

Elk Rapids Schools

SCHOOL BUSES

School Bond Vote - \$1.625 Million, 4-year Issue

Tuesday, May 6, 2008

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This Q&A focuses on the School Bus portion (\$225,000) of the Bond Proposal. There are also Q&A's available for technology and energy efficiency.

1. Q. How many buses will be purchased?

A. Three buses through a competitive bid process.

2. Q. Is the school buying more buses to expand the fleet?

A. No. Actually our fleet has reduced from 21 buses to 20 this past year. The three new buses will replace our three oldest buses.

3. Q. Didn't voters just pass a bus bond?

A. No. Voters passed a bond to build a "Bus Repair & Maintenance Facility." This facility is now built and ends a 27-year rental of a garage that was located 3 ½ miles offsite. New buses were not part of that vote.

4. Q. I thought the district just bought new buses. Didn't they?

A. The district bought five new buses this past summer with a \$358,635 loan. Buses replaced were built between 1987 and 1991. Even after such a sizeable purchase, we still have three buses that may not last another year based on their physical and mechanical condition. The district cannot take on an additional \$225,000 loan for the replacement of these.

5. Q. Why is a fourteen year-old bus being replaced along with two eighteen year-old buses?

A. Bus age is not the only factor considered when replacement is deemed appropriate. Number of miles driven, engine, transmission and body integrity are major factors as well. State bus inspections identify issues that often indicate a bus that is nearing replacement stage.

6. Q. Do other schools use bond funds for school buses?

A. This May, both Leland and Charlevoix Public Schools will have bond propositions that include technology upgrades and new buses. Crawford Ausable Schools is currently paying for energy efficiency upgrades and buses from their successful 2006 bond issue. Traverse City school voters approved the purchase of 12 buses per year for the next 10 years as part of their \$105 Million bond issue that passed in November 2007.