

## Hamilton Community Schools

### May 2, 2023 Bond Proposal

### *Frequently Asked Questions & Answers*

As we plan for the future, the district is continually evaluating district-wide facility infrastructure, enrollment numbers, expenses, and existing debt pay off. On February 3, 2023, the Board of Education approved putting a school bond proposal on the May 2, 2023 election ballot.

**If approved by voters, this bond proposal would generate \$41,180,000 to address safety and security, facility infrastructure, and learning environments.**

#### **PROPOSED BOND PROJECT SCOPE INFORMATION**

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##### *What is a bond proposal and how can funds from a bond be spent?*

A bond proposal is how a community can authorize a school district to borrow money to pay for capital expenditures. If approved by voters, bond funds can be spent on new construction, additions, remodeling, site improvements, athletic facilities, playgrounds, buses, furnishings, equipment, and technology. Funds raised through the sale of bonds cannot be used on operational expenses such as employee salaries and benefits, school supplies, and textbooks. Bond funds must be kept separate from operating funds and must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

##### *What are the key projects in this bond proposal?*

#### **SAFE, DRY, WARM**

- Replacements of aging infrastructure such as roofing, electrical systems, lighting, flooring, plumbing, boilers, doors, interior finishes, and lockers
- Fire alarms
- Door hardware
- Addition of glass security film at main building vestibules

#### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

- Deconstruct the 1950s wing of Hamilton Elementary
- 8-classroom addition at Hamilton Elementary, including Special Education and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) to provide updated learning environments and restrooms
- Physical education classroom redesign at Hamilton High School to improve safety conditions. This classroom is the second most used classroom at Hamilton HS on a daily basis.
- Update classroom casework, finishes, flooring and ceilings as needed throughout the district
- Playground equipment upgrades and extended fencing as needed throughout the district
- Purchase educational technology as needed throughout the district

**For a complete list of building specific information, please visit:**

**<https://www.hamiltonschools.us/our-district/2023-bond-proposal/>**

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### *If approved, would the bond proposal have any impact on our current operational budget?*

Bond proposal funds cannot be used for general fund or operating purposes. However, if approved, the bond would likely have a positive impact on the annual operating budget. Operating funds otherwise intended for capital expenditures could be spent on student programs and resources. Bond funds may only be spent on capital improvements and capital acquisition projects.

### *Would money from the bond proposal be used to pay teachers' salaries and benefits?*

No. School districts are not allowed to use bond funds for operating expenses such as teacher, administrator or employee salaries, routine maintenance, or operating costs. Bond revenue must be kept separate from operating funds and bond revenue expenditures must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

### *How would the bond proposal impact my homeowner property taxes?*

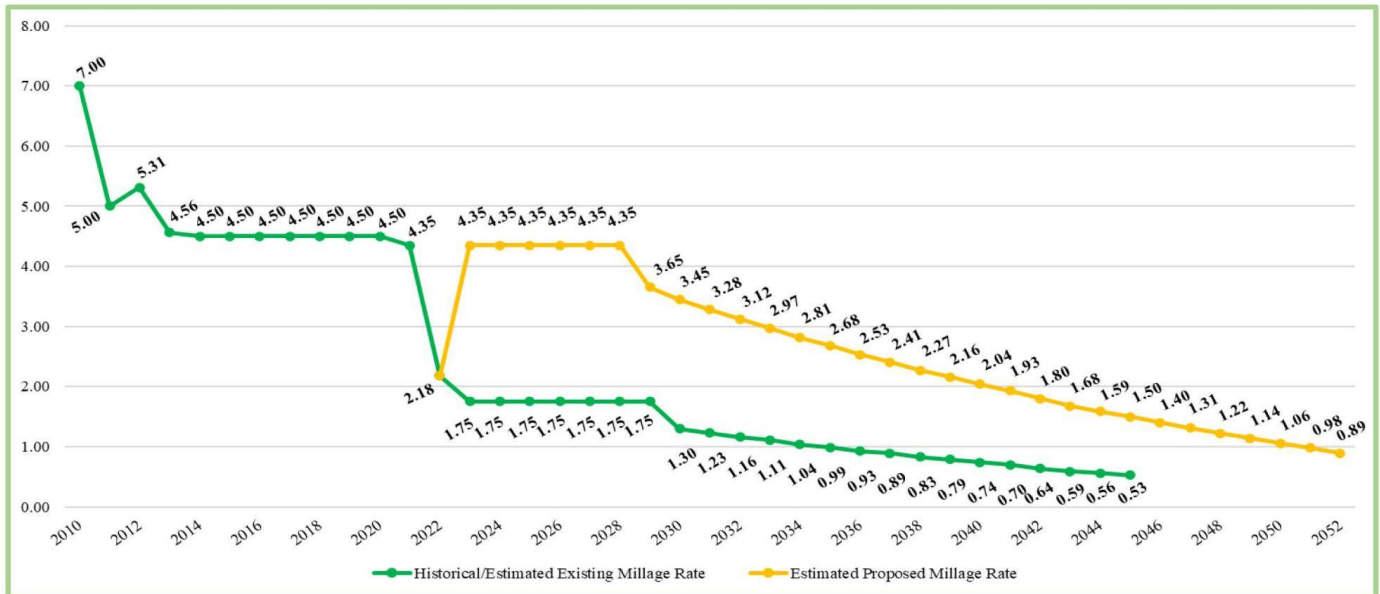
If approved by voters, it is projected that the debt tax rate would increase by approximately 2.17 mills over the current debt tax rate. This would equal approximately an additional \$108.50 per year for every \$50,000 in taxable value.

Taxable Value	Cost/Year	Cost/Month	Cost/Week
\$50,000	\$108.50	\$9.04	\$2.09
\$100,000	\$217.00	\$18.08	\$4.17
\$150,000	\$325.50	\$27.13	\$6.26

To look up your taxable value in Allegan County: [Home | Allegan County | BS&A Online \(bsaonline.com\)](#)

## Estimated Proposed Bond Millage Rates

(Assumes Taxable Value Growth of 3.00%)



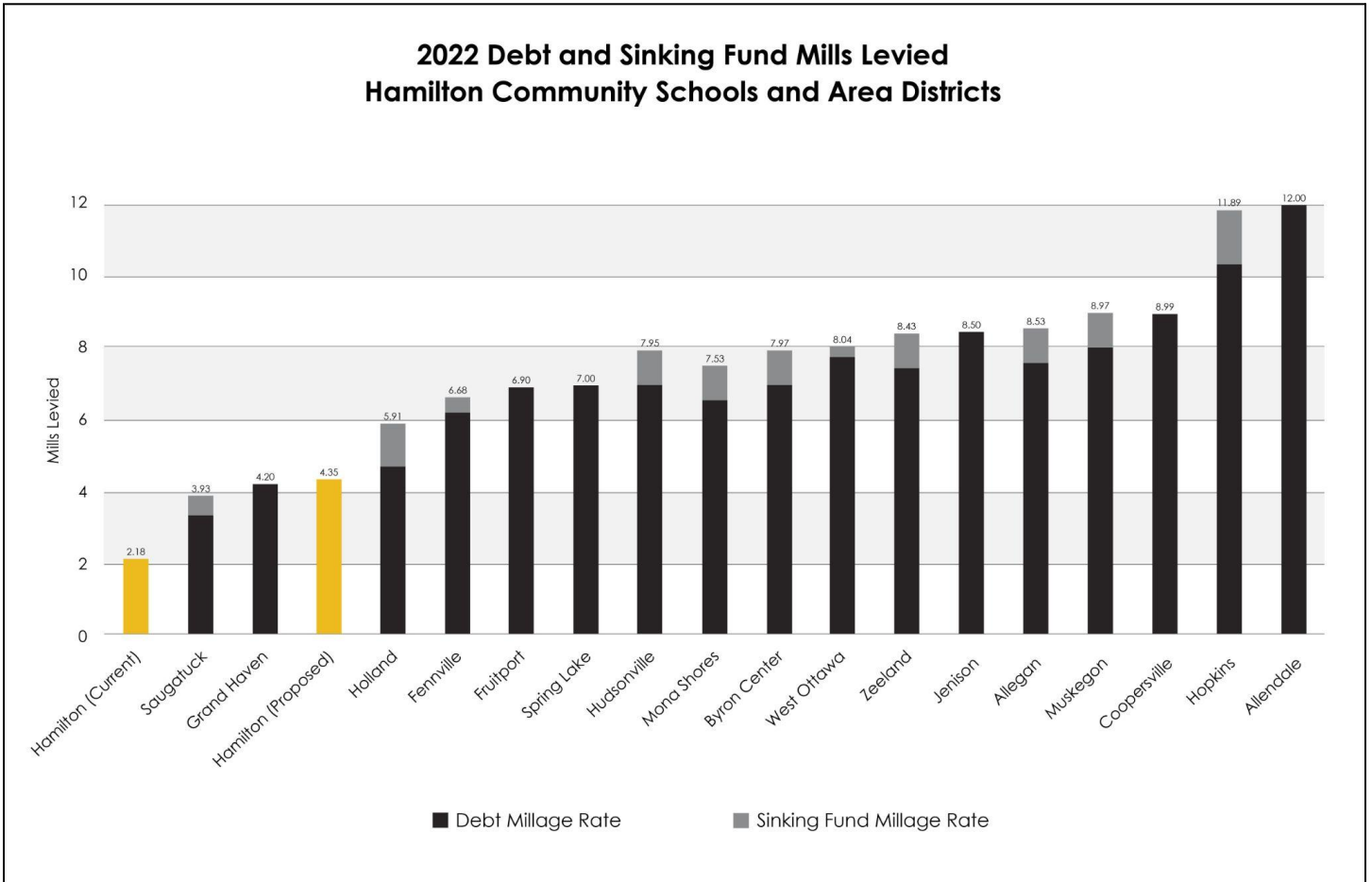
**Please Vote: Tuesday, May 2, 2023**

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**When would the millage for this proposal first be levied?**

On the July 1, 2023 property tax bill, if approved by voters on May 2, 2023.

**How does Hamilton Community Schools millage rate compare to area districts?**



**Would technology purchases be amortized (or paid back) over a 30-year period?**

No. If approved, technology purchases are required to be amortized over a 5-year period beginning from the date of installation.

**Would bus purchases be amortized (or paid back) over a 30-year period?**

No. If approved, bus purchases are required to be amortized over a 6-year period beginning at the time the buses are put into service.

**Are there property tax exemptions to anyone of any kind?**

If a business has been granted an Industrial Facilities Tax ("IFT") credit, then only half of the taxable value is subject to the bond millage. The business would need to verify if any portion of their taxable value has been designated for the IFT credit. One item a community member could research is the Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit. The Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit is a method through which some taxpayers can receive a credit for an amount of their property tax that exceeds a certain percentage of their household income. This program establishes categories under which homeowners or renters are eligible for a Homestead Property Tax Credit. We would recommend that all community members consult their tax service provider to determine if they are eligible for this tax credit.

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***Are businesses and second homes (non-homestead) and primary homes (homestead) treated the same for the purpose of the bond millage?***

Yes, businesses and second homes (non-homestead properties) and primary homes (homestead properties) are treated the same for the purpose of a bond millage.

**VOTING INFORMATION**

***How do I register to vote?***

Visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) to register to vote online. The last day to register by mail is Thursday, April 17, 2023, in order to participate in the May 2, 2023 election. Individuals may also register in-person at their local clerk's office through May 2, 2023, with the required documentation. For assistance in obtaining the address of your local clerk, visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote)

***How is an absentee voter ballot obtained?***

Registered voters must complete and submit the application to receive their absentee voter ballot. To vote by mail, fill out the application and sign it, and then return it to your local clerk. For assistance in obtaining the address of your local clerk, visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). When filling out the application, if you check the box to be added to the permanent absentee voter list, you will get an application mailed to you before every election.

If you registered to vote after absentee voter ballot applications were mailed, applications may be obtained online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). Absentee voter ballots are available for most voters starting Monday, March 23 through election day, May 2, 2023.

***Where and when will the vote occur?***

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, is election day, but absentee voting can occur leading up to that date. All registered voters may cast an absentee voter ballot by mail. Voters may also cast a ballot at the polling location established by their city/township. If you have questions or do not know where you vote, please contact your city/township office. Polls will be open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm on Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

***Can I vote if I rent a house? How would my taxes increase if I rent a house?***

Yes, if you rent a house you can still vote. However, you do need to be a registered voter in the city or township you are living in. As a renter, unless you are responsible for paying the property taxes on the rental, your property taxes would not increase.

***What are the key dates leading up to the Tuesday, May 2, 2023 vote?***

- Registering to vote:
  - The last day for voters to register by mail is Monday, April 17, 2023
  - Voters may register in-person through Tuesday, May 2, 2023 (election day) with the required documentation
- Absentee Voting:
  - Absentee voter ballots are available for most voters from Thursday, March 23, until Tuesday, May 2, 2023
  - Contact your local clerk with questions

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## INPUT AND FEEDBACK

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### *What oversights would hold the district accountable?*

If the bond proposal were to be approved by voters, the district's Architect/Engineer would design the proposed projects and prepare construction documents and specifications for the projects. Once the projects are designed, the district's Construction Manager will assemble bid packages and publicly advertise and solicit competitive bids for all work. This is required by law, as outlined in the Revised School Code. This process ensures that the district selects the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. All qualified contractors will have an opportunity to attend a pre-bid meeting to obtain additional information and project clarification. All qualified contractors will have the opportunity to participate in the competitive bid process.

### *At what point would the State of Michigan, as well as the local fire and police departments, provide input into the bond projects?*

Design documents for each project will be required to be submitted to both the State of Michigan's Bureau of Construction Codes (BCC) and the Bureau of Fire Services (BFS) for both plan review and permitting. These agencies will review the projects for compliance with applicable codes before any building permits are issued. Building plans and specifications must be signed and sealed by a Licensed Architect/Professional Engineer before submission.

As of March 21, 2019, Michigan law requires school districts to consult on the plans for the construction or major renovation regarding school safety issues with the law enforcement agency that is the first responder for that school building. This consultation would happen if a bond proposal has been approved by voters, but before construction documents are finalized for bidding.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### *Where can I find more information about this bond proposal?*

- Visit the district website at <https://www.hamiltonschools.us/our-district/2023-bond-proposal/>
- Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/hamiltonschoolsmi](http://www.facebook.com/hamiltonschoolsmi)
- Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/hamiltonschools](http://www.twitter.com/hamiltonschools)
- Follow us on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/hamiltonhawkeyes](http://www.instagram.com/hamiltonhawkeyes)
- Contact Supt. Bradford Lusk at [blusk@hamiltonschools.us](mailto:blusk@hamiltonschools.us) or (269) 751-5148
- Attend Informational Forum on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Hamilton Elementary School

*Paid for by Hamilton Community Schools, 4815 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Hamilton, MI 49419*

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