



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For the August 4, 2026 Bond Proposal

Introduction: Voters living in the Owosso Public School district will have the opportunity to vote on a bond proposal on the August 4, 2026 election ballot. If approved, it would provide **\$37,900,000** for building & site improvements to address identified and ongoing capital projects based on facility assessments and community input. If approved by voters, the 2026 bond millage is expected to have a **ZERO MILL NET TAX RATE INCREASE** from the current debt tax levy.

1. What is a bond proposal and how can bond funds be spent?

A bond proposal is how a public school district asks its community whether to authorize borrowing money to pay for capital expenditures. Voter-approved bond funds can be spent on additions, remodeling, site improvements, athletic facilities, playgrounds, furnishings, equipment, and other capital needs. Funds raised through the sale of bonds cannot be used for operational expenses such as employee salaries and benefits, school supplies, and textbooks. Bond funds must be kept separate from operating funds and must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

2. What are the key projects in this bond proposal?

This bond proposal would address the highest priority projects as determined by the district and community input.

Bentley Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center

- Create new secure vestibule at east entry
- Expand, mill, and overlay the existing parking lot
- Classroom furniture and equipment

Emerson Elementary School

- Replace boiler
- Replace exterior wall panels on north side of building
- Replace center section of roof
- Pave parking lot
- Replace sidewalks near bus stop on Dewey Street
- Abatement
- Classroom furniture and equipment

Bryant Elementary School

- Build a secure entrance
- Replace boiler
- Remodel restrooms to meet ADA compliance – new fixtures and finishes
- Replace the roof over the gym and the wood exterior fascia
- Replace ceilings throughout the school
- Install exterior fencing
- Abatement
- Classroom furniture and equipment



Central Elementary School

- Build a secure entrance
- Remodel restrooms to meet ADA compliance – new fixtures and finishes
- Replace the entire roof and the wood exterior fascia (the 2019 addition would NOT receive a new roof)
- Replace windows
- Replace sidewalks on Lee Street (some work would be completed in 2027 and some in 2028)
- Abatement
- Classroom furniture and equipment

Owosso 6th–12th Grade Campus & Pool

- Replace roofing over the cafeteria and media center
- Replace pool infrastructure and mechanical systems (some work would be completed in 2028 and some in 2029)
- Remove skylights and infill roof and ceiling
- Abatement
- Resurface the "freshman" parking lot on the west side of the campus

Washington Campus/Lincoln Alternative High School

- Add doors to create a secure entrance
- Remodel restrooms to meet ADA compliance – new fixtures and finishes
- Replace water lines
- Electrical work
- Classroom furniture and equipment at Lincoln

Willman Field

- Remodel restrooms
- Remodel team rooms
- Coat concrete grandstands and replace expansion joint
- Repair sewer line

Jerome Street Transportation Facility

- Demolish buildings
- Create new parking lot for district use
- Abatement

Cedar Street Warehouse

- Demolish existing building
- Abatement

New construction of a 12,500 sf Transportation/Maintenance Center on the north side of the 6th–12th Grade Campus (property currently owned by the district) inclusive of:

- Bus canopy for 12 buses
- Sitework
- Loose furnishings and equipment
- Technology

Net ZERO mill increase projected from the current tax levy



3. Why a bond proposal now?

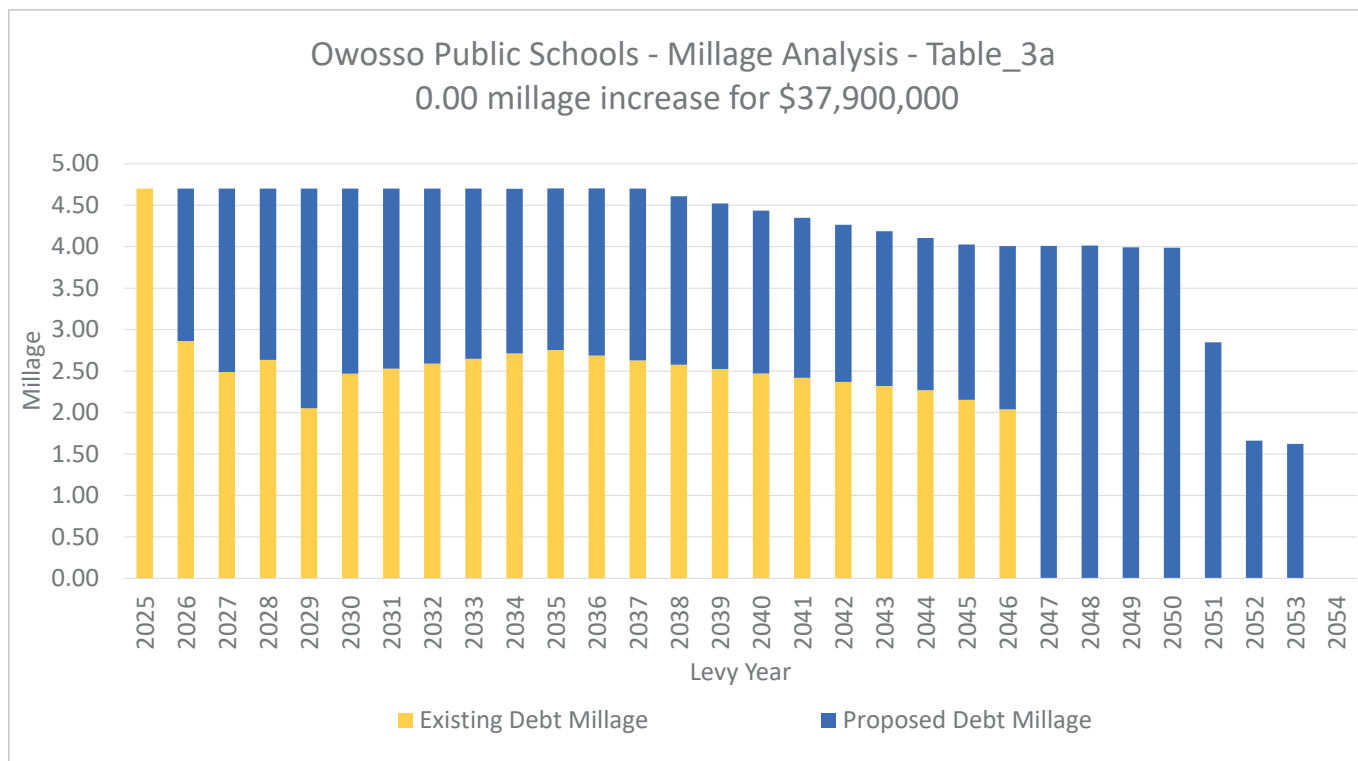
The 2026 bond proposal is planned to address the currently identified issues over the next three years. There are core infrastructure system projects, such as roofs, boilers, plumbing, electrical and windows, that have exceeded their expected lifecycles – replacing these systems would help extend the useful life of our school buildings and sites.

4. How would the bond proposal impact my property taxes?

Owosso Public Schools currently levies 4.7 mills for the debt tax rate. If the 2026 bond proposal is approved by voters, the debt tax rate is expected to remain the same at 4.7 mills, resulting in a projected **ZERO TAX RATE INCREASE** from the current debt tax levy.

5. If the August 4, 2026 bond proposal passes, how would it impact the projected debt levy in the future?

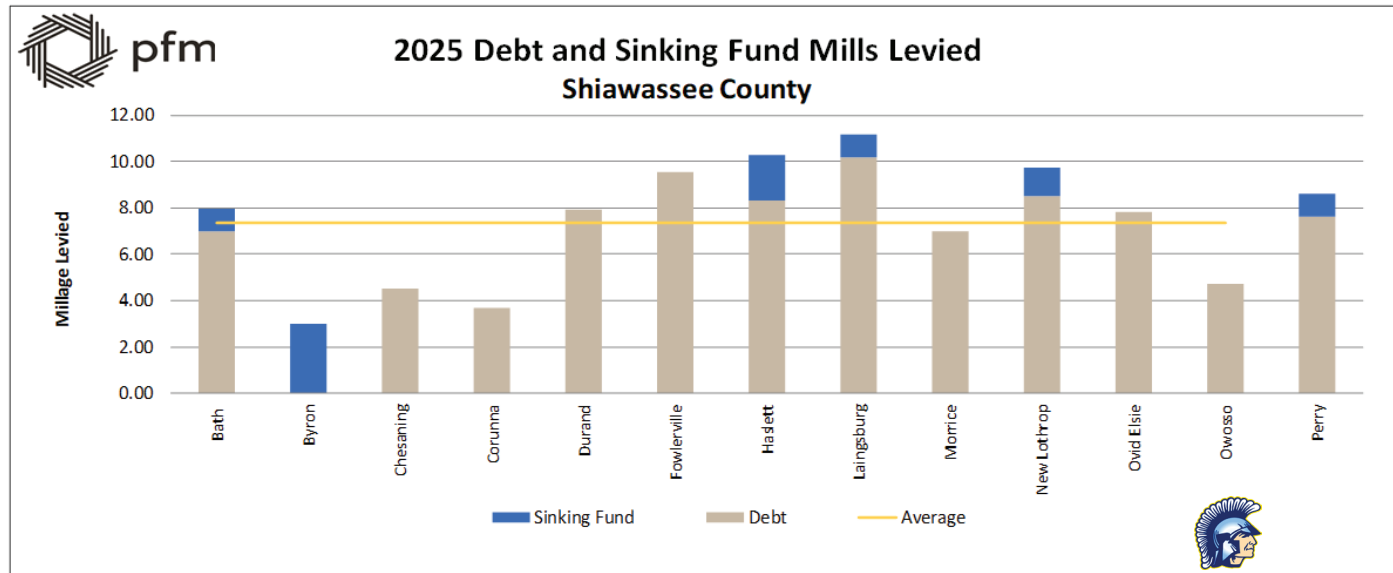
Below is a graph depicting both the district's current debt millage as well as the projected debt millage if the August 2026 bond proposal is approved by the voters.



Assumptions: Taxable value growth rates of 3% for 2026 & 2027, 2.5% for 2028 – 2030, and 2.14% (or the 20-year historical average) thereafter, as well as use of debt fund balance on hand and estimated bond interest rates.



6. What are the debt and Sinking Fund mills levied by other school districts in the area?



Source: Shiawassee County 2025 Apportionment Report and Individual School Districts
7.37 mill average

7. When would the millage for this proposal first be levied, if approved?

The millage for this proposal, if approved, would first be levied on the December 2026 property tax bill. Again, the district's debt millage is projected to remain at 4.7 mills, with no projected increase resulting from the proposed bonds.

8. Would the approval of the bond proposal have any impact on our current operational budget?

While funding from this bond proposal is independent of the district's general fund operating budget, the bond would likely have a positive impact on the district's general fund by allowing the district to reallocate operating funds that are currently being spent on aging facilities and mechanical systems. The operational savings generated from new and cost-efficient facilities could be redirected to student programs and resources.

9. What oversights would hold the district accountable?

If approved by voters, the district's Architect/Engineer would design the proposed projects and prepare construction documents and specifications for the projects. Once the projects are designed, the district's Construction Manager would assemble bid packages and publicly advertise to solicit competitive bids for all work. This is required in the Revised School Code. This process ensures that the district selects the lowest responsible bidder. All qualified contractors would have an opportunity to attend a pre-bid meeting to obtain additional information and project clarification. All qualified contractors would have the opportunity to participate in the competitive bid process. All bond projects, including financial records and expenditures of bond funds, would be audited by a third-party auditor annually.



10. At what point would the State of Michigan, as well as the local fire and police departments, provide input into the bond projects?

Each project would be required to be submitted to both the State's Bureau of Construction Codes (BCC) and the Bureau of Fire Services (BFS) for both plan review and permitting. These agencies would review the projects to ensure they comply with applicable codes, before any building permits are issued. Building plans and specifications must be signed and sealed by a Licensed Architect/Professional Engineer before submission. As of March 21, 2019, Michigan law requires school districts to consult on the plans for the construction or major renovation regarding school safety issues with the law enforcement agency that is the first responder for that school building. This consultation would happen if the bond proposal is approved by voters, before construction documents are finalized prior to project commencement.

11. Are owners of property in the school district eligible to vote if they do not reside in the school district?

Owners of property are only eligible to vote if they reside in the school district boundaries. To be eligible to register to vote, you must be:

- A Michigan resident (at the time you register) and a resident of your city or township for at least 30 days (when you vote)
- A United States citizen
- At least 18 years of age (when you vote)

12. If I rent a home, can I vote?

Yes. If you rent a home, you can still vote as long as you are a registered voter in the city or township in which you live, and you live within the district's boundaries.

13. How is an absentee voter ballot obtained?

Registered voters must complete and submit the application to receive their absentee voter ballot. To vote by mail, fill out the application and sign it, and then return it to your local clerk. If you registered to vote after absentee voter ballot applications were mailed, applications may be obtained online at Michigan.gov/vote. Absentee voter ballots will be available from June 25, 2026 to August 4, 2026.

14. What are the key dates leading up to Tuesday, August 4, 2026, election day?

Registering to vote:

- The last day for voters to register by mail/online is July 20, 2026.
- Voters may register in-person through August 4, 2026 (election day) with the required documentation.

Absentee Voting:

- Absentee voter ballots will be available from June 25, 2026 to August 4, 2026.
- Contact your local clerk with questions.



15. What is the ballot language?

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOND PROPOSAL**

Shall Owosso Public Schools, Shiawassee County, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Thirty-Seven Million Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$37,900,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor, in one or more series, for the purpose of:

partially remodeling the Bentley Bright Beginnings building, including creating a secure entrance; partially remodeling Emerson Elementary School, including a partial roof replacement and boiler replacement; partially remodeling Bryant Elementary School, including creating a secure entrance, a partial roof replacement, boiler replacement, and remodeling restrooms; partially remodeling Central Elementary School, including creating a secure entrance, a full roof replacement (except for the portion of the roof that was completed in the 2017 bond program), remodeling restrooms, and replacing windows; a partial roof replacement, renovation of pool-related mechanical systems and infrastructure, and building remodeling related to the roof and pool projects, at the Owosso High School/Owosso Middle School campus; partially remodeling Washington-Lincoln School, including creating a secure entrance, remodeling restrooms, and replacing water lines; erecting and equipping a transportation/maintenance facility and a transportation structure for district buses and equipment; demolishing the Cedar Street Warehouse building and buildings on the Jerome Street Bus Facility site; furnishing and refurbishing, and equipping and re-equipping school buildings and facilities; developing, improving, and remodeling Willman Field, including the bleachers and restroom facilities; and preparing, developing, and improving sites at the Bentley Bright Beginnings, Bryant, Central, Emerson, Owosso High School/Owosso Middle School, and Washington-Lincoln campuses, the transportation/maintenance facility site, the Willman Field site, and the Jerome Street Bus Facility site, including paving and improving parking lots?

The following is for informational purposes only:

The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2026, under current law, is 1.84 mills (\$1.84 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation), for a -0- mills net increase over the prior year's levy. The maximum number of years the bonds of any series may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is twenty-five 25 years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 2.32 mills (\$2.32 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation).

The school district does not expect to borrow from the State to pay debt service on the bonds. The total amount of qualified bonds currently outstanding is \$36,455,000. The total amount of qualified loans currently outstanding is \$0. The estimated computed millage rate may change based on changes in certain circumstances.

(Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited and the proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)

YES

NO



16. In the ballot language, it states that the maximum number of years any series of bonds may be outstanding, exclusive of refunding, is not more than twenty-five (25) years, what does this mean?

The school district plans to issue three series (portions) of bonds with all bond principal and interest for each portion paid off within twenty-five (25) years.

17. Is a millage like this standard operating procedure for school districts?

Yes, a millage like this is standard operating procedure for school districts in Michigan and across the country. School districts commonly rely on voter-approved millages—such as sinking funds, operating millages, and bond proposals—to fund building and infrastructure projects that are not fully covered by state funding. These funds often support building renovations, safety improvements, technology upgrades, transportation, and other essential infrastructure. In short, millages are a regular and necessary part of how public schools maintain their facilities and services for students and staff.

18. How were the funds from the 2017 bond spent?

Created a combined Middle School/High School Campus

- a. Remodeled 59 HS classrooms, added 20 new classrooms
- b. Constructed a new middle school gym
- c. Constructed a new performing arts center featuring an auditorium with 1,000 seats, 2 band classrooms, 2 choir classrooms, and 2 art classrooms
- d. Remodeled for Career and Technical Education (formerly known as Vocational Education)
- e. Remodeled the Owosso High School/Owosso Middle School Campus media center (library)
- f. Remodeled to create a separate middle school entrance/office
- g. Expanded parking/improved traffic circulation

District-wide security updates

District-wide technology improvements (5 year bond)

Constructed multi-purpose room additions at Emerson, Central, and Bryant Elementaries

Furnishings for all of the new spaces

19. Where can I get more information about this project?

<https://www.owosso.k12.mi.us/bond>

20. What is each district property used for?

- Bentley Bright Beginnings is Owosso Public Schools' Early Childhood Center, offering childcare and several preschool classes for nearly 200 students. There is a waiting list for Bentley's childcare and preschool programs.
- Emerson, Central, and Bryant Schools provide elementary education, grades K-5, to approximately 1,200 students.
- Owosso Middle School, grades 6-8, has approximately 660 students at the Owosso Secondary Campus on North Street.



- Owosso High School, grades 9–12, has approximately 740 students at the Owosso Secondary Campus on North Street.
- The Washington Campus is home to Lincoln Alternative High School, which serves approximately 100 students, and the district Administration Office.
- The bus garage on Jerome Street is the current transportation center.
- The warehouse on Cedar Street is where district maintenance equipment is stored and our maintenance team members' headquarters.
- The Cass Street warehouse is where the bus maintenance takes place and vital district records are stored.
- The Green Meadows (Tahyio Road) property is a vacant piece of land.
- Kiwanis Acres (on Waugh Road) was gifted to the district and by law, cannot be sold.
- The former Owosso Middle School on North Water Street is under contract with Venture, Inc.

21. Would energy efficient lighting be considered in these projects?

Yes, energy efficiency would be considered in all electrical projects.

22. What is the cost of a new boiler to heat a school?

This amount varies based on the size of the school. In this current proposal, Emerson and Bryant would each have a new boiler installed. The projected cost for Emerson's boiler is approximately \$904,398 and Bryant's is \$757,092.

23. Does this proposal include installing air conditioning in Owosso's schools?

No, it does not.

24. Would the district sell the bus garage, Cass St. warehouse, and Cedar Street warehouse?

- The district plans to demolish the bus garage structure on Jerome Street and repave this area that would be used for Willman Field parking.
- Cass Street warehouse would be sold.
- The Cedar Street warehouse would be demolished.

25. Has the old middle school been sold?

Owosso Public Schools' Board of Education entered into an agreement with Venture, Inc. in 2022 to purchase the former Owosso Middle School on North Water Street for \$200,000. Since that time, Venture, Inc., has pursued a tedious grant funding process to repurpose the former school building into affordable housing. Venture, Inc. has also been paying \$10,000 per quarter to offset utility costs since July 2022 and will continue to pay this stipend through August 1, 2026.



26. How can the public trust information provided by the district related to the bond proposal and its financial impacts?

In the State of Michigan, public school districts are legally required to keep bond proposal communications factual, objective, and informational because they are public entities funded by taxpayer dollars. Under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA), Section 57, school districts may not use public funds, staff time, district equipment, facilities, or other public resources to advocate for or against a ballot proposal. That means districts cannot tell voters how to vote or engage in political campaigning using taxpayer-supported resources.

What school districts can do is educate the public by sharing clear, neutral facts—such as:

- what projects are proposed,
- why the improvements are needed,
- how much the bond would fund,
- the estimated tax impact, and
- what benefits the improvements would provide to students and the community.

27. What would happen to the district if this bond proposal does not pass?

If the bond proposal does not pass, the district would have to consider cutting programs to pay for certain priority projects to continue to safely operate our schools. Additionally, because of the condition of the pool equipment at the 6th–12th grade campus, the pool may need to be shutdown/closed and eliminated from programming/sports activities.

28. What is the difference between General Fund, Sinking Fund, and Operating Millage dollars?

In Michigan, school funding is divided into distinct buckets: General Funds cover daily operations (salaries, supplies), Sinking Funds are voter-approved, "pay-as-you-go" taxes for specific facility repairs and security, and Operating Millages (usually 18 mills on non-homestead property) are mandatory local taxes to meet state per-pupil funding levels.

A. General Fund (Operating Budget)

Purpose: Pays for day-to-day operations: teacher/staff salaries, benefits, utilities, supplies, and instructional materials.

Source: Primarily the state school aid foundation allowance, supplemented by local, non-homestead property taxes.

B. Sinking Fund (Capital Projects) - Owosso does not have a sinking fund at this time.

Purpose: A "pay-as-you-go" fund for repairs, remodeling, school security, land purchases, and school buses.

Source: Voter-approved property tax levy (up to 3 mills for up to 10 years).

Usage: Restricted to capital projects only. Cannot be used for operating expenses like staff salaries, benefits, or textbooks.

Net ZERO mill increase projected from the current tax levy



OWOSSO PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Key Advantage: Allows districts to pay for repairs (e.g., roofs, boilers) without paying interest on debt.

Disadvantage: This gives districts smaller amounts of money over time instead of a big chunk of change all at once like a bond. So this funding method is not a great way to pay for big renovations or purchases. However, it does help schools make small improvements and pay for long-term maintenance needs without getting a loan or taking money out of the operating budget.

C. Operating Millage (Non-Homestead)

Purpose: Specifically the 18 mills (approximately) that school districts must levy on non-homestead (commercial/secondary home) properties to receive their full per-pupil state allowance.

Source: Non-homestead property taxes, which must be renewed by voters.

Usage: Used for the General Fund to support daily educational programming and operations.

Note: Most primary homeowners do not pay this tax.

29. Why can't we use 2017 Bond Proposal dollars to fix the items listed in this proposal?

Michigan state law requires that funds only be spent on projects that were outlined in the 2017 bond proposal that was approved by voters. Even though the district was able to pay down the school bond loan early, the district is not entitled to use the funds for any additional purposes.

Questions?

If you have further questions, please contact Steve Brooks, Superintendent, 989-723-8131 or brooks@owosso.k12.mi.us