

Wickliffe City School District
Bond Issue
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need new schools? Why not just renovate?
 - a. The middle and elementary schools are both almost 100 years old and the high school is 62 years old. The buildings are becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain and operational costs are escalating. Cost of renovation exceeds the recommendations of the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission and the State will not provide funds for renovation.
 - b. The district studied the facilities for more than 3 years, investigated multiple sites, conducted an appraisal of the current facilities, and determined that new facilities are in the best interest of students and will serve the needs of the community as well.
 - c. According to a study by Pennsylvania State University the cost of new facilities is outweighed by the positive impacts on students and teachers. Penn State notes that improvements related to acoustics and noise, air quality, lighting, proper temperature and control of temperature, classroom size and space, and twenty-first century learning improves teaching and learning in profound ways and the benefits of those investments surpass the initial fiscal costs.

2. What are the benefits to the children?
 - a. Students will benefit from state-of-the art facilities and technology. Students will have the space to work in teams in ways that replicate the world outside of school. Flexible space and furniture creates an environment that influences curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and communication. Co-curricular and extra-curricular facilities will enhance the performance experience for students and the audience experience for the community.
 - b. As noted above, students will also benefit from improvements to air quality, lighting, temperature control, and acoustics.
 - c. Students will have access to excellent performing arts and athletic facilities.
 - d. The new building will incorporate modern school safety features to ensure the students can learn in a safe environment.
 - e. The ability to expand utility services to the current buildings is reaching capacity thus limiting the advancement of technology and programming. A new school would alleviate this limitation.

3. If enrollment is declining, why are we considering new facilities?
 - a. A new facility will allow the district to “right-size” the facilities for students, create spaces necessary for the educational, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programming and save on overall operational costs.
 - b. New facilities are more energy efficient, cost less to operate, and provide for the flexibility needed to meet the demands of learning now and in the future.

4. What is the timeline for the master plan?
 - a. The study process began in January 2016. The initial study examined the possibility of reconfiguring the facilities, renovating the facilities and building new. A community committee met for months examining the issues and presented key findings to the Board. The Board started the reconfiguration process and learned before the actual work began, that the cost, the time, and final results were not in the best interest of the District. The Board moved to hire a pre-bond architectural firm to lead a more detailed study that included another community facilities committee and that committee presented additional findings to the Board. The Board determined the best course of action is to build new facilities and place a bond issue on the November 2019 ballot. Upon the passage of the issue, the district will formerly plan for the new facility by conducting community and staff visioning sessions to determine the plan details. The planning/visioning process will take one year. Once completed, the construction of the facility will commence. Typically, construction and everything associated with it takes 18-24 months.

5. Where will the district get the money to make the facility change outlined in the master plan?
 - a. The primary funding source is the bond issue. The bond issue will generate \$59.9 million for the project. Money from the bond issue may only be used for construction related expenses.
 - b. The district has also been selected for participation in the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC), Expedited Local Partnership Program (ELPP). The OFCC share of the project is 18% of the basic costs and that makes us eligible for a reimbursement of \$8.6 million from the State.
 - c. The District has \$1.2 million in a fund that legally can only be used for construction to contribute to the cost of the project as well.
 - d. All of the money collected through the bond issue is for the project and cannot be used for daily operational expenses such as salaries and benefits.

6. Can we maintain the facility after it is built?
 - a. Yes, a requirement of participation in the OFCC program is that the district must request a .5 mil maintenance levy as part of the program and this levy is included in the ballot issue.

7. Why is important to pass the bond issue now?
 - a. District facilities are aging and are becoming more difficult and costly to maintain and operate. The ability to expand utility services to the buildings is reaching capacity thus limiting the advancement of technology and programming.
 - b. Additionally, the percentage of reimbursement from the OFCC back to the District is at the highest it has ever been in the history of the program. Failure to take advantage of the State share at this time may result in a reduced State share in the future.
 - c. There is never a good time to raise taxes. We know the buildings need to be replaced and the cost of such a replacement is not going to go down. The combination of the increased State share and current construction costs make this an ideal time to go forward on the project.

8. I am a senior citizen and cannot afford this project. How does this benefit me?
 - a. One of the guiding principles of this project is that the new facility will become a community hub. The new facility will become a place at which the community will be invited to share the facility's resources, participate in programs, and develop a stronger partnership with the district and its students.
 - b. Strong schools and excellent facilities positively impact home values, attract young families, become attractive to business development and economic growth, raise student achievement, reduce costs related to social programs, and reduce crime.

9. What will happen to our existing facilities once the new school is built?
 - a. The middle and elementary schools will be demolished, returned to green space, and be sold for development. An appraisal of the schools and land was conducted in the spring of 2019 and the appraisal report indicated that the value of the property is greater as vacant land and that there are many viable development options for the land that would be a quality of life and economic improvement for the community.
 - b. The current high school will be demolished and returned to green space to be used as playgrounds, physical education space, and practice fields for athletics and marching band and parking for the new consolidated Pre-K through 12 building on the site.