



# OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Our Mission: *Together...educating with excellence, inspiring each learner for life.*

## BOND FACTS

The Okemos Public Schools Board of Education is considering a 2022 bond proposal. With continuation of the current millage rate, the district has a significant opportunity to re-imagine the future, to accommodate long-term enrollment increases and the aging building infrastructure.



### Why is this Important Now?

While planning for the 2019 bond, it became clear that if enrollments continued to increase, a comprehensive process would need to be taken to review enrollment trends, neighborhood composition and potential solutions to create a longer-term plan. Today, the district has a unique opportunity to generate significant funds for improvements, with no change to the current tax rate.

The 2019 Bond improved significantly the technology, transportation and comfort of the schools, along with some building focused updates. This next bond could focus more on the "bricks and mortar" side of creating modern and equitable places for student learning and growth.

Reinvesting in the district is also aligned to the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. Some 15% of respondents to the strategic plan survey indicated that "Aging Facilities" was one of the top 2-3 greatest challenges facing the district in the next 5 years. In response, the plan identified "Priority 10: Provide high quality and equitable facilities and learning environments for students, staff and community."

### What is the Timeline?

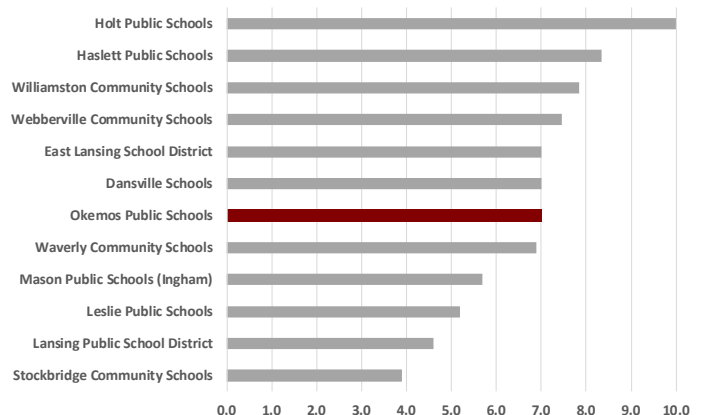
This fall, the district will invite feedback from the community, staff, administrators, and the Board of Education. An update to the facilities assessment as well as best practices in educational environments is also underway. In the winter, we will engage a steering committee of a broad cross-section of district stakeholders. Inputs will include the community survey, facilities study, input from community forums – to be held in the winter and spring—enrollment and budget projections and other resources to develop a recommendation for consideration by the Board. It is anticipated that a bond proposal could be prepared for consideration by the voters on the November 2022 ballot.

### Prior Bond Programs

- **May 2021 — Building Site and Sinking Fund:** Voters have supported a sinking fund in the district for the past 30 years. In May 2021, voters approved the continuation of a \$1.4 million per year building and site Sinking Fund for use in repairing facilities, making site improvements to school buildings, playgrounds, athletic facilities and other site structure as well as school security and technology improvements.
- **May 2021 — Non-Homestead Operating Millage:** Non-homestead funding for district programs has been in place since 1994, following the passage of Proposal A. Voter approval is required periodically to continue that support and was granted once again in May 2021, thereby providing funds to support the operational budget for schools, salaries, textbooks and the like.
- **May 2019 — Bond Program:** As bond funds from a 2013 millage were coming to an end, an extensive collaboration process kicked off in 2017 to assess the current technology, security, capital outlay, transportation and facility needs throughout our district. It resulted in a bond proposal that was approved by voters to continue the tax rate of 7.0 mills and generate \$24.9 million. This bond funded "1 to 1" student learning devices, replacement of classroom technology, the purchase of flexible classroom furniture, air-conditioned learning environments district-wide and the purchase of musical instruments, athletic equipment and other improvements to learning facilities.

### How Does Our Tax Rate Compare?

At 7.0 mills, the current rate is among the sixth lowest level in Ingham County. The district does not intend to change the current tax rate with the potential 2022 bond program, but rather continue at the current level.



Source: LEA Millage Report FY 2019 (Tax Year 2018)