

Q. Why is the Harrison County School District asking for this bond issue?

A. Our student enrollment has grown so much over the years, our schools have become overcrowded. We are fortunate that many families are moving to our communities in Harrison County and enrolling their children in the Harrison County School District, but we have reached a point where we must expand our facilities to accommodate all this growth. Some of our schools are using portable classrooms, because there isn't enough space within the buildings. This bond issue will address immediate overcrowding issues, along with projected future growth, with the construction of two new schools. The bond issue will also allow us to improve security throughout the district.

Q. How much will the project cost?

A. The entire project is expected to cost up to \$71 million. In anticipation of the need to build new schools, the district has committed \$16 million toward the initial cost of the project. We are seeking public support of \$55 million through the bond referendum.

Q. Will my taxes increase if the bond issue passes?

A. Based on current projections, the district does not expect the bond issue will increase the total mills levied for school purposes. This is possible through current estimates of revenue sources available to the Harrison County School District and anticipated growth in the district's tax base. One of our current debts was recently paid off, and we will apply those funds to the new debt. The bond issue should be repaid over approximately 20 years.

Q. How will the money be spent?

A. This bond issue will impact virtually every school in our district by relieving overcrowding and increasing campus security. Here are the four main projects:

* New K-8 school, to be built on the east side of the district, anticipated to be in the D'Iberville area – This proposed new school would relieve overcrowding at D'Iberville Elementary, D'Iberville Middle, Woolmarket Elementary, North Woolmarket Elementary & Middle School, and River Oaks Elementary.

* New middle school, to be built on the west side of the district, anticipated to be located south of West Harrison High School – This proposed new school would reduce the number of students at North Gulfport Middle School and West Wortham Middle School.

* Redesign North Gulfport Middle School by turning it into a K-8 school – This redesigned school would have a more secured entrance by eliminating access to the entire school without permission; build needed restrooms for each building; build an additional gym for the elementary students; build four new kindergarten classrooms; reduce the number of students at Harrison Central Elementary, Orange Grove Elementary and Lyman Elementary.

* Upgrade school entrances to improve security

Q. Will you explain how this bond addresses safety?

A. We already have multiple measures in place to keep our students, teachers and staff safe, and we partner with three local law enforcement agencies to have full-time school resource officers patrolling our campuses. With this bond issue, we are planning to renovate school entrances to provide a single-point entry, with buzz-in door features. The biggest upgrade is planned for Harrison Central High School. The bond issue would be used to build a gated security guard station at the front entrance. The district would provide additional security personnel at the entrance of the school.

Q. Why isn't this bond issue addressing all the needs in our district and our schools?

A. We must address our most immediate needs, specifically, security and overcrowding. Through this \$55 million bond issue, we will take care of as many needs as possible. In addition to the bond issue, the district is currently using approximately one million in district funds for improvement projects as we continue to grow and improve. The district will continue to budget for improvement projects every year.

Q. When will the new schools open?

A. As soon as the bond issue is passed, we will begin the process of moving forward with the projects. All the projects are scheduled to be completed by August of 2020.

Q. Once the new schools are built, where will my child attend high school?

A. This bond issue does not affect high school attendance zones. For example, if your child is slated to attend Harrison Central High School now, that will not change. Once the new schools are built, your child will still attend Harrison Central.

-- Students who attend D'Iberville Middle School, North Woomarket Middle School and the new K-8 school on the east side of the district in 2020 would go to **D'Iberville High School**.

-- Students who attend North Gulfport Middle School and West Wortham Middle School in 2020 would go to **Harrison Central High School**.

-- Students who attend the new middle school on the west side of the district in 2020 would go to **West Harrison High School**.

Q. Where will the money come from to pay for the additional teachers and staff for the new schools?

A. Some teachers from schools that will have a decrease in enrollment will be reassigned to the new schools. In addition, the district has budgeted funds from the general fund for additional administrators and staff.

Q. When is the election and who can vote?

A. The election will be held Tuesday, November 6, 2018, with 23 polling places. The bond vote is open to registered voters who live in the Harrison County School District boundaries. Absentee voting is currently underway and will end at noon on Saturday, November 3, 2018.

Q. Why should this bond issue matter to me?

A. This is an opportunity for the district to carry out up to \$71 million in improvement projects to ease overcrowding and increase security in our schools. Our schools are at capacity and overcrowded, and the enrollment is projected to continue to rise. It has been over 30 years since the district has requested a bond issue. Over the last three decades, the district has managed to make improvements and additions to handle the growth; however, the needs are so great now, the district must seek a bond issue to address those needs. A great, strong school district benefits the community in many ways. A successful bond issue will send a clear and powerful message of how much the community supports education and makes the safety of students and staff a priority.