TRACY AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL FACILITY COMMUNITY SURVEY

Dear Members of the Tracy Area Public Schools,

The past several months have provided our school district with exciting changes and opportunities. On July 1 we welcomed the Milroy School District as the consolidation was completed. Summer projects, including new doors and locks at Tracy Area High School, updates to the Tracy Area Elementary Media Center, and LED lights at the baseball and football fields, were completed in time to welcome all students back for the start of the 2026-27 school year.

In addition to finalizing the consolidation details, our **school board has been thoughtfully considering a variety of needed facility updates to improve safety and allow us to better serve our students and communities**. This includes updates to the main entrance at the elementary school and additional space to allow for a separate gym and cafeteria. At the high school, updates are needed to the science classrooms and there is a need for additional gym and collaboration space. While the district has some funding remaining from the 2022 facility updates, additional funding will be needed. This will require the District to ask voters to support a referendum authorizing the use of the remaining funds and the issuance of a new bond.

It is important to the school board that the community has a voice in the planning process. Therefore, they are conducting a community-wide survey to give all residents an opportunity to provide input on the proposed projects. Please take a few minutes to complete this important survey.

Sincerely,
Chad Anderson, *Superintendent*

YOU MAY COMPLETE THE SURVEY USING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

ONLINE
Scan the QR code to the right with your phone or visit **bit.ly/taps_survey** to complete the survey online.

PAPER SURVEY
Download and print the survey found at **tracy.k12.mn.us**.
Once complete, drop off or mail to: **Tracy Area Public Schools, 934 Pine Street, Tracy, MN 56175**.

SENT TO YOU
Call **(507) 629-5500** to have a survey mailed to you.
Once complete, drop off or mail to: **Tracy Area Public Schools, 934 Pine Street, Tracy, MN 56175**.

Scan the QR code below with yourphone camera or visit **tracy.k12.mn.us** to complete the survey online.

All responses must be submitted online or returned by **October 15, 2026.**

ABOUT YOU

1 **What is your age?**

☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-64 ☐ 65+

2 **Are you an employee of the Tracy Area Public School District?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

3 **Do you have school-aged children?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

4 **Do you live in the Tracy Area Public School District?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

5 **Please select all that describe you:**

☐ Own a home in the District
☐ Rent in the District
☐ Own a business in the District
☐ Own commercial property in the District
☐ Own agricultural land in the District
☐ None of the above

6 **Where do you live (mailing address)?**

☐ Balaton
☐ Currie
☐ Slayton
☐ Marshall
☐ Milroy
☐ Vesta
☐ Tracy
☐ Garvin
☐ Walnut Grove
☐ Other
☐ Do not live in the School District

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The school district is committed to maintaining facilities that ensure a safe and quality learning environment for students. Each year, the district identifies facility updates that can be completed within the general operating budget. Recent updates have included:

- ✔ Lighting Updates
- ✔ Interior and Exterior Floor Replacement
- ✔ Fire Alarm System Updates
- ✔ Roof Section Replacement
- ✔ HVAC Updates
- ✔ Window and door replacement
- ✔ Door locking hardware and security cameras
- ✔ Parking lot improvements
- ✔ Creating a secure entrance at the high school, with vestibule for visitors to check in

The District has identified the following priorities in its long-range facility plan.

Improving Security at the Elementary School

The safety of our students and staff is a top priority. While the elementary school has a secure entrance, there is a need to relocate the main office to the front of the school. This would route all visitors through the school offices to better welcome guests and control building access.

Creating a Dedicated Cafeteria at the Elementary School

The elementary school lacks a dedicated cafeteria, resulting in breakfast and lunch being served in the gym. This requires staff to set up and take down tables twice daily. This is labor-intensive and creates scheduling challenges for physical education classes.

An additional gym could be built, allowing the existing gym to serve as a cafeteria and still providing flexibility to be used as gym space outside of the school day. The other option is to build a cafeteria, leaving the existing gym to serve solely as a gym.

Adding Needed Gym and Gathering Space at the High School

The District currently utilizes multiple gyms throughout our community to meet the needs of our co-curricular programs. In addition to the gyms at the school, we have been blessed to use the VMC, Milroy, Balaton and St. Mary's gyms. However, there are inefficiencies and expense with transporting students between these facilities as well as outdated bathrooms and a lack of locker rooms, gathering space, and parking at the VMC.

As a District that now covers 436 square miles, having a multi-court gym at the high school would improve scheduling efficiencies, safety/supervision and accessibility as well as allow for greater camaraderie among the Tracy Area School community.

Updating Science Classrooms

The high school science classrooms have not been renovated since original construction in 1969 and need to be redesigned to allow for greater flexibility for project-based activities and better access to technology. The lab stations require updates to plumbing and cabinetry as well as modifications to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) code compliance.

These projects are larger than what the District's annual budget can support. Therefore, the District would look to voters to support a bond referendum to fund the projects. A bond referendum is one of the primary ways that Minnesota School Districts can fund large facility updates. The Tracy Area School District last used this process in 2022. A bond, much like a home mortgage, is typically financed over an extended period of time, often 20 years.

What advice would you give the School Board?

- ☐ Explore a bond referendum based on survey results to improve our schools
- ☐ Do nothing at this time
- ☐ Not sure/need more information

PROPOSED PROJECTS

If the community supports the District exploring a bond referendum, the following projects could be included:

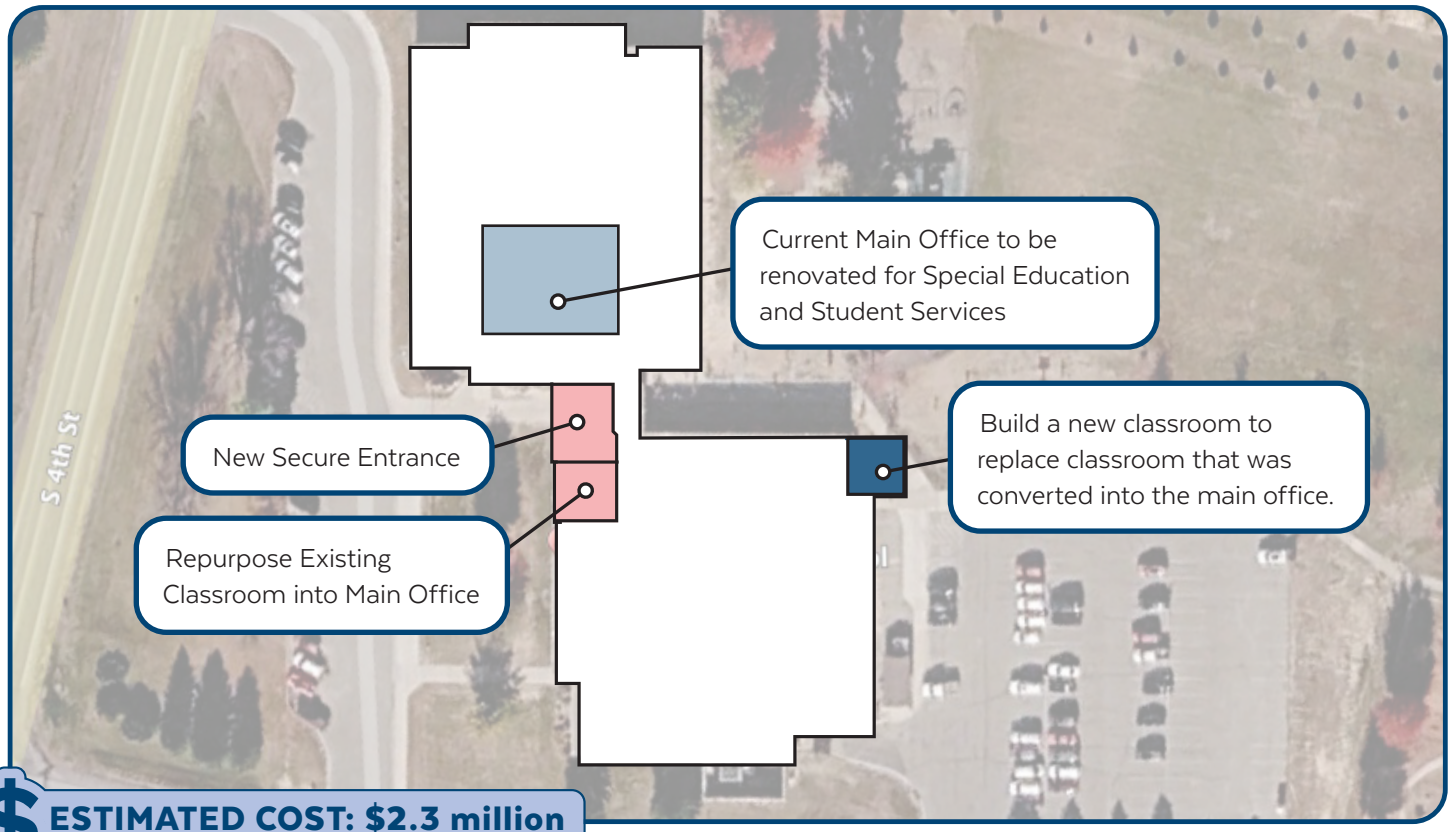
Tracy Area Elementary School

Add Secure Entrance and Renovation of Existing Space

While the elementary school has a secure main entrance, there is a need to relocate the main office to the front of the school to welcome and check-in visitors in the office. Currently, visitors are buzzed in, but then must find their way to the office to be checked in.

If a new office is built, the existing office can be repurposed to provide needed space for special education services. This includes space for:

- ✔ Occupational and Physical Therapy
- ✔ Speech and Language Therapy
- ✔ Reading and Math Support
- ✔ Counseling Support



ESTIMATED COST: $2.3 million

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to create a secure main entrance, new main office, special education space and replacement classroom as described above?

- ☐ Extremely likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely Unlikely
- ☐ Not sure/Need more information

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Create Dedicated Cafeteria Space

Currently, the elementary school has one space that serves as both a gym and a cafeteria. As a result, the tables need to be set up and put away twice daily for the serving of breakfast and lunch. When not in use as a cafeteria, the space is used for physical education class and other large group activities. The shared space is very labor-intensive and impacts the ability to schedule physical education classes.

At times a physical education class is in session on one half of the gym while lunch is being served on the other. This results in noise challenges, making it hard to teach as well as for students to focus.



Custodial staff set up and take down lunch tables and clean the floors after both breakfast and lunch each day

The District is exploring two options:

Option 1: Build a new cafeteria – A new cafeteria could be built adjacent to the kitchen. This would provide a dedicated space for breakfast and lunch and could be used as a large group meeting space.

Option 2: Build an additional gym – The existing gym would remain set up for breakfast and lunch during the school day and could serve as a gym space after school when needed.

$ ESTIMATED COST: $4.1–$4.7 million

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to create a dedicated cafeteria space at the elementary school as described above?	☐ Extremely likely ☐ Likely ☐ Unlikely ☐ Extremely Unlikely ☐ Not sure/Need more information

Which option do you prefer?	☐ **Option 1**: Build a new cafeteria ☐ **Option 2**: Build an additional gym ☐ I support either option ☐ I do not support either option ☐ Not sure/Need more information

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Add Performance Space

There is a need for a stage at the elementary school for concerts, speakers, and performances. The dedicated cafeteria project could be expanded to include a stage and sound system.

ESTIMATED COST: $850,000

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to add a performance space at the elementary school as described above?	☐ Extremely likely ☐ Likely ☐ Unlikely ☐ Extremely Unlikely ☐ Not sure/Need more information

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK/COMMENTS:



PROPOSED PROJECTS

Tracy Area High School

Update Science Classrooms

The current high school science classrooms are in need of renovation. The lab stations and casework are almost 60 years old and failing. A portion of the chemistry hood is rusted out. The tabletops and casework are cracking and falling apart. The plumbing and fixtures are all operating beyond their service life and need to be replaced.

Updates are also needed to allow for flexible space for both large and small group instruction, as well as use of current technology.





ESTIMATED COST: $712,000

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to update the science classrooms as described above?

- ☐ Extremely likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely Unlikely
- ☐ Not sure/Need more information

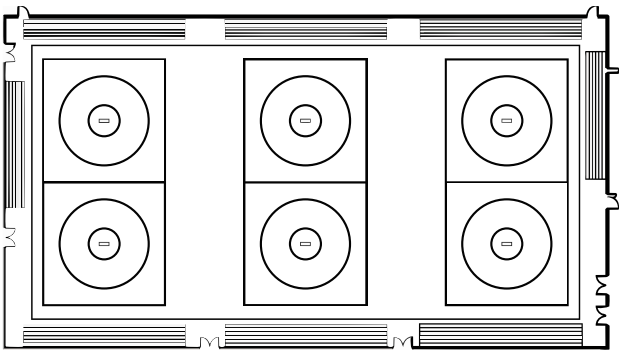
Additional Feedback/Comments:

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Add Gym and Gathering Space

3 Station Gym

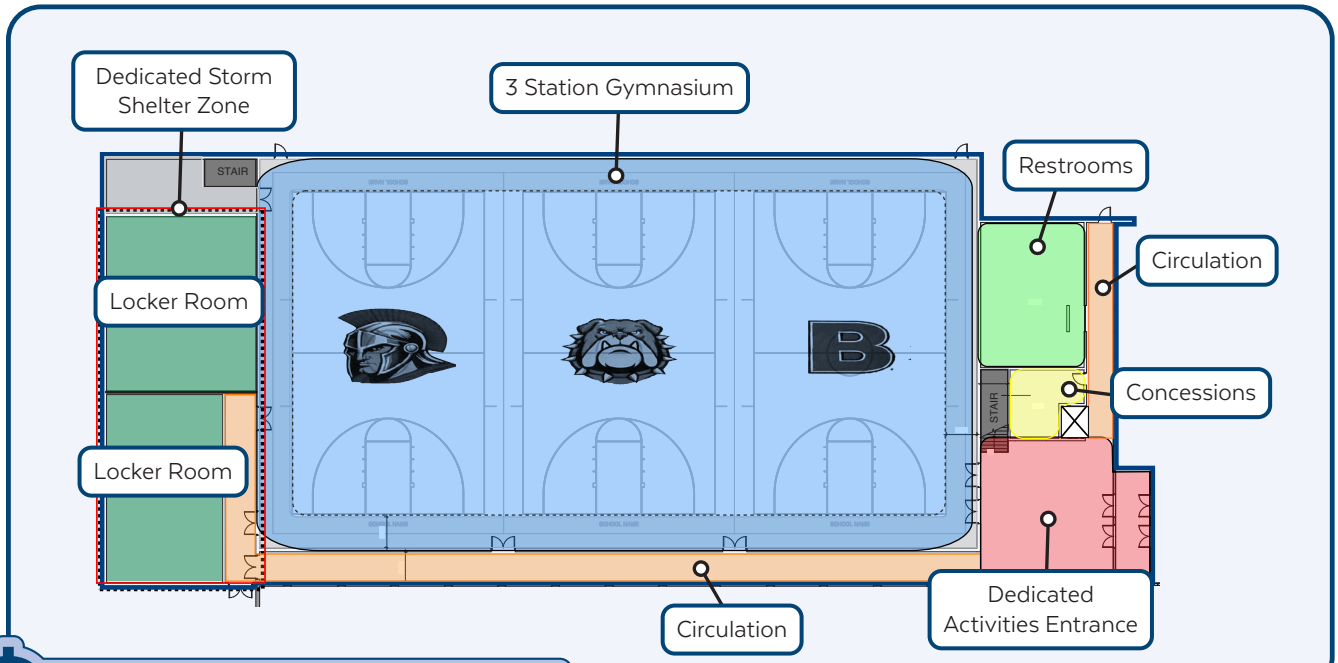
There is a need for additional gym space at the high school to more efficiently meet the needs of students and our communities. There is only one gym at the high school, therefore the District utilizes the VMC, Milroy, Balaton and St. Mary's gyms to meet the needs of our co-curricular programs. However, there are scheduling and staffing inefficiencies, as well as expenses associated with transporting students between the school and these facilities. In addition, the VMC has outdated and failing bathrooms and a lack of locker rooms, gathering space, and parking.



The 3 station gym could hold 6 wrestling mats.

The high school does not have enough locker rooms. As a result, opposing teams occasionally need to change in classrooms for games. Our school was built prior to Title IX, and only have one boys and girls locker room. Due to the fact that we now have both boys and girls practices and games taking place on campus we need additional locker room space. Currently our own varsity teams do not change in the locker room during game days, they change in a space without bathrooms or showers. The project would also include restrooms and concession stands.

The addition of these spaces at the high school would improve scheduling efficiencies, safety/supervision and accessibility as well as allow for greater camaraderie among the Tracy Area School community.



ESTIMATED COST: $20 million

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to build a multi-station gym and supporting spaces at the high school as described above?

- ☐ Extremely likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely Unlikely
- ☐ Not sure/Need more information

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Elevated Walking Track

If a new gym is built, the project could be expanded to include an indoor walking track above the gym. This would be available for both school and community use.

ESTIMATED COST: $1.4 million

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to build an indoor walking track at the high school as described above?

- ☐ Extremely likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely Unlikely
- ☐ Not sure/Need more information

Legacy Commons

If the new gym is built, there would also be value in having a gathering area/commons for large group activities, a waiting area for parents and camaraderie during tournaments/games/events. The underutilized courtyard space could be redesigned to celebrate the success and traditions of all of the communities that make up the Tracy Area Public Schools.



*AI rendering, not a final concept

ESTIMATED COST: $5.8 million

How likely are you to support a bond referendum that provides funding to build a legacy commons at the high school as described above?

- ☐ Extremely likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely Unlikely
- ☐ Not sure/Need more information

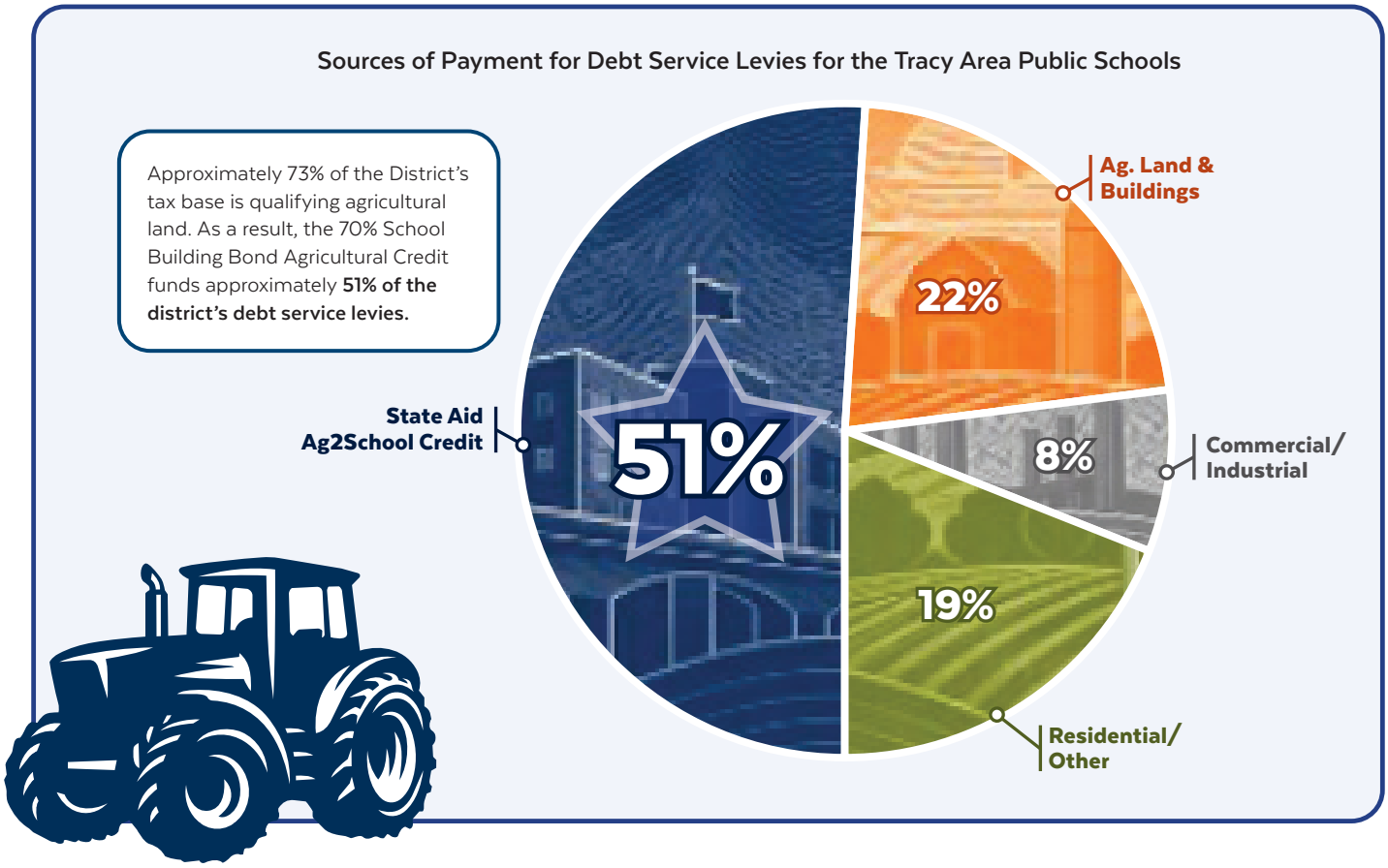


FINANCIAL BACKGROUND

Ag2School Credit

In 2017, the legislature enacted the Ag2School Tax Credit Program to reduce the burden for agricultural property owners on existing and future school building bonds. The Credit Program provides a 70% tax credit on the agricultural landowner's property tax bill. Its passage in 2017 was a significant win for rural students and farmers. Legislators from both parties speak highly of this program and its impact on education and tax fairness.

Due to the amount of agricultural land that the school district has, approximately 51 % of debt service levies for the Tracy Area Public Schools are paid for through the State Agriculture Credit Program.



2022 PROJECT FUNDS

In 2022, the school board authorized funding to complete needed updates to the school's HVAC system. Fortunately, the project came in under budget! The remaining funds from that project have been invested and are earning interest. **Today, that investment totals $4.6 million.** In order for the school board to access those funds, voters need to approve their new use. If the community supports completing one or more of the projects in this survey, the District will ask voters to give permission for these funds to be used. This will reduce the size of the new bond needed and offset the tax impact to residents.

2022 PROJECT FUNDS

Funding Support

Depending on the options chosen, the cost to complete all of the projects outlined in this survey could total an estimated $35 million. The District has $4.6 million remaining from the 2022 project. With voter approval, the $4.6 million will serve as the "downpayment" for the project. The District would like to know your willingness to support these projects through a tax increase, should they move forward with a bond referendum.

Authorized Bond Amount Number of Tax Levies		$19 million 20		$23 million 20		$27 million 20		$31 million 20	
Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Estimated Tax Impact							
		Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
Residential Homestead	$100,000	$35	$3	$42	$4	$49	$4	$57	$5
	$200,000	$95	$8	$115	$10	$135	$11	$156	$13
	$250,000	$126	$10	$152	$13	$178	$15	$205	$17
	$300,000	$156	$13	$189	$16	$221	$18	$254	$21
	$400,000	$217	$18	$262	$22	$307	$26	$353	$29
Commercial/Industrial	$250,000	$237	$20	$286	$24	$335	$28	$386	$32
	$500,000	$515	$43	$622	$52	$730	$61	$839	$70
Agricultural Homestead* (average value per acre of land & buildings)	$8,000	$0.67	$0.06	$0.81	$0.07	$0.95	$0.08	$1.09	$0.09
	$10,000	$0.83	$0.07	$1.01	$0.08	$1.18	$0.10	$1.36	$0.11
	$12,000	$1.00	$0.08	$1.21	$0.10	$1.42	$0.12	$1.63	$0.14
Agricultural Non-Homestead** (average value per acre of land & buildings)	$8,000	$1.34	$0.11	$1.61	$0.13	$1.89	$0.16	$2.18	$0.18
	$10,000	$1.67	$0.14	$2.02	$0.17	$2.37	$0.20	$2.72	$0.23
	$12,000	$2.00	$0.17	$2.42	$0.20	$2.84	$0.24	$3.27	$0.27

*Estimated tax impact includes principal and interest payments on the new financing. The amounts in the table are based on school district taxes for bonded debt levies only, and do not include tax levies for other purposes. Tax increases shown above are gross increases, not including the impact of the homeowner's Homestead Credit Refund ("Circuit Breaker") program. Owners of homestead property may qualify for a refund, based on their income and total property taxes. This will decrease the net effect of the proposed financing for some property owners.

**For all agricultural property, estimated tax impact includes a 70% reduction due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit. Average value per acre is the total estimated market value of all land & buildings divided by total acres. If the property includes a home, then the tax impact on the house, garage, and one acre of land will be calculated in addition to the taxes per acre, on the same basis as a residential homestead or non-homestead property. If the same property owner owns more than approximately $3.84 million of agricultural homestead land and buildings, a portion of the property will be taxed at the higher non-homestead rate.

In general, based on the tax increases shown, which bond amount would you be willing to support?

Representing a tax increase as shown in the chart above over the next 20 years.

- ☐ $31 million bond
- ☐ $27 million bond
- ☐ $23 million bond
- ☐ $19 million bond
- ☐ I would support a bond less than $19 million
- ☐ I am not supportive of any bond at this time.
- ☐ Not sure/need more information

Please complete the survey by **October 15, 2026.**