



Wolverine Community Schools

Home of the Wildcats

wolverineschools.org
Phone: (231) 525-8201
Fax: (231) 525-8251

NEWS FROM WOLVERINE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Date: January 27th, 2022

For release: Immediate

For more information: Matthew Baughman, Superintendent of Schools

mbaughman@wolverineschools.org, 231-525-8201

Wolverine Community Schools Bond Proposal on May Ballot

When the Wolverine Elementary School boiler caught fire in 2020, Superintendent Matthew Baughman knew that continuing to repair instead of replacing the aging electrical, mechanical, and physical infrastructure of the district was putting students and staff at risk. “We have gotten to the point where continuing to try to fix things is not only likely going to cost us more in the long run, it’s actually a safety hazard to kids. When the boiler caught fire, our fire alarm didn’t even go off before evacuating the kids to the high school. Later that day, the back up boiler died too.” Fortunately, school personnel identified the issue and shut off power and electricity to the boiler before a serious fire occurred. The narrowly avoided boiler fire, in addition to other challenges the district is facing is why, in its regular January Board meeting, the Wolverine Community School Board voted unanimously to put a \$7.3 million dollar Bond issue on the May 3rd ballot, in order to ensure that Wolverine Community Schools can continue to keep its students safe, warm, and dry.

“The last major work done in Wolverine was 1993, when the gymnasium was constructed. At that time, our Middle School science lab and classrooms were constructed and we added a temporary cafeteria. We have not fully updated any of the district’s original classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, electrical, or mechanical systems since the buildings were constructed, which was in 1974 for the elementary and 1934 for the high school. These are not wants, they are needs.”

If the bond is approved by voters on May 3rd, 2022, Wolverine Community Schools will not only update its fire and life safety systems, but will renovate classrooms, install emergency generators in both buildings, update its electrical and heating systems and make other essential repairs, including replacing the temporary structure the high schoolers have been using as a cafeteria with a permanent building.

“The original life of our high school cafeteria was only supposed to be 15-20 years; we have been using it now for approximately 30 years and it shows,” Baughman noted.

As stated previously, the total cost for these projects is \$7.3 million—which is \$3 million less than the original scope of work the architects and engineers proposed the district should complete. Wolverine Community Schools currently levies 1.25 mills for a sinking fund, which it has used to replace roofs over the gym, high school, and elementary. Each of these roofs were years beyond their warranted lifespans. If the bond measure is approved, the district will not ask for the sinking fund to be renewed and the total millage after 2025 will be 3.1 mills, with an average millage of 2.54 over the life of the 30 year bond.

The district's superintendent and School Board believe that Wolverine kids deserve these updates, "The district's exterior, does not reflect the value of our students and staff inside. Wolverine kids deserve to have the same opportunities and facilities as other students in our area," Baughman said.