



Caledonia Community Schools

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OPERATING MILLAGE RENEWAL & 2020 SCHOOL BOND PROPOSAL

1. What will be on the May 5, 2020 ballot?

There are two Caledonia Community Schools (CCS) proposals on the May 5, 2020, ballot. The first asks voters to consider a school bond proposal that will allow CCS to invest in necessary updates in the areas of safety and security, repairs and upgrades, new facilities, buildings and equipment. The second will ask voters to renew our operating millage that supports day-to-day operations. Both proposals are a ZERO tax rate increase.

2. What is the Caledonia Community Schools (CCS) Bond Proposal?

The Caledonia Community Schools Bond Proposal will allow CCS to invest in much-needed security and safety enhancements and repairs to update aging buildings so our kids can learn in a safe environment. CCS has a proven track record of success inside and outside the classroom and this proposal will allow us to build on our proud tradition of excellence and keep Caledonia an attractive place to raise a family. The Caledonia Community School Bond Proposal is a fiscally responsible proposal that will allow CCS to repair and invest in our schools and facilities without increasing existing property taxes.

3. What is the Caledonia Community Schools Operating Millage Renewal?

The operating millage renewal is a continuation of the current operating millage that levies 18 mills on non-homestead properties and supports day-to-day operations from teachers to utilities to keeping our schools safe and dry for our children.

4. Why does CCS have two proposals on the ballot?

CCS has a proven track record of success inside and outside the classroom and both of these proposals will allow us to build on our proud tradition of excellence and keep Caledonia an attractive place to raise a family. We will be able to start the next 2020-21 school year with funding for day-to-day operations secured and be able to begin needed facility repairs and improvements.

5. How much will the school bond proposal cost homeowners?

The Caledonia Community School Bond Proposal is a fiscally responsible proposal that will allow CCS to repair and invest in our schools and facilities without increasing existing property taxes. The 2020 bond proposal is a zero-tax-rate-increase proposal. The district currently levy's 7.0 mills and this would remain the same with the approval of this bond proposal. The bond proposal is a 30-year bond and would generate approximately \$88,090,000 for necessary upgrades and updates to aging equipment, buildings and facilities while keeping general fund dollars in our classrooms.



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6. How much will the operating millage renewal cost homeowners?

Zero! This millage only applies to non-homestead properties, not your primary residence. The operating millage renewal proposal is a zero-tax-rate-increase proposal. This means that the 18.0 mills the district is currently levying remain the same under this five-year proposal. Without the operating millage, the school district would experience an estimated \$10.2 million loss in revenue each year and require significant cuts to programs and services for its students.

7. What impact will the bond proposal have on student safety and health?

The school bond will allow CCS to invest in much-needed security and safety enhancements and repairs to update aging building so our kids can learn in a safe environment. The safety and health of our students, staff and community is our number one priority. Additional security enhancements – including cameras and high-tech video monitoring equipment – at all buildings and facilities are needed to help keep our students, staff and community safe before, during and after school.

8. What impact will the bond proposal have on student learning?

The CCS school bond proposal will help provide the latest technology to complement our strong career and technical education programs to prepare students for college and careers. The CCS school bond proposal will help provide upgrades that allow students to gain skills, real-world on-the-job experience and compete for jobs whether in the skilled trades, agriculture or high-tech computer science fields. Supporting our award-winning arts, band and music programs with new equipment and upgrades will contribute to more well-rounded students.

9. What are some of the improvements and projects for school buildings being proposed as part of the school bond proposal?

The CCS Bond Proposal is necessary for the district to keep pace with needed repairs and improvements to school safety and make all of our buildings as safe and healthy as possible. All of our school buildings will receive repairs and upgrades and the bond will also replace the 64-year old Dutton Elementary with a neighborhood school in a new location better suited for serving elementary students and their families. The future location of a new Dutton Elementary is not finalized and we would work with the community to find the best location that serves our students and their families.

10. What other new facilities are being proposed as part of the school bond proposal?

Athletics, performing arts and continuing education brings our whole community together and the bond will allow us to create a new community center with a swimming pool and multi-use gymnasium. The new community center will bring students, families and seniors together and encourage healthy lifestyles and ongoing learning. The swimming pool will provide a new asset for our community and will be available to our



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whole community and students that currently have to use facilities far outside our district in order to practice and compete.

11. How will CCS be held accountable if these proposals pass?

Both of these proposals are fiscally responsible and will allow us to invest in our schools without increasing existing property taxes. CCS has a proven track record of fiscal responsibility and transparency. If this proposal passes, every dollar spent will be tracked and available on a public website to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. CCS has received a clean financial audit for over 20 years and has an AA bond rating from Standard & Poor's.

12. My kids are grown and no longer in school. Why should I care about this proposal?

CCS has a reputation of academic excellence which helps keep property values and home values strong – attracting new families, businesses and talent to our area that support Caledonia's continued economic growth and success. Supporting our schools is about supporting our entire community and making sure we stay competitive instead of falling behind. CCS has a 93% graduation rate – 14 points higher than the state average – and has consistently outpaced graduation rates. CCS students consistently score above the state and countywide averages on state assessments and all five elementary schools received a silver or gold ranking from the Michigan Department of Education for their achievement in reading, academics and behavior.

13. Why did the school district decide to pursue an election in May?

The two proposals were approved by our school board and placed on the ballot long before we knew the full impact the COVID-19 pandemic would have on our schools, families and community. While all of us are focused on the crisis at hand, we need to plan for the future of CCS to make sure our students continue to have a quality education. We believe these proposals are critical for the education, public health and success of our students and community. We are taking measures to promote safety in the election process by encouraging voters to fill out absentee ballot applications, which will be mailed to them by the State of Michigan if they are registered to vote, in order to vote in the May 5 election by mail. These need to be returned for voters to receive a ballot by mail. The ballots are due by election day. It would be our preference for the entire election to be done by mail. To promote the safety and health of election workers and community members we highly encourage you to vote by mail.

14. Where can I find more information about the CCS Bond Proposal?

In the coming weeks, we will conduct a series town hall dialogues to help you learn about this proposal and gather your input. We will keep you updated through the website and our district Facebook on meeting times and locations. Additionally, we will be updating our website with pertinent information about this important proposal. For information about the Tuesday, May 5, 2020, election, visit www.calschools.org.



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Potential Questions to add: We can integrate these to fit up above where appropriate

15. What happens if the operating millage is not renewed?

Without the operating millage, the school district would experience an estimated \$10.2 million loss in revenue each year and require significant cuts to programs, services for its students and even layoffs.

16. How can the school bond truly be a zero increase to homeowners?

This is simply extending the current bond for a longer duration, resulting in no tax increase for homeowners.

17. How can the operating millage be a zero increase to homeowners?

The operating millage is a simple renewal that only effects rental properties, vacation homes and businesses. With passage of the non-homestead operating millage renewal the district would continue to collect the same 18 mills between 2020 - 2025.

18. Why do we need a new football stadium?

Athletics, performing arts and continuing education brings our whole community together. While the primary focus of the school bond is on investing in much-needed repairs and improvements to aging buildings so kids can learn in a safe environment, we must also anticipate the future needs of a growing district. There are several challenges that a new football stadium would address, and though it's not an immediate priority we'll work with the community in the coming years to build a facility that works for Caledonia.