

# REYNOLDSBURG CITY SCHOOLS

*Empowering leaders who impact the NOW and innovate the FUTURE*



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. What is on the November ballot?

**A.** The Reynoldsburg City Schools Board of Education voted to place a 4.9 mill bond and permanent improvement issue on the November ballot in order to build a new middle school and early learning center, as well as repair, renovate, and bring our other existing facilities up-to-date to meet the needs of our growing community now, and for generations to come. By law, the funds from this issue can only be used to build and maintain District facilities and cannot be used for salaries or other operating expenses.

### Q. Why do we need it?

**A.** We tabled our pressing facility needs when the pandemic struck, but we cannot table them any longer. A number of our schools are overcrowded, old, inefficient, and present numerous environmental, educational and financial challenges. This issue will accommodate our community's growth and the educational changes over the past century that will ensure our students graduate ready to compete and succeed.

Overcrowding at our elementary level is a serious concern as we have seen enrollment increase by more than 23% over the last decade as more and more families move into the District. We are at capacity in some elementary buildings – and overcapacity in others. In a few years, that growth will reach the upper grade levels, so it is imperative for our District to have a plan and act now.

Additionally, a number of our buildings are old, inefficient, and were not built to accommodate today's teaching and learning. The outdated electrical systems in our aging buildings hamper our ability to integrate computers and other educational technology into lessons. Further, new facilities will be built with updated safety and security measures in place.

The main components of this issue include:

- Replacing the 153-year-old Hannah J. Ashton Middle School
- Addressing overcrowding due to increasing enrollment
- Creating space for full-day, every-day Kindergarten
- Upgrading electrical and technological systems to accommodate modern teaching and learning
- Providing flexible learning spaces for today's educational models
- Setting aside funds for ongoing maintenance and repairs of District facilities

### Q. Can't we just eliminate open enrollment to get rid of overcrowding?

**A.** Overall, our District has experienced a 23% increase in resident enrollment over the past decade, so most of our growth is due to people moving into the District. Roughly, there are 558 open enrollment students attending Reynoldsburg City Schools spread across our schools, and this is a significant decrease over the past 3-4 years. While the number of open enrollment students fluctuates year by year,

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the District continuously receives a net gain from this program. For example, this past year (FY2021), open enrollment students generated \$3.36 million in revenue. This is equivalent to a 3.75 mill operating levy.

## **Q. What is wrong with Hannah Ashton Middle School? Can't we just renovate it?**

**A.** Hannah J. Ashton Middle School is 153-years old, in dire need of millions of dollars in repairs, and continually causes educational and financial challenges. A facility assessment conducted in 2018 estimated the overall cost to renovate and rehabilitate the school to optimal working order would be over \$18 million. This would merely extend the life of the building for another 5 to 10 years, not make it ideal for today's teaching and learning needs.

With further damage to the roof and façade, as well as ongoing problems with its dated plumbing, heating, electrical and fire systems, we have reached the point where repairs are no longer enough, and any amount of renovation is not fiscally prudent.

## **Q. Why is this ballot issue needed right now?**

**A.** School buildings take 3-4 years to build. Given that timeline, if we do not start now, then our buildings will only become more crowded as our enrollment grows. In fact, Summit Road STEM and Taylor Road elementary schools will be at capacity next year in 2022 and our remaining elementary buildings are expected to be at capacity by 2025. By starting construction now, Reynoldsburg will be ready to meet the needs of our students before we are forced to use costly stop-gap measures that divert money from classroom resources and staffing.

Additionally, the annual costs to maintain Hannah Ashton Middle School are already eating into our General Fund budget. The upgrades needed to meet the needs of the students learning in this building are upwards of \$18 million.

## **Q. Where will these new buildings be?**

**A.** The middle school will be on the Summit Campus and the early learning center/District Offices will be about where Hannah Ashton and our Graham Road offices currently exist. In both cases, the District already owns the land for these two sites.

**Q. When are the new schools going to be done, and will it involve redistricting?** We anticipate completion of the buildings by the fall of 2024, if we secure the local funding. Generally, architectural planning takes about a year, followed by another year to 18 months of actual construction.

Upon completion of the new buildings, the District buildings will be aligned with the corresponding grade levels:

- Early Learning Center (Pre-K and Kindergarten) (new)
- Elementary (grades 1-5)
  - French Run
  - Herbert Mills
  - Rose Hill
  - Slate Ridge
  - Summit Road

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- Taylor Road
- Waggoner Road (converted)
- Middle School (grades 6-8)
  - Baldwin Road
  - Middle School at the Summit Campus to be named later (new)
  - Waggoner Road
- High School (grades 9-12)
  - Livingston Campus
  - Summit Campus

Additionally, because Hannah Ashton Middle School will no longer be standing and Waggoner Road Middle School will be converted to an elementary school, district realignment (redistricting) will have to take place.

## **Q. How can we trust that the buildings will be maintained?**

**A.** Our school building would never have reached the 153-year mark without careful attention to proper maintenance and upkeep. We know how essential it is to keep up with repairs, maintenance and improvements across our schools, which is why this issue includes built-in funds allocated just for those purposes.

## **Q. What will be the cost of this issue?**

**A.** The issue will cost about \$14.00 per month per \$100,000 of home value. Reynoldsburg City Schools has been fiscally responsible and has not asked for additional funding in over 10 years. With this issue, the Schools continue to be fiscally responsible by addressing its greatest facility needs, while also including built-in funds to keep up with repairs, maintenance, and improvements.

## **Q. What's the difference between an operating levy and a bond?**

**A.** Operating levies are used to fund the day to day operations of a school district including utilities, staff, supplies and technology. Bond issues are utilized to secure funding for capital projects including new construction, renovations or upgrades. The November 2 issue for Reynoldsburg City Schools is a bond issue that will generate \$85 million over a 30-year period.

## **Q. Who will pay this tax? Do renters pay their fair share?**

**A.** This issue is a property tax, which means homeowners, businesses that own their land or building, and apartments will pay the tax. Renters in apartments pay their fair share through their monthly rent. Just like businesses, which rent office space, pay their fair share via their rent.

## **Q. What's the value of this issue for community members without children in our schools?**

**A.** This issue is about keeping up with our community's growth so we can continue to prepare our students for college and careers after graduation. Reynoldsburg is growing, as are our home values, along with the growth in our enrollment. Not only do our school buildings provide educational spaces for all students to learn but also community spaces and resources to support the residents of Reynoldsburg.

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## **Q. What happens if we do not pass this issue?**

**A.** Reynoldsburg City Schools will continue to feel the strain of educational and financial challenges caused by its overcrowded, deteriorating facilities and leaders will need to make more tough decisions.

We are grateful for our dedicated maintenance staff, who work hard to make repairs to our building systems and keep the schools functioning as well as they can. But the process costs thousands of dollars every year we would otherwise spend elsewhere on education and instructional resources.

Similarly, our overcrowding issues have significant costs involved, both in regards to educational quality and financial resources. We cannot grow or expand needed programs while spending funds on the maintenance alone of these aging buildings.

## **Q. When is this issue on the ballot?**

**A.** The bond and permanent improvement issue is on the November 2, 2021 ballot. On Election Day, polls are open from 6:30 AM to 7:30 PM. Early voting in-person and by mail begins on Monday, October 4.

To confirm your voter registration or to update it, [click here](#).

To register to vote, [click here](#).

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