

## **Bend-La Pine Schools Proposed Bonds for New Schools, Maintenance and Preservation, Safety and Technology**

### **How often does Bend-La Pine Schools review its facility needs?**

A committee is convened every five years, or sooner, to take a 20 year look at anticipated enrollment and facility needs.

### **How was the proposed bond developed? Who decided what would be included and how much it would cost, if passed?**

Ultimately, the School Board decides what to include in a bond measure. In this case, the board relied heavily on the recommendations brought forward by the Sites and Facilities committees, made up of community members and staff, to make its decision.

The Sites and Facilities Committees provided recommendations to the School Board after learning about the issues in each of our 31 schools and five support buildings. In all, 800 major maintenance and preservation, classroom addition, safety, technology, energy conservation and new school construction projects were reviewed and 159 were identified as critical needs and included in the May 2017 bond request.

The 2016 Sites and Facilities Committees, using data provided by Portland State University's Population Research Center<sup>1</sup> found that Bend-La Pine Schools would need seven new schools (four elementary, one middle and two high schools) by 2035 to successfully manage current and future student enrollment.

Two of these schools, a high school and an elementary school, were identified as immediate needs.

### **How was the community involved in this work?**

In addition to receiving input and suggestions from community members that served on the Sites and Facilities teams, staff also surveyed community members and found that their priorities included: building new schools and classrooms and improving existing schools to prolong their use through projects such as making security upgrades and replacing old, inefficient plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling equipment with increased energy-efficient systems that would save tens of thousands of dollars in annual operating costs – making more money available for the classroom.

Using the survey results and the Sites and Facilities recommendations, a team developed a bond proposal to address as many of the high priority issues as possible, while considering proposed bond costs.

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<sup>1</sup> Portland State University's Population Research Center report to Bend-La Pine Schools, Charles Rynerson, November 2014.  
January 2017 - SH 17-001

### **Why a proposed bond now?**

Many District facilities are near or over capacity today. On average, student enrollment has increased by more than 300 new students each year for more than three decades.

Between 2000 and 2016, school district enrollment grew by more than 5,000 students. According to state and local projections, this trend is expected to continue. In fact, Portland State University's Population Research Center<sup>2</sup> projects that Bend-La Pine Schools will grow by more than 3,000 students in the next ten years alone.

According to Portland State University's Population Research Center's report<sup>3</sup>, two new schools — one elementary and one high school — should be opened in Bend by 2021 to help balance enrollment and ease significant overcrowding. If the bond passes, these two schools will be sited in areas where overcrowding issues are the greatest to meet current and anticipated future classroom shortages caused by enrollment growth.

Additional instructional spaces and renovation of classrooms and support spaces at several of our oldest elementary (Amity Creek at Thompson 1949, Juniper 1965, R.E. Jewell 1974 and Bear Creek 1963) and middle schools (Pilot Butte 1968), as well as modernization of instructional spaces at other schools would support instruction in science, technology, engineering, arts and physical education.

Modernizing aging, health and life safety devices including security systems, electrical wiring, intercoms would improve safety in our schools. Adding cameras and redesigning entrances is likely to ensure controlled access to our schools, while providing improved visibility of visitors.

Nearly half of our schools are more than 30-years-old, and projects are proposed to update these facilities. We can extend the life of our schools, which are some of our community's largest investments, by making significant building improvements such as replacing and upgrading aged roofs and heating, electrical, plumbing and ventilation systems.

Replacing old, less efficient and high maintenance equipment could save the District tens of thousands of dollars in operating costs each year, dollars that can be redirected to classrooms.

### **How crowded are local high schools?**

Spaces like cafeterias, bathrooms, hallways, gyms, etc. at Bend area high schools, were built to accommodate approximately 1,500 students at each site. As student enrollment increases and overcrowding occurs, these spaces become congested and begin to wear at accelerated rates.

*Bend Senior High School*, built in the 1950s to accommodate 1,500 students, currently serves 1,763 students<sup>4</sup>. Classrooms have been added over the years, but common areas like hallways,

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<sup>2</sup> Portland State University's Population Research Center report to Bend-La Pine Schools, Charles Rynerson, page A-3, November 2014.

<sup>3</sup> 2016 Sites and Facilities Report, Mike Tiller, pages i and ii, December 13, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

bathrooms and the cafeteria are undersized and are not meant to serve this school's growing student population.

*Marshall High School*, originally built as an elementary school in the 1940s, currently serves 168 students<sup>5</sup>. The proposed construction of a gym and two classrooms would increase capacity by 50%, to 300 students.

*Mountain View High School*, built in the 1970s to accommodate 1,500 students, currently serves 1,453 students<sup>6</sup> and is expected to be over capacity by the fall of 2017 and to be significantly over capacity in the years to come.

*Summit High School*, built in 2001 to accommodate 1,500 students, currently serves 1,526<sup>7</sup>. It is expected to be significantly over capacity in the years to come.

*La Pine High School*, built in the late 1970s, currently serves 413 students.<sup>8</sup> It was expanded in the early 2000s to accommodate 550 students.

### **How many new students do you expect to enroll in our high schools in the next several years?**

From fall of 2016 to fall of 2020, high school student enrollment is expected to increase by 600 students. From fall of 2016 to fall of 2024, 1,200 new students are expected to be enrolled in our high schools.<sup>9</sup>

Portable, temporary classrooms are expected to be needed at Bend area high schools to relieve overcrowding.

### **How is current over-crowding affecting our high schools?**

Some classrooms meant for 20-30 students now hold classes of 40-50. Many students eat lunch in the halls or on stairways because there is not enough table space in the common areas, which were built for smaller enrollments.

Staff rooms and libraries are serving as classroom space, causing the library/media center to be closed when it is needed to be used for classes.

### **Where will the proposed new high school be located?**

Bend-La Pine Schools currently owns property for a future high school in southeast Bend. We intend to build a new high school there, unless a site better suited for a new school becomes available.

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<sup>5</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

**How crowded are local elementary schools?**

More than half of the district's elementary schools in Bend are near or over capacity, due to continuous enrollment growth.

At the elementary level today, you can find instruction happening in unconventional spaces including teachers' work rooms, libraries and temporary modular classrooms. This is not ideal, and the classroom shortage will be compounded as new students continue to enroll in our schools.

**How many new students do you expect to enroll in our elementary schools in the next several years?**

From fall of 2016 to fall of 2020, elementary school student enrollment is expected to increase by 400 students. From fall of 2016 to fall of 2024, 1,000 new students are expected to be enrolled in our elementary schools.<sup>10</sup>

**Where will the proposed new elementary school be located?**

The new school will be sited where overcrowding issues are the greatest and to meet current and anticipated future classroom shortages caused by enrollment growth.

**When will the proposed new schools open?**

If approved, students are expected to move into the new high school as soon as the fall of 2020 and the new elementary school as soon as the fall of 2019.

**Why are maintenance and preservation of existing buildings, safety, technology and energy saving projects included in the bond proposal?**

The District has focused its attention on keeping funds directed at classrooms, which means other areas such as construction of new classrooms, district-wide technology improvements, and replacement of aging roofs have not been funded. In order to keep as many operating dollars in the classroom as possible, construction bond dollars would be utilized to complete these maintenance and preservation projects.

**What are the maintenance and preservation projects that would be made throughout the district, if the bond passes?**

These are a collection of projects to replace worn out building components such as roofs, boilers, HVAC equipment, electrical systems, etc. In general, they are significant building improvements that extend the useful life of existing buildings.

**How were these significant building improvements identified and prioritized?**

Bend-La Pine Schools staff conduct regular inspections of all existing buildings evaluating the condition and life expectancy of facility components.

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<sup>10</sup> Bend-La Pine Schools Enrollment Report, Brad Henry, December 1, 2016.

The identified maintenance and preservation projects address items that are near, at or beyond the end of their useful life.

**Would all schools get an equal share of the proposed bond funds for maintenance and preservation?**

No, newer schools do not have as many needs as older buildings. However, every existing school would receive some improvement projects.

**When would these projects take place?**

If the proposed bond is passed, most of the projects would start right away and continue over the next four to five years, primarily taking place during summer months to minimize classroom disruption.

**What is a school construction bond?**

A school bond is like a home mortgage with principal and interest to be paid off over a set period of time. School districts in Oregon use bonds to finance school construction, building improvements and preservation of facility assets.

**Does the state provide funding for school construction bonds?**

No. The Oregon Department of Education does not provide funding for school construction or major renovation. It does, however, provide the dollars that we utilize to deliver instruction to students and operate.

Oregon's school funding model is somewhat unique. The legislature allocates dollars each year for teaching and learning, but construction of new schools and the modernization and preservation of existing schools is the responsibility of the local community. Funds for capital construction can be raised through elections and the support of community members for local tax levies.

Oregon is one of the few states in the nation that does not provide direct funding support from the state for building schools or major capital renovations. School districts are expected to finance these projects with general obligation bonds (construction bonds) authorized by the district's local voters.

**Can construction bond dollars be used to hire more teachers and staff?**

No. By law, bond money cannot be used for salaries or other daily operating expenses. These dollars can only be used for capital construction.

**How will you fund new teachers and staff for the new schools, if the bond passes?**

As students are shifted to new schools to relieve overcrowding, a proportional number of teaching staff would follow the students. As enrollment grows, which it is forecasted to do, additional operational funding will be provided by the State, which uses a funding formula based upon student enrollment numbers.

These factors address most of the operational funding needed at the two new schools. However, some support costs (school front office staff, custodial, grounds, utilities, etc.) will need to be addressed in the normal General Fund budget development process, probably beginning with the 2019-20 budget.

**How do you estimate construction costs for new schools?**

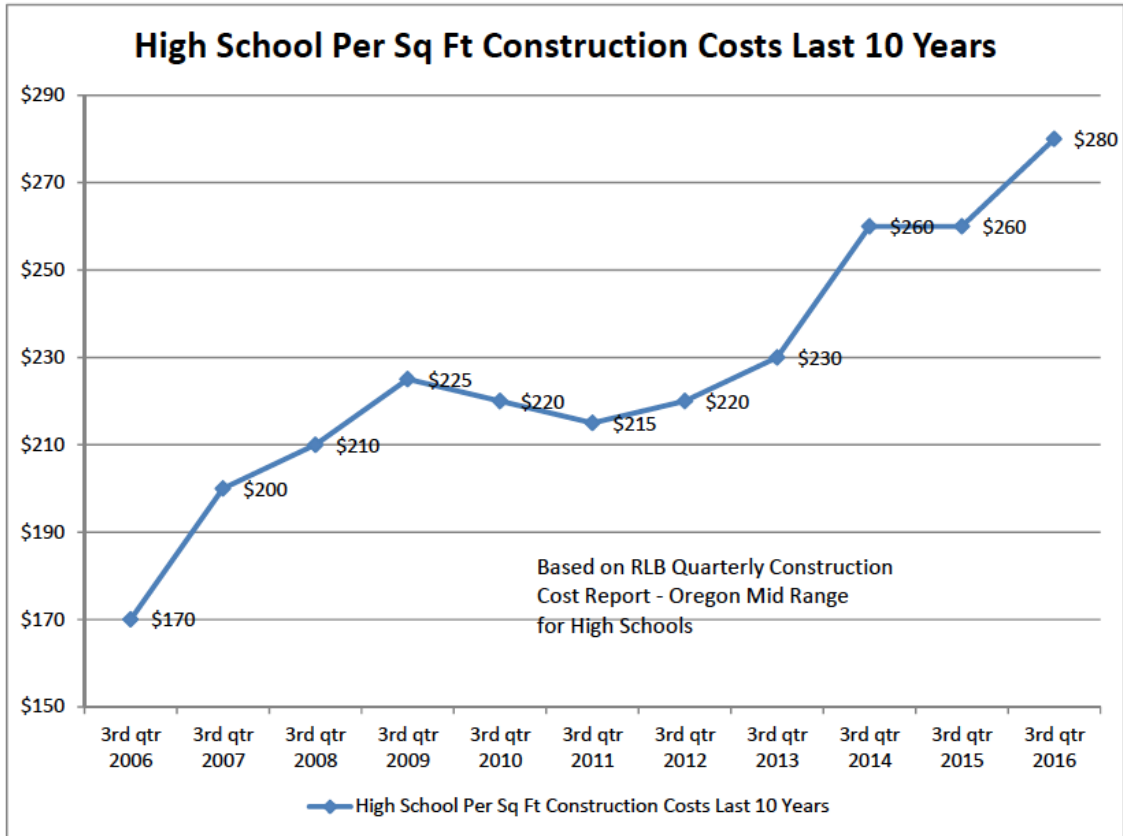
We use a third party, Ryder Levitt Bucknall (RLB), to provide construction cost estimates, which we use to project building costs. These estimates are based on current area trends.

RLB provides low and high ranges for construction costs. We selected a mid-range from RLB's analysis of current construction costs (2016 Q4) to estimate our construction costs and added an inflationary factor. To this we added professional service fees (architects, engineers, etc.), system development charges and off site construction, contingency, and project management costs.

**Why are these new school expected to cost more than in the past?**

The economic turnaround, demand for construction and general inflation have contributed to the rise in the cost of public construction across the region.

As an example, the following data, provided by RLB, shows that construction costs alone have increased by nearly 65% in the last ten years. These costs have increased from \$170 per square foot in 2006 to more than \$280 per square foot in 2016.



**Who pays for construction bonds?**

In Oregon, bond payments are structured so that existing and future residents moving into the community would assist in the payment of school construction bonds through local property taxes.

**If passed, how much will this proposed bond measure cost?**

The proposed bond would raise \$268.3 million for school construction projects to build new schools and classrooms, improve the learning environment, make the buildings safer and save money on operating costs.

With the continued retirement of existing bonds, the overall tax rate is projected to increase by .44-cents per \$1,000 of taxable value annually, over the life of the proposed bond. This amount is equal to an estimated cost of \$7 per month on a home with a taxable value of \$200,000. (\$200,000 is the approximate average taxable value of a home in our area, according to the Deschutes County Assessor.)

**How big is this school district?**

Bend-La Pine Schools is Oregon’s 5th largest school district with 31 Schools: 17 K-5 elementary schools, two K-8 schools, one (K-8) charter school, six middle schools and five high schools. We serve more than 18,000 students living in our district’s 1,600 square mile attendance area.

**The School Board approved a new charter school to begin in the fall of 2017. Won't that reduce the need for capacity in other District schools?**

The new Montessori charter school is anticipated to begin operations with 75 students and could grow to approximately 150 students in the future. It is anticipated that many of these families may have chosen to provide their children's education outside of the District (ie, home school), so these students will essentially be new to our district. The new charter will add another great option for the families in our district, but will do little to limit the growth we will see in our elementary schools.

**I have heard that some school districts have received as much as \$4 million from the state through a matching grant program. Is Bend-La Pine Schools eligible for these dollars?**

Yes. Bend-La Pine Schools submitted an application for consideration of those matching dollars in January. We may be eligible to receive the funds if the bond request is approved by voters during the May 2017 election and the state identifies us as a beneficiary. These matching funds are competitive and are awarded based on many factors. You can find additional information here: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/news/announcements/announcement.aspx?ID=13468&TypeID=5>

**How are your projects audited?**

In addition to our annual financial statement audit performed by the firm SGA Certified Public Accountants and Consultants, we will invite industry experts in to review the work related to our bond projects. Bend-La Pine Schools staff have built independent financial and performance reviews into the bond request and the School Board receives the results of these reviews. Most recently, an audit of projects included in the 2013 construction bond program was completed by the Portland-based firm, PlanB Consultancy.