



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is on the May 3, 2016 ballot?

On May 3, 2016, voters in Port Huron Schools will be asked to consider two bond proposals to implement improvements at each of our school facilities. This program focuses on improvements to address *safety, security, health, energy efficiency, accessibility, and technology issues* within our facilities, as well as update learning environments to meet 21st century curriculum and educational goals.

2. What are the major features of this bond proposal?

Bond 2016 is a comprehensive facilities upgrade and construction program that touches every building across the district. The highlights of this program encompass four key areas:

- Learning Environment-focused upgrades to meet 21st century educational and technology requirements;
- Improvements to address the aging infrastructure of all buildings;
- Safety and Security Upgrades that build upon security initiatives already in place;
- Energy initiatives to improve the operational efficiency of buildings and reduce operational expenses.

Bond 2016 is a combination of new construction and renovation that has been studied and designed to assure cost-efficiency and quality. New construction features include:

- New Early Childhood Center located on the McKinley/Crull campus to allow consolidation of these programs currently spread across multiple schools throughout the District. This consolidation also frees up space in our current elementary schools for expansion of Kindergarten classrooms and other amenities.
- Replacement Elementary School for the current Kimball Elementary School.
- New additions at all schools throughout the District that provide flexible and collaborative learning environments.

3. Why are the needs being presented as two different proposals on the May ballot?

The “two-proposal” approach is based on communication from community surveys and research that indicated a possible funding threshold. While all of the improvements

identified meet program goals and physical shortcomings the Building Tomorrow, Today Committee and the Board realized that voters may have a funding limit. This approach is intended to be respectful of that potential limit, by giving voters a choice on the May 2016 ballot.

Proposal 1 must pass in order for Proposal 2 to be funded. The district does not intend to issue bonds under Proposal 2 if it passes alone. Proposal 1 requests approximately \$125 million in bonds and Proposal 2 requests an additional \$27.5 million, totalling \$152.5 million for approval of both.

- Option 1: Only Proposal 1 passes and is funded.
- Option 2: Proposal 1 and 2 both pass and both are funded.
- Option 3: Proposal 1 fails and 2 passes, neither will be funded.
- Option 4: Proposal 1 fails and 2 fails, neither will be funded.

4. How will our classrooms be transformed?

The focus of a 21st century classroom is on students experiencing the environment they will enter as modern day workers and developing their higher order thinking skills, effective communication skills, and collaboration skills, making them adept with using technology and all other skills that they will need in the 21st century workplace.

In each classroom, broken furniture will be replaced with flexible and appropriate furniture that supports our curriculum. Additional technology in each classroom will also support current educational practices. Upgrades will occur to systems and finishes and climate control will be provided in all classrooms.

5. Why is Kimball Elementary School being replaced while other schools are being remodeled?

After thoroughly assessing the conditions in each of our school buildings, the District's professional team prepared cost estimates to bring each building to a common standard, creating 21st century learning spaces across the district. After analyzing the estimates, it was apparent that the cost to renovate Kimball Elementary was more than two-thirds the expense of constructing a new, replacement facility. Our professional team advised that when estimates reach that level, it is more cost effective to build new. The decision was also based on longevity of the facility, with new construction as a more sustainable choice, rather than the cost of remodeling and maintaining the current facility. Therefore, because of the cost threshold and desire for a longer term solution, the decision was made to replace Kimball instead of renovate. All other district schools were below this threshold in costs, and therefore renovating and upgrading those facilities was recommended.

6. What are the benefits of consolidating the District's early childhood programs into one new facility?

Port Huron Area School District has operated its early childhood programs in a neighborhood school model. The focus has been on available space more than on the district's goals for early childhood learning environment. Consolidation of programs into an early childhood facility would have the following advantages:

- a. With the state-wide focus on education being on early intervention prior to 3rd grade, this consolidation and focus puts the district in a position to provide additional support to students early in their education. Many of our students are behind when they start school. This focus would allow students early opportunities to grow and be ready for their entrance into kindergarten.
- b. The facility would be designed for our youngest learners; it would house a gross motor area, with furniture and facilities geared to a 0-5 program.
- c. Placing the early childhood educators in one building will allow for collaboration between professionals running similar programs. By providing this opportunity, staff will be able to plan together, review data and address interventions in a structured and systematic manner. The structure would allow for a fluid movement of students between programs based on their progress. Professional development opportunities would be strategically developed to support this population and the curriculum.
- d. With a single facility instead of fragmented programs across our district, our early childhood specialists can address the goals of increasing proficiency, accurate dissemination of information and consistency in program design and expectations.
- e. With a consolidated building, we would be able to place trained interventionists in early childhood development into one building. They would be focused on the areas of speech and language, social work, occupational therapy and physical therapy. Students would be assessed regularly and could access services earlier and in an informal manner.
- f. In moving the GSRP (*Great Start Readiness Program*), ECSE (*Early Childhood Special Education*) and Infant and Toddler Programs from elementary buildings, we increase space within those buildings for kindergarten, art, music, and collaboration spaces.
- g. The consolidation of programs into one facility allows for the district to maximize services by reducing their duplication. In addition, we would also be able to evaluate programs and services based on need and maintaining fiscal responsibility. This would include food services, licensing, maintenance and transportation, which is provided to many of these programs already.
- h. The facility would allow us to provide educational programs for parents and engage our community partners in supporting them with resources.

7. Why has air conditioning/climate control at all of our schools been included in Proposal 2?

Climate control in all school facilities was discussed by the Steering Committee in early discussions about bond program components. Initially, the committee did not place this feature as a priority, although current use of District facilities is year-round (e.g. summer academic intervention, summer camps, band/athletic practices, Cleveland's balanced calendar, etc.). To be clear, at this time there are no plans or intent for our district to go year-round at all schools. Focus returned to including climate control when the professional, independent survey responses were analyzed. The responses from community members clearly indicated to the district that providing air conditioning/climate control in our schools was a higher community priority than the committee initially believed. Therefore, the committee members felt that it should be proposed in a second question to allow voters the opportunity to consider it.

8. Proposal 2 includes remodeling of the former Lakeport Elementary School to accommodate a Magnet Program. How will this impact Port Huron Schools' students?

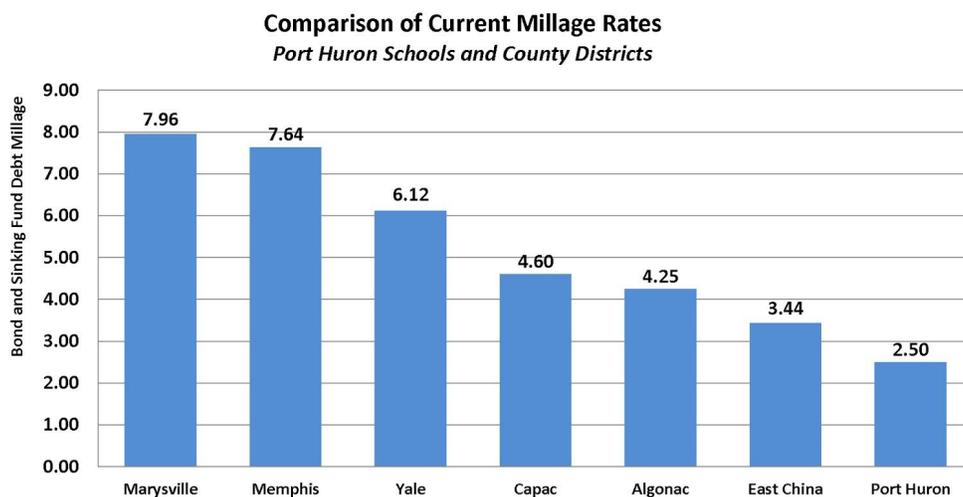
Magnet programs are specialized programs that are offered to appeal to student interests, talents and abilities. The district's emphasis on student achievement focuses on magnet programs that can benefit the entire student body and can narrow the achievement gap. Offering educational opportunities for interested or talented students generates: focused learning, parental involvement, professional development, student engagement, and a safe environment. These programs can be used as models for other schools and promote sharing among schools as well as some healthy competition.

It is our goal to impact students with this program in the following ways:

- The current discussion regarding the repurposing of Lakeport Elementary consists of housing a configuration of grades 3-8.
- The magnet program will provide a curriculum focused on enriched, differentiated, problem-based learning outcomes.
- The establishment of such programming may relieve class size pressure in some of our more crowded buildings.
- The establishment of such varied learning opportunities will provide programming alternatives for our students, as well as potentially making us more attractive to students outside of our district.
- Offers school choice.
- Provides educational equity.
- Provides learning environments that match students' interests, talents and abilities.
- Positively impacts our declining enrollment.
- Improves satisfaction among families seeking learning alternatives.
- Expands career opportunities with authentic application of skills.
- Fosters education innovation and provides a venue to pilot new teaching and learning strategies and approaches.

9. How are neighboring districts addressing the aging condition of their schools?

Neighboring districts have experienced the same issue of aging buildings and outdated technology. Bond programs have been approved and implemented in Marysville, Yale, Algonac, Memphis, and East China has placed a bond issue on the May ballot as well. New facilities, as well as improvements, are being constructed in most of our surrounding districts to improve their aging facilities. Port Huron Schools currently has the lowest debt millage compared to surrounding districts. The following chart includes our neighboring districts’ current bond and sinking fund millage rates and the impact of these proposals on our current millage rate.



FINANCIAL AND ELECTION INFORMATION

10. Can money from the bond proposal be used to pay for salaries and benefits?

No, it is against state law. Bond dollars cannot be used for operation expenses such as employee salaries, repairs, maintenance, or energy costs. Bond funds must be accounted for separately from general operating funds.

11. Please explain what bond proceeds can and cannot cover.

Bond proceeds **cannot** be used for the following items:

- Salaries and wages
- General operating expenses and maintenance
- Classroom supplies and textbooks

Bond proceeds **can** be used for the following items:

- Construction and remodeling of facilities

- Purchase of technology equipment
- Equipment and furniture
- Site improvements
- Bus purchases

12. What is our current bond debt?

The District’s current debt service includes the 2006 Refunding bonds (remaining principal balance \$6,600,000), which will be paid off in 2018 and the 2011 Building & Site & Refunding bonds (remaining principal balance \$22,380,000), which will be paid off in 2031.

13. How much will the proposal cost the average taxpayer?

Generally, a home’s taxable value will be no more than ½ of its market value. For instance, for a house market value of \$100,000, the tax increase will be calculated on its taxable value which is no more than ½ the value, or \$50,000.

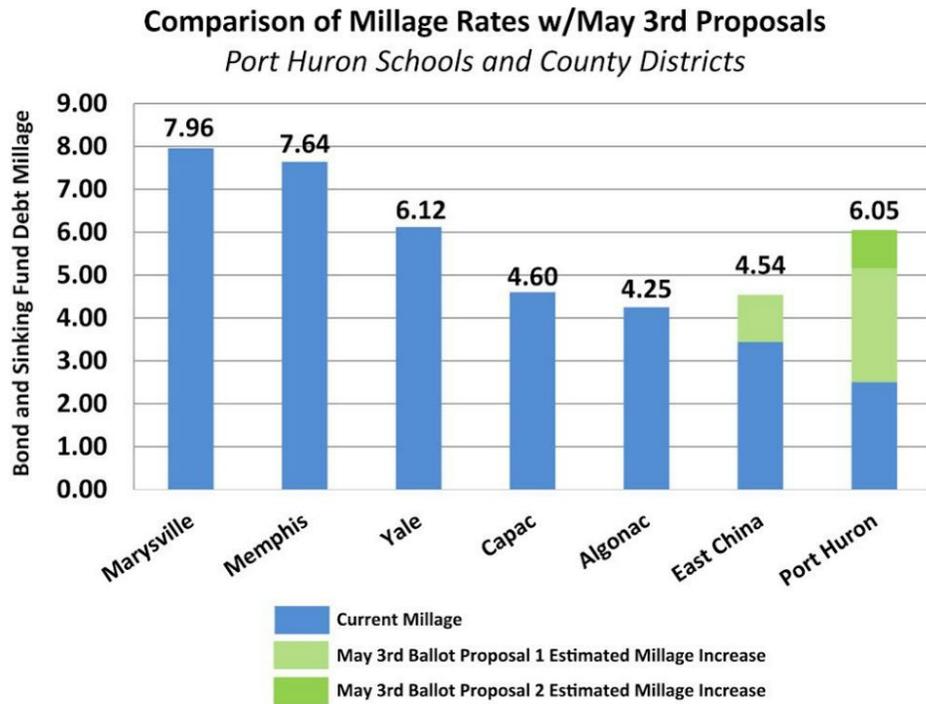
According to 2015 data reported by the St. Clair County Equalization Department, the average market value of a home in the Port Huron Area School District is approximately \$90,000, which equates to an increase of \$13.32 a month for the average taxpayer for both proposals.

The following table illustrates the breakdown of the tax impact. You can also visit the district website and click on the tax calculation link to determine your particular tax impact.

Market Value of Your Home	Taxable Value of Your Home	Proposal 1 Estimated Monthly Increase	Proposal 1 & 2 Estimated Monthly Increase
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$5.54	\$7.39
\$90,000	\$45,000	\$9.98	\$13.32
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$11.08	\$14.79
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$22.17	\$29.59
\$300,000	\$150,000	\$33.25	\$44.38

14. How will our debt millage rate compare to our surrounding districts if Proposals 1 and 2 are successfully passed in May?

As indicated in the chart below, compared to surrounding districts, Port Huron Schools is projected to go from the county’s lowest millage rate at 2.5 Mills to the middle position of 6.05 Mills with the passage of Proposal 1 and 2. Proposal’s 1 is requesting 2.66 Mills and Proposal 2 is requesting .89 Mills for a total increase of 3.55 Mills.



15. Can I deduct these property taxes on my income tax return?

Property taxes may be deductible as itemized deductions on your federal income tax return if you itemize. You may also be eligible for the Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit on your Michigan income tax return. Please consult with your tax preparer.

16. What exactly is the Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit?

Michigan's homestead property tax credit is how the State of Michigan can help you pay some of your property taxes if you are a qualified Michigan homeowner or renter and meet the requirements. The credit, for most people, is based on a comparison between property taxes and total household resources. Homeowners pay property taxes directly and renters pay them indirectly with their rent.

Given that each taxpayer has unique circumstances that determine their eligibility for the credit, please consult with your tax preparer to determine if you are eligible for this important and valuable tax credit. More information can be found at:
http://www.michigan.gov/taxes/0,1607,7-238-43535_43538---,00.html

17. Economically, is this a good time for a bond proposal?

- Current interest rates on school bonds are at or near historic lows. The district will have to pay a smaller amount of interest to bondholders for the bonds than it would at another time should rates hold.
- The value and vitality of a community often rests on the quality and marketability of its schools.
- A bond program often provides opportunities for local contractors and businesses to participate in the economic benefits of a construction program, thus providing economic stimulus to a community.

18. What are the key dates leading up to the May 3, 2016, bond election?

Final day to register to vote is Monday, April 4, 2016.

Final day to vote absentee is Monday, May 2, 2016. Ballots must be received by this date.

Election Day is Tuesday, May 3, 2016.

19. Where and when do I register to vote?

To vote in the May 3, 2016 election, you must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age by Election Day, a resident of Michigan, and Port Huron Area School District. Please visit your clerk to register to vote or visit any Secretary of State office.

You must be registered 30 days prior to an election to be eligible to vote. The official "last day to register" for the May 3, 2016 election is **Monday, April 4, 2016**. Printable voter registration forms are available on the District's website www.phasd.us or on the state website, www.michigan.gov/vote.

20. What is the procedure for absentee voting?

Applications for Absentee Ballots are available:

- On-line at www.michigan.gov/vote
- In your school building offices
- At your City Clerk's office
- On the District's website at www.phasd.us

Note: Once election ballots are available in the clerk's office, you can walk into your clerk's office, receive an absentee application, fill it out, and immediately be given your ballot to cast your vote.

21. Where do I vote?

<i>Township/City</i>	<i>Precinct</i>	<i>Polling Place / Address</i>
Burtchville Township / will include Grant Township	P1S	Burtchville Twp Hall, 4000 Burtch Road
Clyde Township	P1C	Clyde Township Hall, 3350 Vincent
Fort Gratiot Township	P1F	Keewahdin School, 4801 Lakeshore
Fort Gratiot Township	P2F	Fort Gratiot Middle School 3985 Keewahdin
Fort Gratiot Township	P3F	Fort Gratiot Township Hall 3720 Keewahdin
Fort Gratiot Township	P4F	Thomas Edison Elementary 3559 Pollina Avenue
Fort Gratiot Township	P5F	The Point, 5085 Lakeshore
Kimball Township / will include Kenockee Township (2) and Wales Township (427)	P1K	Township Municipal Building 2160 Wadhams
Kimball Township	P2K	Township Municipal Building 2160 Wadhams
Kimball Township	P3K	American Legion, Smith Creek
Kimball Township	P4K	Township Municipal Building 2160 Wadhams
Port Huron City	P1	Holland Woods, 1617 Holland Ave.
Port Huron City	P2	Colonial Woods Missionary Church 3240 Pine Grove Ave.
Port Huron City	P3	H.D. Crull School, 2615 Hancock
Port Huron City	P4	Palmer Park Center, 2829 Armour
Port Huron City	P5	McMorran Place (Memorial Room) 701 McMorran Blvd.
Port Huron City	P6	1 st United Methodist Church 828 Lapeer
Port Huron City	P7	1 st United Methodist Church 828 Lapeer
Port Huron City	P8	Griswold St. Baptism, 1232 Griswold
Port Huron City	P9	Roosevelt School, 1112 20 th Street
Port Huron City	P10	Eleger Harvey Re-investment 3013 24 th Street
Port Huron Township / will include Precinct 4 (837)	P1P	St. Pauls' Lutheran Church 3790 W. Water
Port Huron Township	P2P	DPW Building, 4134 West Water
Port Huron Township	P3P	Port Huron Township Hall 3800 Lapeer
Port Huron Township	P4P	Girl Scout Building, 2186 Water St.
Port Huron Township	P5P	Virtual Learning 1520 Michigan Road

22. Who may I contact if I have additional questions?

You are welcome to call or email:

Keely Baribeau, Director of Community Relations

Phone number: (810) 984-3101 Ext. 4021

Email: kbaribeau@phasd.us

Or email the Superintendent directly at Superintendent@phasd.us

Visit the District Website at: www.phasd.us