

## Our Schools are at a Crossroads

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Our schools are experiencing declining enrollment, which is projected to continue for several more years. At the same time, three of our four school campuses are in need of major work.

- **Blue Heron Middle School** is our newest school. The school district ran a bond in April of 1992 for \$17,785,000 to construct the new middle school, upgrade and renovate portions of the other three schools, and complete other limited capital projects. Blue Heron was constructed in 1994 and currently houses 320 students in grades 6-8. This bond is retired in 2012.
- **Port Townsend High School** was built in stages from 1929 to 1956 and currently houses 532 students in grades 9-12, including the MarVista alternative program.
- **Grant Street Elementary**, built in 1956, currently houses our Birth to Three program, Pre-school, grades K-2, and the ICE alternative program.
- **Mt. View Elementary**, built in 1961, currently houses grades 3-5 and the OPEPO program (grades 1-6). Combined, our K-5 student population is 581 students.

We are proposing a bond in May 2008 to build a new elementary school on the Grant Street site to house our current Grant Street and Mt. View students.

The costs of remodeling the current Grant Street building instead of building a new school were carefully considered before making the recommendation to build a new K-5 elementary school.

## Bond Proposal

In the May 2008 bond, we will be asking for funds to build a new elementary school on the Grant Street site that would open in the fall of 2010. The cost for a new elementary is estimated at \$32,520,000. The bond amount also includes funds to address needs at Blue Heron Middle School and Port Townsend High School, which include:

- Replacement of floor tiles and sealing the concrete at Blue Heron (\$120,000);
- Roof repairs, ADA upgrades, site improvements, resurfacing courts and other minor health and safety work on various buildings on the high school campus, including design planning (\$450,000);
- Replacing aging carpet in sections of the high school (\$60,000);
- Upgrading the phone system to be emergency 911 compliant at Blue Heron, the high school and the district office to match the new system in our new elementary (\$200,000);
- Install a fiber optic connection between buildings to meet bandwidth demands (\$290,000);
- Bus storage and maintenance shop repairs (\$200,000).

**TOTAL BOND REQUEST: \$33,840,000**

## May 2008 School Bond

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**The Port Townsend School District is planning for a new facility, talking to the community concerning the future of our schools, and developing lasting partnerships with community groups to enhance educational opportunities for all students.**

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## Why are we requesting a bond?

The Port Townsend School District has reached a point where three of our four current school facilities need major upgrades and/or repairs in order to operate efficiently and effectively for next several generations of students.

The Port Townsend School District is dedicated to providing quality facilities for its patrons – students, staff, and community members. The vision for our school district includes building a new elementary school on the Grant Street site that will accommodate students from both Grant Street and Mt. View. This building will:

- Consolidate our K-5 students onto one campus, which will result in lower overhead costs to the district.
- Be energy efficient.
- Be constructed with durable and easily maintained materials.
- Provide healthy indoor air quality.
- Provide more natural light and ventilation.
- Enhance student safety through quality design and site layout.
- Provide needed space for community use.

The future of Port Townsend High School is also under consideration, and we will need community input in the near future. *What should a 21<sup>st</sup> Century high school look like? How will it meet the needs of a diverse student body?*

The future of Port Townsend School District is difficult to predict. However, we must plan, develop ideas, and share information with the public. Public schools are, and will continue to be the foundation of our community. Enriching the lives of young people through quality education and programs supports our mission and guides us in our future decision-making.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Citizens have had questions concerning the building of a new school and what the future may hold for our district. While not all questions have a definitive answer, several are listed here:

### **Why is the district looking at building new instead of remodeling?**

The cost of remodeling and bringing the existing buildings up to current codes and energy standards is within 15% of new construction. However, new construction offers long-term cost savings in maintaining the facility.

### **Since enrollment in the district is shrinking, why build a new school?**

We want to combine students from our two current elementary schools in a single school on a single campus. Given the age and condition of our current buildings it seems both appropriate and prudent to put our resources into a new facility.

### **What will happen to the Mt. View property?**

It is still a work in progress. Some of the options we are reviewing include selling the entire site, trading it for land elsewhere in the district in case there is a need for future building, or possibly accepting a long-term lease on the current facilities/site.

### **How will the May 2008 bond impact my property taxes?**

The bond is voted on in 2008, but will not be collected until the 2009 tax collection. This will result in an increase of \$0.68/1,000 of assessed valuation on property taxes at current rates.

### **What is the difference between the May 2008 bond and the levy we passed in February of 2007?**

A school district **levy** can be run for a one- two- three- or four-year period. Levy funds are collected twice a year with April and October taxes and are used to fund general maintenance and operations of the district. To reduce election costs, the district ran the February 2007 M&O levy for a four-year period.

A **bond** is requested for construction purposes and is paid back over longer period of time – typically fifteen to twenty years.

## Property Tax Implications

Property tax for local school districts is divided into requests for maintenance and operations (M&O) needs (levy requests) and for capital construction projects (bond requests).

The combined requests make up your local school property tax.

### **Historical, Current and Projected Tax Information:**

Year	M&O Levy rate	Bond Rate	Total Levy & Bond Rate
2006	1.263	.985	2.248
2007	1.223	.900	2.123
2008*	1.390	.940	2.330
2009*	1.173	1.60	2.773
2010*	0.990	1.60	2.590
2011*	0.997	1.60	2.597
2012*	0.990	1.60	2.590
2013*	0.990	1.60	2.590

\*The M&O and Bond Rates are estimated, based on the district assessed valuation growth numbers.

*Seniors and disabled citizens may qualify for a tax exemption. Contact the Jefferson County Assessor's Office (360.385.9105) for more information.*