

# Chelsea School District

## 2019 School Bond Press Release

The Chelsea School District School Board voted unanimously to proceed with a bond election for November 5, 2019 for the Chelsea School District. The bond proposal for the District is for \$81,000,000 and there will be no current tax rate increase. If passed, the bonds will address things such as deferred maintenance, renovations to buildings and grounds to support modern learning, additions, student safety, sanitation, building access, athletic improvements and parking.

A Facilities Assessment was conducted by Kingscott Architects and Clark Construction Company and completed in the spring of 2017. This study outlined the condition of our buildings, grounds, and sites across the District. It divided the results into categories that needed to be addressed in 0-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10+ years. In addition, a program study was completed by OHM and Kingscott architects in 2019 to determine the needs in the area of programming and modernizing our buildings.

The District assembled a Bond Study Team comprised of members of the community, students, parents, teachers, administrators, board members and other staff members. This team's charge was as follows: **The Bond Study Committee, acting as a good steward of the community's resources, will review, analyze and provide input into a plan for upgrading Chelsea School Districts' educational facilities to support learner-centered school communities and meet safety priorities aligned to the District's Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals.**

The Bond Study Team met several times, toured buildings, analyzed the program and facility studies, learned about modern learning, and heard from experts in the field. They also conducted a survey through EPIC MRA to gain a broader view of what our taxpayers think about a bond. Their dedication to this process was invaluable.

Members of the Board of Education were on committees that reviewed the identified projects and survey results to narrow the scope of the bond to address the needs of the district and community.

The Bond would be sold in 3 series protecting the District for the next 10-15 years. The total square footage of the buildings across the district is 660,000. The average age of the District's school buildings is 49 years old. The State of Michigan ([michigan.gov](http://michigan.gov))

defines the useful life of a school building at 40 years. Many core infrastructure systems, especially in our oldest buildings; North Creek, South Meadows, Beach Middle School, and the Washington Street Education Center (1955), have outlived their expected life cycles. The District has continued to address preventative maintenance as much as possible; simply to the point where systems can no longer just be repaired, but should be replaced. In addition, the District has not been able to address the changing needs of our students inside of the classrooms with flexible learning environments that promote collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication. This bond will support modern learning environments for our students.

Also, included in the bond are renovations to Pierce Lake Elementary School. As you are aware, this building has been closed for several years due to declining enrollment. Over the past few years our enrollment has stabilized and with the residential development in and around Chelsea, we need to be prepared to open Pierce should enrollment warrant. Both of our elementary buildings are approaching capacity and having an alternative plan is necessary at this time. In addition, our enrollment study executed by Plante Moran shows increased enrollment over the next 5 years. If our enrollment does not increase and Pierce remains closed, we will divert funds in the bond to other projects outlined in the bond application.

Other key renovations will include updates to classrooms, technology, student common areas such as the Library Media Center, auditoriums, a new auxiliary gym with weight room at the high school. Based on community input, the plan creates a versatile, student friendly learning space that supports high volumes of students in a collaborative and interactive learning environment. As with any renovation, federal law requires all updated buildings meet current fire, health, and handicap accessibility standards.

The school district will be hosting numerous informational events regarding the bond issue in the coming months. You can also seek more information on our website at <https://www.chelsea.k12.mi.us/> or by contacting Dr. Julie D. Helber at 734-433-2208 and [jhelber@chelsea.k12.mi.us](mailto:jhelber@chelsea.k12.mi.us).