

**Park County School District Re-2
Ballot Question 3A**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What is the BEST program? What happens to the matching funds if this issue fails?

The Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program is the result of Colorado legislation (HB-08-1335) passed in 2008. The purpose of the program is to provide State matching money funds from Mineral and Lease royalties to help Colorado School Districts build educational facilities that they would otherwise be unable to afford. These state funds are contingent upon the passage of a local school bond election. If the bond fails, we lose these state funds.

2. Why hold a bond election this year?

- a. Our school facilities are in poor condition and need to be remodeled or replaced.
- b. In order to help prepare our children to compete in the 21st century, we need 21st century facilities, not 19th century facilities.
- c. This is a unique opportunity. The state will pay 50% of the cost. It is very unlikely that we will be able to receive a 50% state grant again. This amount is contingent on the passage of a bond election for matching money.
- d. In addition, the cost of construction has decreased in this economic down cycle, so we should be able to obtain more school facilities at a lower cost.

3. If 3A passes, how much will a homeowner's taxes increase? The tax increase for the district's 50% share of the project will be approximately 3.30 mills. The residential homeowner will see a tax increase of approximately \$26.50 per year, or about \$2.21 per month per \$100,000 of home value.

4. If 3A passes, how much will a business owner's taxes increase? The tax increase for the district's 50% share of the project will be approximately 3.30 mills. The Commercial owner will see a tax increase of approximately \$96 per year, or about \$8 per month per \$100,000 of commercial value.

5. Why not build all facilities on the 24-acre site planned for the athletic complex?

- a. The District is still paying off the bond for the Midway Addition, which is in good condition.
- b. Abandoning a building that is not paid off would have jeopardized the approval of the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) Grant.

6. Wouldn't relocating the entire Fairplay campus provide needed space for commercial development within the town?

- a. There are presently 131.66 acres of commercially zoned land in the Town of Fairplay, of which 71.52 acres (54%) are vacant. The supply of commercially zoned property is greater than the demand.
- b. The playground property next to Main Street could be sold to the public for commercial use.

7. Wouldn't it be more cost effective to renovate rather than replace buildings?

- a. It will cost more to renovate existing school facilities than to replace them with new facilities. CDE conducted an audit in March and determined that the Lake George Charter School and most of the buildings on the Fairplay campus need to be replaced.
- b. The average life of a building is approximately 30 years. Major portions of our facilities are over 45 years old. Edith Teter Elementary School is 129 years old. In addition, those that are newer require major renovations to achieve current building codes and the new high performance building standards for state supported buildings.
- c. Reducing the footprint of buildings within the limited space at the Fairplay campus requires building up rather than out. The high school's walls are not load-bearing and cannot support a second story.

8. What will happen to the Edith Teter Elementary School building? ETE is on the Historic Registry. The 1880 building will be renovated to house school district offices and public meeting space.

9. If the square footage of facilities is increased by 25%, wouldn't that drive an increase in energy and maintenance costs? A prerequisite for approval of the BEST Grant was that the District target renovation and construction of its facilities to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold standards. These standards require high performance buildings with low maintenance materials, significantly reduced energy consumption, and high durability. We estimate that the energy and maintenance costs may be reduced by up to 50% from the cost today.

10. Is the cost of replacing the Lake George Charter School included in 3A?

- a. Yes. If the BEST Grant that Lake George will apply for in March 2010 is approved, the State will pay 87% of the cost of new construction for that facility.
- b. The 13% matching funds, approximately \$900,000, would be included in the bond.

11. Why is it necessary to relocate the Lake George Charter School?

- a. The current location of the school is counter to the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE's) school construction standards, which state that schools should not be constructed adjacent to a major highway.
- b. The school is located in lowland adjacent to a flood plain and has been subject to drainage problems.
- c. The CDE's assessment this year determined that the condition of the school facilities was such that the school should be replaced. Renovation is not an option

12. What would be the impact on the local economy of building new schools?

- a. During the construction period, contractors would spend money in local restaurants, motels, and stores.
- b. Young families with children would be more inclined to settle in our community knowing that the District provided adequate educational facilities.
- c. We would be able to host wrestling, track, and possibly baseball competition, which would infuse money into our community from visiting teams and their families.
- d. There are approximately 162 students who live in our district but attend schools in other districts. In 2009, this represented a loss of about \$1.2 million in revenues. New facilities should attract some of these students back to our district.

13. Is there a plan for expansion if needed in the next few years?

- a. The Colorado Department of Education's guidance for school district construction is to size the schools for the existing enrollment but to plan for expansion.
- b. The conceptual architectural design will show where the new facilities will be engineered for future expansions.

14. Does the bond and grant only include construction costs or does it include classroom supplies, desks, computers, and etc.? Classroom supplies, desks, computers, and etc. are considered soft costs and were included in the grant and bond calculations.

15. When will construction start and how long will it take?

- a. It is anticipated that construction would begin in the spring of 2010 and would be completed in 2 phases.
- b. From the date that construction is initiated, it is estimated to take 2 to 2 ½ years for completion.

16. Would any outdoor athletic facilities remain on the existing site? Yes. Plans call for a practice field for PE to remain on the existing site.

17. Will there be rooms for community use (rental)?

- a. Rooms for community use were a high priority in the planning phase and will be designed into the new facilities.
- b. Anticipated community uses include the sports facilities, a large meeting room, and classrooms for community college classes.

18. If the voters approve 3A, how long will the tax last?

- a. The mill levy will be increased in the amount necessary to make annual payments on the bond issue. Once the bond issue is paid off (20 years or less), the mill levy goes away.
- b. The District will use the 50% matching money bond from our voters, in conjunction with the 50% grant from the State in order to fund the project.

19. How can we get involved if we are part time residents who can't vote? While part time residents cannot vote, they can get involved by volunteering time or money to our campaign committee BEST for South Park Schools.

20. Is this a mail in ballot election only?

Yes. Important dates to remember are listed below

- a. Oct 5: Last day to REGISTER to vote
- b. Oct 9-19: Active registered voters receive ballots in mail
- c. Oct 19-20: Registered voters can vote early on electronic machine at County offices, as long as they turn in their mail ballots.
- d. Oct 27: Last day to file application for "mail-in" ballot *if* applicant wishes to receive "mail-in" ballot by mail
- e. Oct 30: Last day to file application for "mail-in" ballot *if* applicant does *not* wish to receive "mail-in" ballot by mail

21. What happens to the mill levy rate as assessed value changes? The bond mill levy is calculated each year. The levy is multiplied by the assessed value to generate the amount necessary to pay the following year's annual bond payment. If assessed value increases, the bond mill levy will decrease; if assessed value decreases, the bond mill levy will increase.

22. Where can I get more information on the election? Visit our website at www.bestforsouthparkschools.com for election information and registration forms.