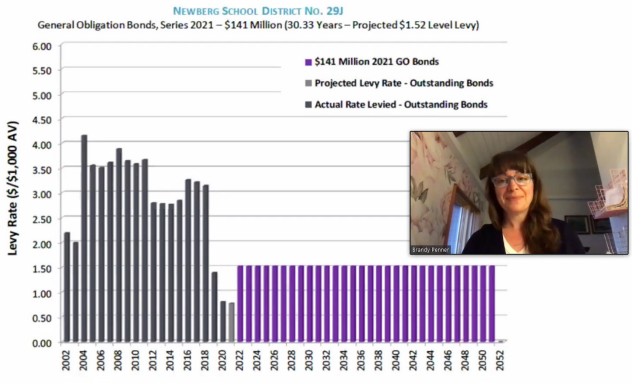


EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

October 15, 2020



Last Week was a presentation on the 2020 School Bond Measure.

Brandy Penner (above with the levy rates projection), School Board Chair, Zone 2, opened the meeting with Superintendent Joe Morelock (below with proposed Dundee Elementary sketch).

In short, the district is seeking \$141 million in construction bonds on the November 2020 ballot.

Part of this budget didn't exist a year ago. The pandemic and wildfire impact on air quality will certainly be behind us before construction even begins. But the fact remains that our air systems and school security meet 1960s' standards.

The bond will completely replace Dundee Elementary, which was my own 5th and 6th grade. I wish I could say I would miss it but honestly, the only thing I miss from that school is Jan Nybakke, my 6th grade teacher.

The bond will, of course, maintain the public's investment in current structures and grounds.

The building behind Joe was the original high school, now serving as the District office, and was built in 1911. "We have certainly gotten our dollar value out of that building."

2018 saw the Long Range Facilities Plan with a thorough review of all the District's building. The session had substantial community involvement and resulted in a final plan delivered January 2019.

The three primary decision factors were Educational Program, Enrollment and Capacity, and Facility Condition.

Pictures were taken of every foreseeable issue including cracks from settling buildings, roof leaks, cooking and heating equipment, heating systems, plumbing, etc.

The District partnered with [BRIC Architecture](#) in Portland for six months and delivered a plan to the School Board in 2020.

Edwards Elementary gets upgrades and expansion and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) will be updated to cutting edge facilities.

The bond will increase our property taxes by 71¢ per \$1,000 of assessed value with a total tax rate of \$1.52, substantially below the last 15 years (\$2.70-\$4.08).

By illustration, a home with an assessed value of \$400,000 would bear a tax increase of \$23 a month.

And, if we pass this bond, it qualifies us for over \$5 million from the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching (OSCIM) Grant.

How does the Newberg Bond compare to our 33 neighboring districts in levy rates per \$1,000? Gladstone and Sherwood are the steepest at about \$4.00/1,000 with Newberg near the lowest in 30th place.

The law says that a Bond Oversight Committee must be appointed by the School Board. This committee is a second level of assurance that the money we approve is spent as it was proposed.

Dundee's most common question is whether the new facility structures will be on the existing property or to an entirely new location. The answer is, "we don't know yet. We have done site feasibility studies in other parts of Dundee to look at those." One consideration is that the park on the existing grounds is heavily used. School construction would impact park access greatly.

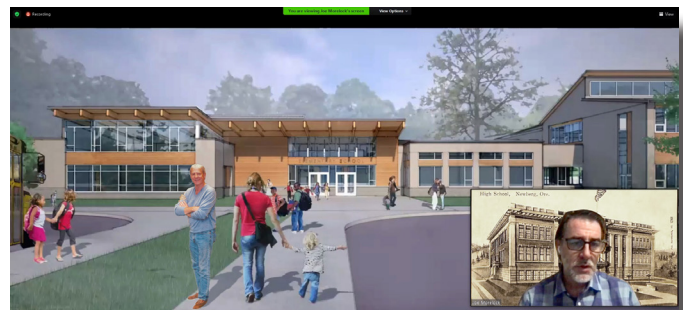
There is not money allocated in the bond measure to purchase land for a new site but there is value in the current site's real estate that could fund a different location.

The "Core Bond Package" includes \$34M for the new 350-Student Dundee Elementary, \$17M for the Edwards expansion and modernization, \$24M for CTE/STEM and Greenhouse upgrades, \$18M for general

maintenance (\$61M identified as needed) new covered play areas, security and safety upgrades, Catalyst (alt HS) expansion, accessibility improvements, technology updates, flex learning space, disaster preparedness updates, and upgrades to NHS health clinic and science lab.

COVID-19 made a place for itself in the bond presentation. Edwards' expansion will make it better able to meet social distancing requirements as will the new Dundee facility and covered play areas (CDC says transmission rates are reduced in open air environments).

Q: Does the dollar per thousand rate go down as Newberg's population increases?



Dundee Elementary
Conceptual Rendering



A: Yes. We've had that question before so I double checked with BRIC who said that yes, theoretically, as your tax base grows the tax burden on individual homeowners decreases.

Q: How are you getting word out prior to the election? "This seems very reasonable. Maybe I've been living under a rock but this is the first I've heard of it."

A: [editorial input: Brandy's answer was thought provoking. She said one of the biggest hurdles to public awareness is that there has been no organized opposition to the bond. Funny how important stuff doesn't make the news unless someone is raising a stink about it.]

"Our biggest challenge is how do we reach people in this time of COVID?" [when everyone is living under a rock --Ed.] We are using social media, yard signs, larger signs for higher traffic areas, and "I have six presentations this week," so we are trying to get the word out.

[NewbergSchoolBond.org](#)