

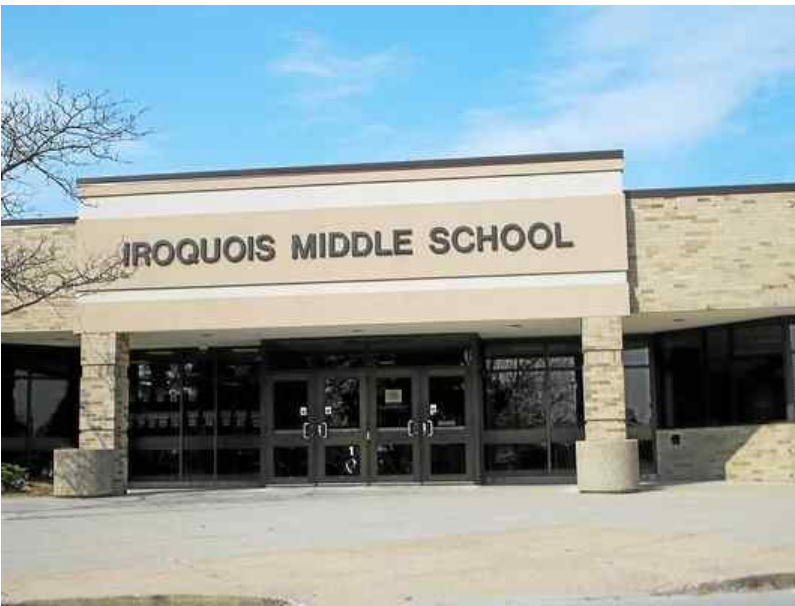
# Chippewa Schools considers potential bond



Chippewa Valley Schools district has been considering asking voters to support a millage increase to levy a bond that would assist in funding school improvement projects. Pictured is the district's administration building in Clinton Township. Nicole Tuttle — For the Macomb Daily

By Nicole Tuttle , For The Macomb Daily

Posted: 11/03/16, 9:45 AM EDT | Updated: 2 hrs ago



The Chippewa Valley Schools district is exploring methods of increasing access to computer devices, which could include one-to-the world computers in the middle school Global Challenge courses. Pictured is Iroquois Middle School in Macomb Township. Nicole Tuttle — For the Macomb Daily

Chippewa Valley Schools district is contemplating asking voters for a millage increase to levy a bond that would fund technology and school improvement projects.

The Chippewa Valley Board of Education hasn't officially decided on the matter and doesn't have an official bond application according to Chippewa Valley Director of School and Community Relations Diane Blain.

However, Blain did confirm that the district is exploring the possibility of a bond proposal with work spread over a six year period.

“I anticipate the board will decide before the end of the year,” Blain said.

If the board chooses to place the issue on the ballot, a meeting with the Michigan Department of Treasury would be necessary in January to seek their approval, according to Blain. The earliest that a millage increase question could come before voters is in May 2017, Blain said.

As to how large of a mill increase is being considered, Blain said that this is as yet undetermined but could range from 0.34 mill to 0.67 mill.

“Although a final determination hasn’t been made, it could range from \$34 to \$67 per year for the average homeowner,” Blain said.

The bond proposal could range from \$79 million to \$98 million, according to Blain.

“That is still being determined at this time. We have completed a comprehensive needs assessment and we are in the process of prioritizing that list now,” Blain said.

Chippewa Valley Schools has had the possibility of asking voters to support a millage increase to levy a bond under contemplation since spring or early summer, according to Blain.

“Our school community has made significant investments in our district and we work hard to ensure that we protect those investments. Keeping our schools safe and in good working order is a priority. Throughout the spring and summer we conducted a district-wide needs assessment,” Blain said.

To conduct the assessment, a team of school facility and technology consultants along with school staff formed to offer input on future educational needs for students, according to Blain.

“The team walked through each school campus evaluating things like roofs, heating and cooling systems, parking lots and sidewalks, doors, windows and security systems, as well as, other building specific needs,” Blain said.

Discussions have also been held several times regarding instructional technology that will be important to provide students and staff in the future, according to Blain.

“Because we know technology helps enhance student engagement, we are exploring ways to increase access to computer devices in our schools. One idea under consideration would be to provide computer devices in certain subject areas in defined classrooms,” Blain said.

New technology could include an engineering or science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) focus for elementary school science classes, according to Blain. Blain also said that at the middle school level, one-to-the-world computers for Global Challenge courses would provide students an opportunity to work together to research, collaborate, and present a final capstone project. One-to-one devices could be utilized at the high school level for English Language Arts students to produce blogs or writing assignments for sharing and critique, according to Blain.

“Of course, these are just a few of the ways we would plan to use technology to enhance our students’ educational experience. We would also replace teacher computers, add additional mobile device carts, upgrade our network infrastructure, and replace aging security cameras and printers,” Blain said.

In the area of construction, parking lot and pavement improvements, security improvements, some roofing, mechanical and site work are items under consideration, Blain said. The district is also interested in upgrades to network infrastructure, according to Blain.

The amount of money for construction and technology costs would be determined in a final bond application if approved by the board, according to Blain.

“There will be a need for some school bus and furniture replacement throughout the district,” Blain said.

Voters approved a bond proposal for Chippewa Valley Schools in February 2010 for \$89 million.

“Yes, there is still some money left. This past summer we used the remaining bond funds to replace some flooring and to do smaller sidewalk and pavement repairs throughout the district,” Blain said.