



## November 4, 2025 Bond Proposal

### FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

**Introduction:** *Our community will have the opportunity to consider a bond proposal at an election to be held on November 4, 2025. If approved, the proposal would authorize the district to borrow \$30,000,000 for building and site improvements to address identified and ongoing capital projects based on facility assessments, community surveys, and community focus group feedback. If the bonds are issued, it is estimated that the district's overall debt millage levied in 2026 would return to the 5.0 mills last levied in 2024.*

#### 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 for authorization to borrow money to pay for capital expenditures. Voter-approved bond funds can be spent on projects identified in the bond proposal such as additions, remodeling, site improvements, 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 only the highest priority projects as determined by the district, with a focus on projects that are replacing building systems that have reached the end of their useful lives:

##### **Ealy Elementary School:**

- Heating & cooling upgrades
- Media center updates
- New furniture & equipment
- Technology for classrooms
- New window coverings
- Electrical work

##### **Middle School:**

- Heating & cooling upgrades
- Cafeteria and kitchen updates
- Replacement of select flooring
- Media center updates
- Technology for classrooms
- Electrical work

##### **Shoreline Elementary School:**

- Heating & cooling upgrades
- Cafeteria and kitchen updates
- Front office and learning space upgrades
- Technology for classrooms
- Electrical work

##### **High School:**

- New secure entry and administration area
- Heating & cooling upgrades
- New fire alarm
- Cafeteria updates
- Technology for classrooms
- Furniture
- Electrical work

**Additionally, bond proceeds would fund roof repairs and replacements on select buildings, as needed.**

**3. How is a bond proposal different from an operating millage, such as the operating millage on the May 2025 ballot?**

An operational millage is part of the general fund, which is used for daily operations. This money pays for staff, utility bills, classroom supplies, busing, etc. Unlike a bond proposal, a homeowner's primary residence is exempt from an operating millage.

**4. What was the process to determine what is in this bond proposal?**

The District has consistently studied the current and projected needs of school buildings and educational programs to determine a facility plan. Using this information, supplemented with the District's strategic plan initiatives, an independent facility assessment that was published in [2025 by School Finance Research Foundation](#), staff and student focus groups, a community survey, and input from our Architect/Engineers and Construction Manager bond partners, District leaders and the Board of Education are now asking voters to consider a school bond proposal on the November 4, 2025 ballot that include only the highest priority projects.

**5. Why a bond proposal now?**

The 2025 bond proposal is planned to address the currently identified issues over the next three years. There are core infrastructure needs, such as providing a secure entry, or core building system needs, such as heating, cooling, and electrical systems, that have reached the end of their useful lives. Replacing these systems would extend the lifecycle of our school buildings, comply with student safety standards, and improve our classroom learning environments.

**6. How would the bond proposal impact my property taxes?**

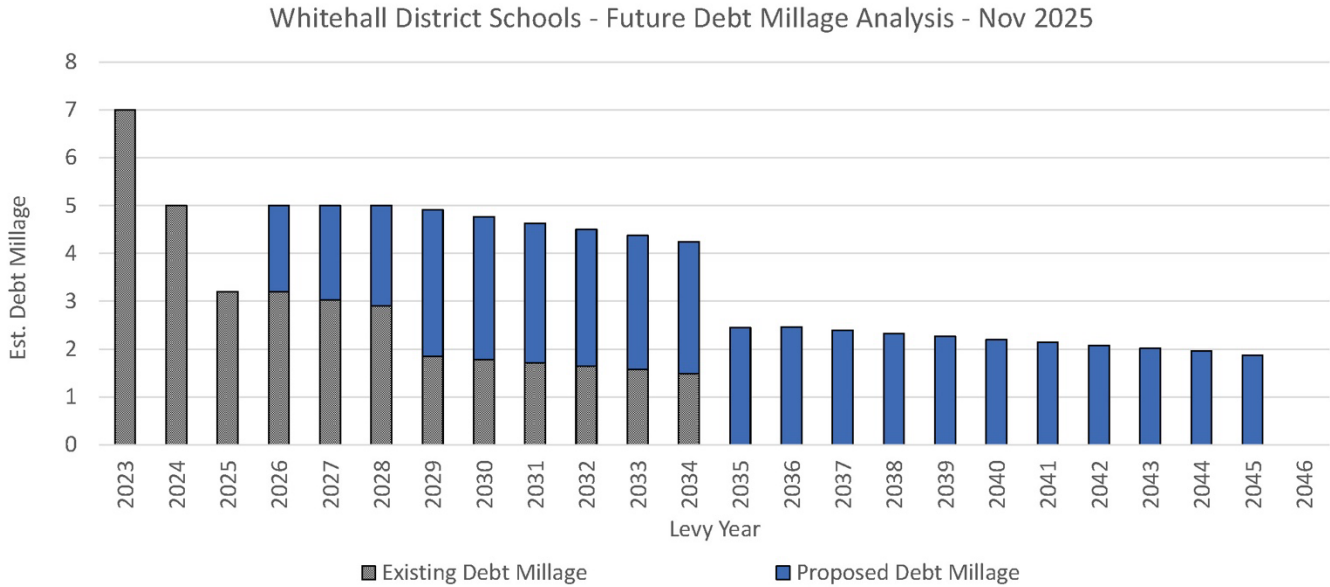
Whitehall District Schools currently levies 3.20 mills of overall debt millage . If the November 2025 bond proposal is approved by voters and the bonds are issued, *it is estimated that the district's overall debt millage levied in 2026 would return to the 5.0 mills last levied in 2024.* The following chart calculations are based on the estimated millage increase of 1.80 mills:

HOME MARKET VALUE	HOME TAXABLE VALUE	YEARLY COST	MONTHLY COST	DAILY COST
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$90.00	\$7.50	\$0.25
\$150,000	\$75,000	\$135.00	\$11.25	\$0.37
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$180.00	\$15.00	\$0.50
\$250,000	\$125,000	\$225.00	\$18.75	\$0.62

**NOTE: If taxpayer qualifies for the State Homestead Property Tax Credit, the "net" tax rate could be less than shown above.  
Talk to your tax preparer to see if you qualify.**

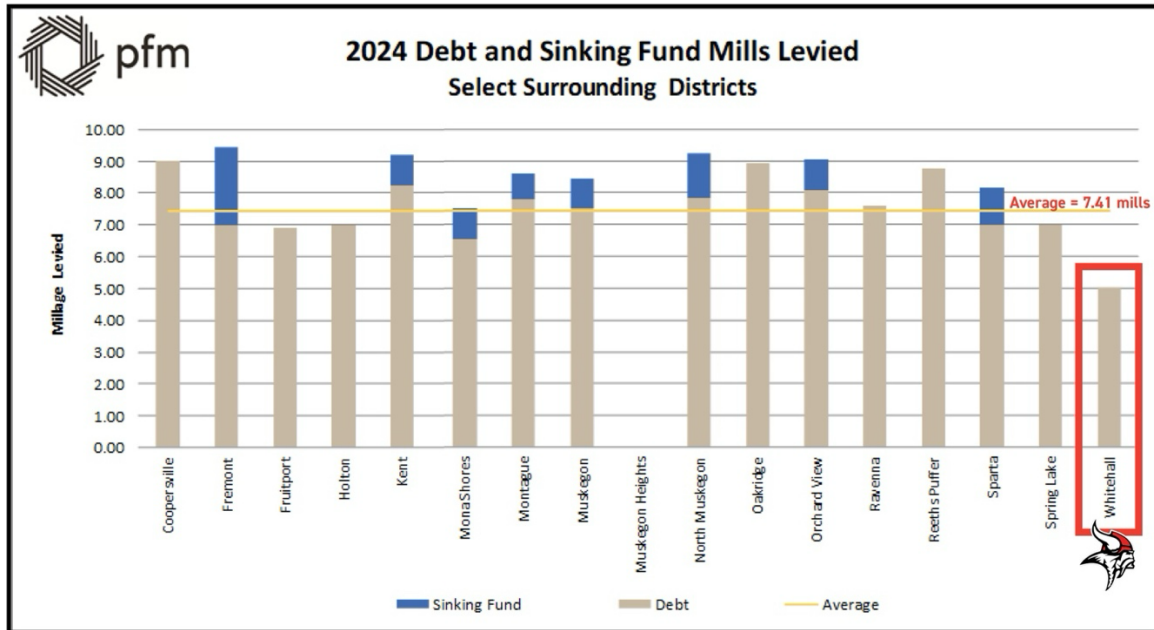
7. If the November 4, 2025, bond proposal passes, how would it impact the projected overall debt levy in the future?

Below is a graph depicting both the district's existing total debt millage as well as the estimated total debt millage required if the November 2025 bond proposal is approved and additional bonds are issued.



8. How does the millage rate for Whitehall District Schools compare to other districts in the area?

As the chart below illustrates, the average combined sinking fund millage and total debt millage levied by surrounding districts is 7.41 mills. If the 2025 bond proposal is approved by voters, it is expected that Whitehall District schools would maintain a 5.0 mills total debt levy and remain below the average of surrounding districts.



Source: Respective County's 2024 Apportionment Reports and Individual School Districts  
7.41 mill average

**9. 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 1, 2026 property tax bill.

**10. 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 maintaining aging facilities, mechanical systems, and technology. The operational savings generated from new and cost-efficient facilities could be redirected to programs and resources.

**11. Are businesses and second homes (non-homestead properties) and primary homes (homestead properties) treated the same regarding bond debt millage?**

Yes, businesses and second homes (non-homestead) and primary homes (homestead) are treated the same regarding debt millage.

**12. 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, and there would be a State-level review of the plans. 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. Additionally, the finances of the bond project are required by state law to be audited.

**13. 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.

**14. 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 within 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)

**15. 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 boundaries.

**16. 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](https://Michigan.gov/vote). Absentee voter ballots are available from September 25 through November 4, 2025.

**17. What are the key dates leading up to Tuesday, November 4, 2025, election day?**

- Registering to vote:
  - The last day for voters to register by mail/online is October 20, 2025.
  - Voters may register in person through November 4, 2025 (election day) with the required documentation.
- Absentee Voting:
  - Absentee voter ballots are available from September 25 until November 4, 2025.
  - Contact your local clerk with questions

**18. What is the ballot language?**

**WHITEHALL DISTRICT SCHOOLS  
BOND PROPOSAL**

Shall Whitehall District Schools, Muskegon County, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Thirty Million Dollars (\$30,000,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor for the purpose of:

erecting, remodeling, equipping and re-equipping, furnishing and refurbishing school buildings, additions to school buildings, and facilities, including safety and security improvements and secure entrances; preparing, developing, improving and equipping structures and sites; purchasing school buses; and acquiring, installing, and equipping and re-equipping school buildings for instructional technology?

The following is for informational purposes only:

The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2026 is 1.80 mills (\$1.80 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation). The maximum number of years the bonds may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is twenty (20) years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 2.37 mills (\$2.37 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation).

(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.)

**19. In the ballot language, it states that the estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2026 is 1.80 mills, what does this mean?**

The proposed bonds are estimated to add 1.80 mills to the total 2026 debt levy. This would return the debt levy back to 2024 levels of 5.0 mills.

**20. 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 (20) years, what does this mean?**

The school district plans to issue bonds with all bond principal and interest paid off within twenty (20) years.

**Questions?**

If you have further questions, please contact, Superintendent, CJ Van Wieren at  
[cjvanwieren@whitehallschools.net](mailto:cjvanwieren@whitehallschools.net)