances educational needs with operational efficiency. Our district honors the legacy of the buildings and the generations of students who learned there, while moving forward with modern, safe, and accessible facilities that meet today's educational standards.

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### **How were renovation versus replacement decisions made?**

Strongsville City Schools evaluates facilities using the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) renovate-versus-replace methodology. This approach compares renovation costs to the cost of new construction.

When renovation costs approach or exceed two-thirds (67%) of replacement costs, replacement is generally considered more cost-effective.

Current renovation-to-replacement ratios include:

- Chapman Elementary: 74%
- Muraski Elementary: 77% (older portions range from 76–79%)
- Surrarrer Elementary: 74%
- Whitney Elementary: 83%
- Kinsner Elementary: 35%

These ratios guided which buildings were recommended for replacement versus renovation.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### **Why tear down some buildings now instead of renovating them?**

Our district uses the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) renovate-versus-replace methodology to guide facility decisions. This approach compares the cost of renovating a building with the cost of constructing a new one. When renovation costs approach or exceed two-thirds (67%) of replacement costs, replacement is typically more cost-effective.

For example, Chapman Elementary, Muraski Elementary, Surrarrer Elementary, and Whitney Elementary easily exceeded this threshold, while Kinsner Elementary remains well below.

This methodology ensures taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly, providing students with safe, functional, and modern learning environments.

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### **Why is Muraski being converted into a preschool facility?**

Ohio law requires school districts to provide preschool services, including programming for students with disabilities. Under the plan, Muraski would be renovated and expanded to serve as a centralized preschool facility.

Centralizing preschool services allows:

- More consistent access to programs
  - More efficient use of specialized staff and resources
  - Reduction of duplicated services across multiple buildings
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### **How does the plan affect the surrounding community?**

Facility planning considers neighborhood fit, traffic patterns, and site safety. The plan reduces the number of elementary sites to four locations, allowing operations to be concentrated at fewer, more functional sites.

Key considerations include:

- Traffic flow and arrival/dismissal procedures
  - Site safety
  - Compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods
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### **What happens to the old school properties in the future?**

Decisions about properties no longer used as schools will be made collaboratively with the city, neighbors, and community stakeholders. The Board's Facilities Development Committee, which is comprised of community members, district staff, and Board of Education representatives, meets regularly to review and evaluate our district's facilities, land use, and future needs.

Our district is committed to finding the best shared-use opportunities that benefit the community, while respecting surrounding neighborhoods. Each property will be evaluated for safe, productive, and community-friendly uses in the future.

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### **How does this plan affect long-term facility maintenance?**

By reducing the number of aging buildings, the plan allows capital funding to be focused on fewer, more modern facilities. This supports long-term maintenance planning and helps manage repair costs over time.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### **How was community input incorporated?**

Over the past three years, the district worked with facility experts, staff, parents, and community members to evaluate options and develop the plan. This process included:

- Facility studies
- Community engagement opportunities
- Financial modeling
- Long-range planning analysis

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### **What is our district doing to demonstrate fiscal responsibility?**

Strongsville City Schools has a proven record of careful financial stewardship. This commitment is reflected through numerous awards and distinctions for financial reporting, including:

- Nine consecutive years of the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting (AASBO International) and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (GFOA)
- Nine years earning the Meritorious Budget Award (AASBO International), one of only four Ohio school districts to receive this distinction
- Five of the last six years receiving the Auditor of State Award with Distinction

For Tax Year 2025 (Collection Year 2026), our district maintains one of the lowest residential effective tax rates in Cuyahoga County at 27.23 mills, ranking 2nd-lowest among 31 districts.

Our district manages facility needs through a Five-Year Critical Needs Plan, a long-term roadmap for prioritizing essential repairs and replacements. Operating and capital funds have been consistently invested to maintain safe and functional learning environments, demonstrating responsible upkeep rather than deferred maintenance. While these investments address immediate needs, they do not fully address the challenges created by aging facilities.

The Foundation for the Future Facilities Plan complements this approach by balancing new construction with targeted renovations, ensuring resources are used efficiently for decades to come.

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### **What would the bond issue fund?**

Bond proceeds would be restricted by law to capital improvements, including:

- New school construction
- Renovations
- Site work
- Infrastructure upgrades

Bond funds cannot be used for salaries, daily operating expenses, classroom supplies, or instructional materials.

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### **What is the difference between a bond issue and an operating levy?**

A bond issue allows the district to borrow money for long-term capital improvements, such as building new schools or renovating existing facilities. Bond proceeds are repaid over 35-37 years, similar to a mortgage. Furthermore, the funds can only be used for construction, renovations, and related infrastructure. The funds can not be used to operate a district.

An operating levy generates funds for the district's day-to-day expenses, including teacher and staff salaries, utilities, transportation, instructional materials, and other operational costs.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### How will past and future bond issues be affected by recent property tax reform laws?

Recent changes to Ohio law place limits on how much school property tax revenue can grow without voter approval; however, the recent changes do not alter bond levy rates, terms, or voter-approved amounts directly.

In addition to the recent changes, state leaders are discussing potential future changes to the property tax system, though no decisions have been finalized. Because state policy discussions are still evolving, it is too early to know whether future legislative changes could affect how school districts plan or finance future bond projects after current bonds expire. However, it is important to note that we are not alone in this and hundreds of school districts and their existing bond issues would be affected by this legislation.

Strongsville City Schools will continue to closely monitor state legislation and will keep our community informed if any changes could impact current or future facilities projects.

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### What is the expected timing for these projects?

The district is planning multi-year improvements, including new construction and renovations, with major milestones occurring between 2029 and 2031.

#### Projected Timeline

##### Summer 2026

Design work for the new construction and renovation projects begins.

##### Summer 2027

Construction of New Elementary Schools at the Albion, Chapman, and Surrarrer sites to begin.

##### Fall 2029

Construction of the new elementary schools will be complete. Students will begin the school year in the newly constructed buildings at the Albion, Chapman and Surrarrer sites. Kinsner renovation is planned to begin and students will relocate to Muraski for 2029-2030 school year.

##### Fall 2030

Kinsner renovation will be completed and students will begin the 2030-2031 school year in the renovated building. Construction and renovation work for the preschool will begin at Muraski.

##### Summer 2031

Completed renovations and construction for the preschool at Muraski. Students will begin attending the site at Muraski for the 2031-32 school year. The final timeline will be based on final project scope.

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### Where can I find more information?

Detailed information, facility data, planning materials, updates, and a full list of frequently asked questions are available at: [scsmustangs.org/f4f](https://scsmustangs.org/f4f)

