

Grand Haven Area Public Schools Beacon

Spring 2023

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Beacon is a publication of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. For questions or comments please contact Dawn Kelley at 616.850.5015 or e-mail kelleyd@ghaps.org.

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Board Meeting Schedule

- Monday, May 15, 2023
@ Lake Hills Elementary School
- Monday, June 12, 2023
@ Grand Haven Education Service Center
- Monday, July 17, 2023
@ Grand Haven Education Service Center

All board meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

www.ghaps.org

Superintendent's Message

“The Grand Haven community is committed to education excellence for all students, and it shows!”

It is truly an honor and privilege to serve Grand Haven Area Public Schools. While there is always work to be done, our district consistently ranks among the best in Michigan. Family involvement, community support, world-class teachers and evidence-based strategies are just a few reasons why GHAPS is a district of distinction.

GHAPS delivers exemplary programs and opportunities that meet the diverse needs of our students. I believe this is due in part to close-knit partnerships that create win-win-win scenarios for students, the community and area businesses. GHAPS teachers and community partners continue to go the extra mile to provide students with hands-on, project-based experiences that encourage creative problem solving.

Just as the Grand Haven community broadens opportunities and experiences for our students, our highly rated schools are a boost to the community as well. A report by the National Bureau of Economic Research shows a strong correlation between school expenditures and home values. For every dollar spent on public schools in an area, home values increased by \$20. Quality schools contribute to higher values, attract families to our community, and above all, provide excellence in education for all students.

In the following pages we will share about district progress and provide a sneak peek at plans to advance school safety, academic growth and success, and social and emotional wellness for the months and years ahead. Your continued support of GHAPS allows our enthusiastic pursuit of ongoing improvement and Success for All.

Additional details about the bond proposal are available at: ghaps-bond.org. If you have any questions, please reach out to your building administrator or to the district office.

Thank you for being a valued member of the GHAPS family and for contributing to the education of our students. GO BUCS!



Scott Grimes
Superintendent

A Decade of Improvements

In 2014, Grand Haven voters approved a \$35.5 million bond. With the community's support, GHAPS has added new technology to achieve a 1:1 student/technology ratio. We've taken care of needed roof repairs and security upgrades, and we've purchased new buses to expand our fleet and replace aging vehicles.

Also in 2014, the community approved a 10-year \$9.5 million bond. With this, the district has expanded athletics and performing arts facilities, including a new fitness room, orchestra, band, choir and theater areas. We've also updated traffic routes at Grand Haven High and Lakeshore Middle schools to facilitate improved traffic flow and safety. The bond also paid for asbestos removal and the installation of needed fencing.



GHAPS Strategic Plan Update

We are pleased to share our progress on the *GHAPS Strategic Plan*, which identifies *student growth and success*, *school safety*, and *social/emotional wellness* as the district's three areas of priority for the 2022-23 school year.

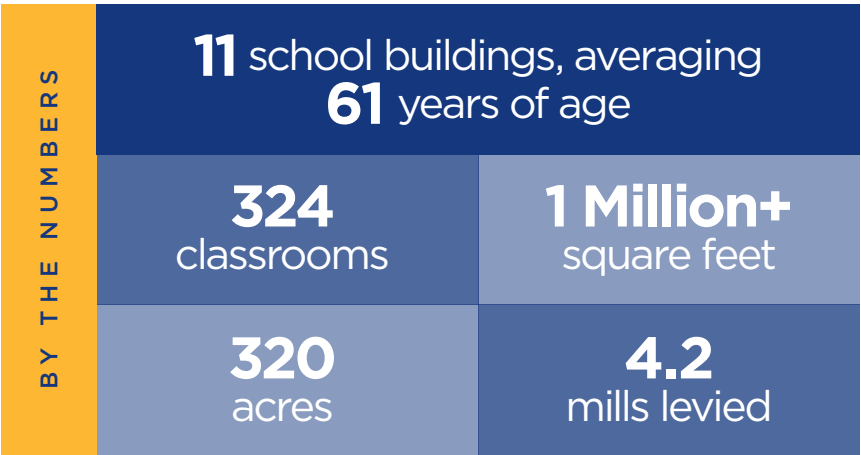
- The district continues to pursue evidence-based initiatives that support student growth and success.
- Building on last year's English language arts advancements, the district invested heavily this year in math programming, manipulatives, math coaches, math intervention training and professional development.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at every school continue to provide the tried-and-true backbone to address individual learning needs in the wake of COVID-19.
- With school safety at the forefront, Safety & Security Director Trent Carithers is working to align all GHAPS safety programs and training, supervise building conditions and coordinate emergency response teams.
- The district now employs four behavior coaches who have been working with existing staff members to create and implement behavior processes and encourage school-ready behavior in students.
- Staff professional development on trauma-informed instruction combined with Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) programming at each school are beginning to improve student understanding of school behavior norms.



Facilities Assessment

In June 2022, GHAPS completed a revision of its 2019 facilities assessment. All buildings and classrooms, covering over one million square feet, were thoroughly inspected, and the review provides both a snapshot in time and a look forward to the district’s current and anticipated facility needs.

The Board of Education reviewed preliminary plans in September, and following the completion of a necessary treasury application, approved the bond resolution in February.



“Consistent with the facilities assessment, the Bond Proposal has been designed to address current building needs and provide modern learning environments for the future.”

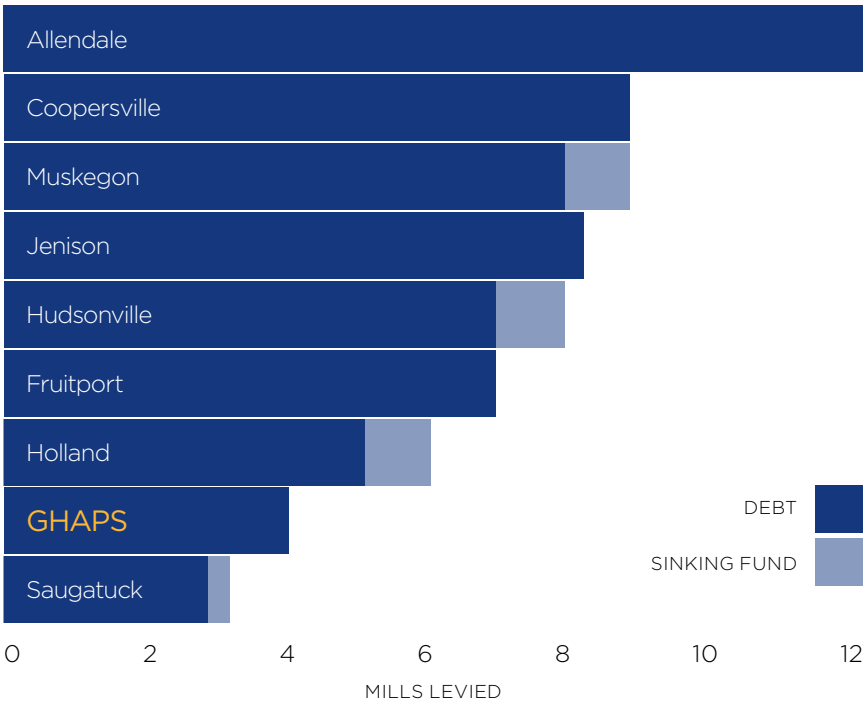
- Superintendent Scott Grimes

What’s on the Ballot?

On Tuesday, May 2, voters will be asked to consider a new bond proposal alongside the district’s annual operating millage renewal. If passed, the bond would support foundational building needs and educational enhancements throughout the district.

Strong property values and the district’s ability to pay down its debt means there is no tax rate increase from the current year’s rate. This keeps GHAPS’ overall debt levy at only 4.2 mills, the second lowest amongst neighboring districts.

“Past investment in our schools has allowed us to provide educational offerings from preschool to college and career prep. However, our facilities are starting to show their age. This Bond Proposal would address short and long term facility needs,” explains Grimes.



Proposed Improvements

If approved, funds from the bond would benefit all students, staff and buildings with these district-wide improvements and updates:

- Enhance security with new/more visible entrances and strategic office reconfigurations
- Build a new multipurpose facility at Grand Haven High School to benefit Buccaneer athletics, band and the Grand Haven community
- Restore the transportation pole barn and replace 20 school buses that have outlived their useful life
- Implement mechanical, heating, cooling, and plumbing system upgrades
- Provide new musical instruments for all schools
- Update technology at all district buildings
- Perform mechanical upgrades at the Education Service Center
- Renovate, update and repair restrooms at K-8 buildings and Central High School

In addition to the above district-wide improvements, the bond proposal addresses individual needs at each building including:

Lakeshore Middle School

The bond proposal addresses replacement of the deteriorating 70-year-old building with a modern physical environment. Formerly the district’s high school, the Lakeshore building transitioned to a middle school 26 years ago and is becoming increasingly expensive to operate.

The facilities assessment recommends the new middle school be built on a district-owned, 90-acre parcel at the corner of Lincoln Street and 152 Avenue in Grand Haven Township.

Analysis shows new construction to be a safer, more cost-effective, and more logistically feasible option than renovating the existing building. The proposed middle school’s design will maximize safety and security while providing plenty of access to natural

light, spaces for collaboration, right-sized classrooms, transparency, and flexibility in a modern, healthy learning environment. Ultimately, the investment would also reduce operational costs at the middle school.

White Pines Intermediate

- Resurface tennis courts
- Purchase new furniture for teachers
- Improve playgrounds and green spaces

Elementary Campuses & Central High School

- Replace aging corridor tile and classroom cabinetry
- Improve playgrounds and green spaces

Grand Haven High School

Proposed improvements at the 26-year-old high school campus include:

- New multi-purpose, indoor athletic facility to address an ongoing need for additional gym space
- Replace air handlers to improve building air quality
- Install new carpeting
- Update mechanical controls
- Replace deteriorating roof
- Update technology
- Upgrade furniture
- New tennis courts
- Natatorium dehumidification system

Proposed Bond Investments



**New
Middle School**
\$82,798,631



**High School
Renovations &
Multipurpose
Facility**
\$27,804,829



**Elementary
Campuses &
Central High
Renovations**
\$25,350,378



Technology
\$12,949,007



**Transportation
Garage & Buses**
\$3,856,794



**Music
Instruments &
Improvements**
\$3,015,361

Total: \$155,775,000

(Proposal includes all high-priority infrastructure needs.)

**Don't
forget!**

Election Day
is Tuesday,
May 2, 2023

Voters will be asked to consider a new bond proposal alongside GHAPS' annual operating millage renewal.

The following proposals will be on the ballot:



Grand Haven Area Public Schools Bond Proposal

Shall Grand Haven Area Public Schools, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed One Hundred Fifty-Five Million Seven Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$155,775,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor, in one or more series, for the purpose of:

erecting, completing, remodeling, and equipping and re-equipping, school buildings and facilities; furnishing and refurbishing school buildings and facilities; purchasing school buses; and acquiring, installing, and equipping and re-equipping school buildings for instructional technology; preparing, developing, improving and equipping structures, athletic fields, play fields, playgrounds and sites?

The following is for informational purposes only: The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2023 is 1.98 mills (\$1.98 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a 0.00 mills net increase over the prior year's levy. The maximum number of years the bonds of any series may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is twenty-one (21) years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 2.90 mills (\$2.90 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation). The school district does not expect to borrow from the State to pay debt service on the bonds. The total amount of qualified bonds currently outstanding is \$4,565,000. The total amount of qualified loans currently outstanding is \$0. The estimated computed millage rate may change based on changes in certain circumstances. (Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited and the proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)



Grand Haven Area Public Schools Operating Millage Renewal Proposal

This proposal will allow the school district to continue to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18 mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, in Grand Haven Area Public Schools, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties, Michigan, be increased by 18 mills (\$18.00 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for the year 2023, to provide funds for operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2023 is approximately \$16,160,295 (this is a renewal of millage that expired with the 2022 tax levy)?