

Paola Unified School District #368
Fall 2022 Bond Issue
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How was it determined to run a bond issue?

A: The current bonds are projected to pay off in 2028. The newest school, Cottonwood Elementary, is now 22 years old and the oldest school is the middle school at 50 years old. Ongoing maintenance costs and replacing roofs and other mechanical (HVAC) devices that are reaching end of life are exceeding district capital outlay funds used for maintenance and upkeep. The district is also needing to upgrade learning spaces to meet today's educational best practices, expand our Career and Technical (vocational) Education programs, and create an early learning program for pre-school age children.

Q: How was the scope of the bond issue determined?

A: A list of educational programming space needs and maintenance needs for the buildings and grounds were compiled and presented to a community group of parents and patrons. This community group met multiple times to discuss the list of potential projects and the respective costs. Their goal was to keep the mill rate for bond and interest at or below our current rate. At the conclusion of meetings, the community group made a recommendation to the Board of Education who agreed with the recommendations and keeping the mill rate at or below our current rate.

Q: What is the cost of the bond issue?

A: \$40,000,000

Q: Will this bond issue cause my taxes to increase?

A: No. Taxes are determined by the district mill levy and a property's assessed valuation. The district has made a commitment that the bond issue will not increase the mill levy for bond and interest payments that is currently being assessed. With increased valuation, it is possible that the bond and interest mill levy will lower.

Q: Didn't the school district just run a bond issue?

A: The last bond issue was approved in 2014 and are projected to pay off in 2028.

Q: Student enrollment is declining, why are we adding new space?

A: The proposal is to add space for additional Career and Technical Education (vocational) programming that requires additional space not available within the current high school. Two additional classrooms are proposed to start an early childhood education program that is not currently available to our community due to space limitations at Cottonwood Elementary. Other projects center on updating and maintaining existing spaces, mechanical equipment, roofs, and parking lots. Information regarding the district enrollment study can be found at:

<https://www.usd368.org/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/62cc1cf7d2423/Enrollment%20Study%20Paola%202021.pdf>

Q: Doesn't capital outlay pay for end-of-life mechanical issues and upkeep?

A: The district has done an outstanding job of maintaining our buildings utilizing a multi-year plan. Unfortunately, the need is too great to replace and make the needed improvements. Utilizing our

current capital outlay budget, it would take over 20 years to accomplish the needed improvements while falling further behind with the additional routine maintenance items that come up yearly.

Q: How long will the bond issue take to pay off?

A: 25 years

Q: When will the bond issue be voted on?

A: The bond issue will be a mail ballot election on September 8, 2022. The election office will mail ballots to all registered voters in USD 368 on August 19, 2022 and will be due back to the election office by noon on September 8.

Q: When will construction start?

A: Construction is scheduled to start the summer of 2023.

Q: Why is money set aside for turf replacement?

A: Part of the 2014 bond issue included putting artificial turf on the football field and the baseball and softball infields. Just like carpet in your house, artificial turf needs to be replaced. The 2022 bond issue includes money to replace turf installed as part of the 2014 bond issue, but not until it is at end of life and worn out. It is estimated that the current turf will last another six years and hopefully longer.

Q: When is the deadline to register to vote?

A: The deadline to register to vote in the USD 368 mail ballot election is August 18, 2022. Voter registration information can be found on the Miami County Election Office Website or at the following web address, <https://www.kdor.ks.gov/apps/voterreg/home/index>, for the Kansas Secretary of State.

Q: What is the actual bond language that we will be voting on?

A: Shall Unified School District No. 368, Miami County, Kansas (Paola), issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$40,000,000, to pay the costs to:
(a) construct furnish and equip a Career and Technical Education addition at Paola High School; (b) construct, furnish and equip a Pre-K addition at Cottonwood Elementary;
(c) renovate and modernize learning spaces at Paola High and Paola Middle schools;
(d) make needed upgrades to maintain district facilities and buildings; (e) make safety improvements to elementary playgrounds and related areas at Cottonwood and Sunflower Elementary Schools and the baseball/softball complex; and (f) make all necessary improvements related thereto; all pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 10101 et seq., K.S.A. 25431 et seq., K.S.A. 25-2018(f), K.S.A. 725457 and K.S.A. 725458 et seq.?

Additional questions may be directed to Matt Meek, Superintendent of Schools, at matt_meek@usd368.org.