

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Smithville School District placing a \$12.5 million NO TAX INCREASE bond issue and a \$20 million 79-CENT LEVY INCREASE on the November 8 ballot?

Two main issues exist for which a solution is needed: overcrowded schools and the need to address conditions of existing facilities including a 60-year-old Smithville Primary Elementary School. The no tax increase bond and the levy increase will allow the district to expand its facilities to address growth in our student population. The district is currently using space for instruction that was originally designed for storage and utilizing eight (8) mobile classrooms to meet student needs.

How will this proposal appear on the ballot?

Question 1 - No Tax Bond Increase

Question 1: Shall the Smithville R-II School District issue its general obligation bonds in the amount of \$12,500,000 for the purpose of constructing, improving, furnishing and equipping school facilities, including renovating the Primary Elementary School, classroom additions and renovations at the High School, roofing and asphalt improvements, and security enhancements, resulting in no estimated increase in the District's debt service tax levy?

Question 2 - 79-cent Levy Increase

Question 2: To provide funds for constructing, furnishing, equipping, operating and maintaining a third elementary school, shall the Board of Education of the Smithville R-II School District be authorized to increase the District's operating tax levy ceiling by \$0.79 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, such levy increase to terminate after the earlier of (1) a period of 25 years, or (2) full payment of any obligations issued to construct, furnish and equip such third elementary school?

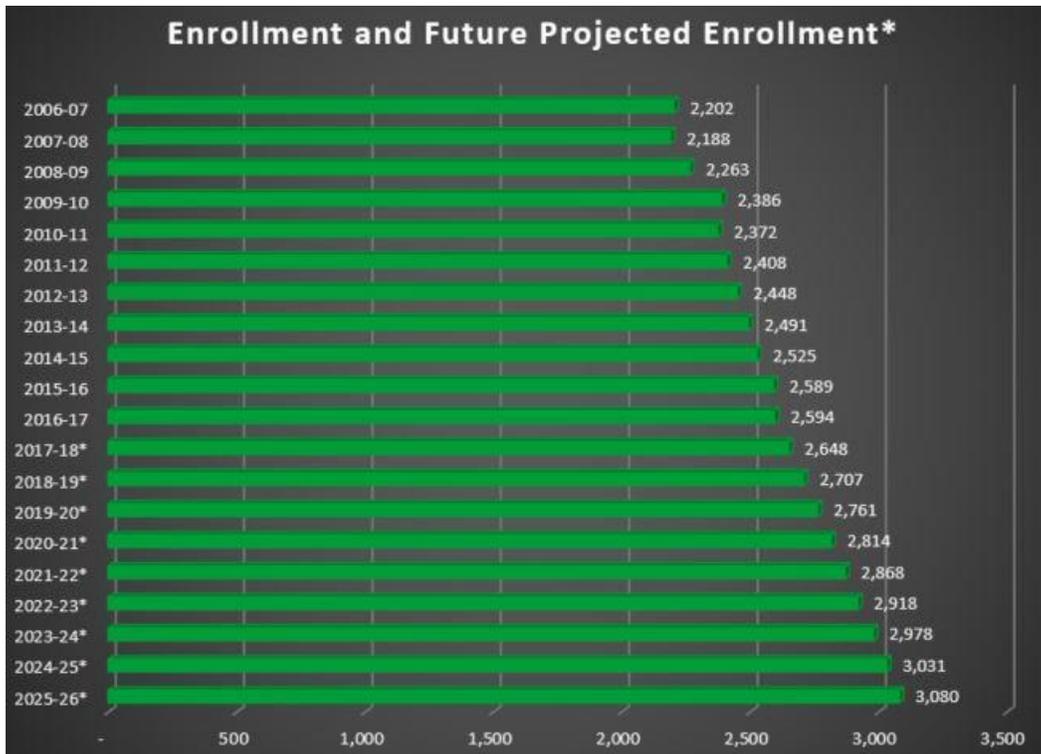
How will all schools benefit from passage of the no-tax bond and levy?

All schools will benefit from the passage of the no tax bond and levy. It will create additional instructional space that will result in a premier learning environment in all schools in which we are serving students, teachers and staff. Schools will not be overcrowded, thus eliminating the current use of mobile classrooms. Time on the bus for students, Pre-K - 6, will experience a reduction in the amount of time spent on the bus.

How much has the student population grown?

What are the enrollment projections?

Since voters passed the last tax levy increase in 1997, district enrollment has grown by 1,167 students. Projections indicate enrollment will increase about 19% (over 400 students) in the next 10 years meaning enrollment will exceed 3,000 students.



*The district uses a process of considering past enrollment trends to predict future grade level, building level, and district enrollments. This enrollment projection process has been accurate in predicting future enrollment trends. Enrollment is based on the official count date that occurs on the last Wednesday of September.

Building Capacities of Current Facilities

School	Current Grade Configuration	Capacity	9/2016 Enrollment*
Smithville High School	Grades 9-12	852	836
Smithville Middle School	Grades 6-8	632	647
Smithville Upper Elementary School	Grades 3-5	616	589
Smithville Primary Elementary School	Grades K-2	540	522
Smithville Early Childhood Center	Pre-Kindergarten	36	33

*As of the last Wednesday of September 2016

What projects are included?

Question 1

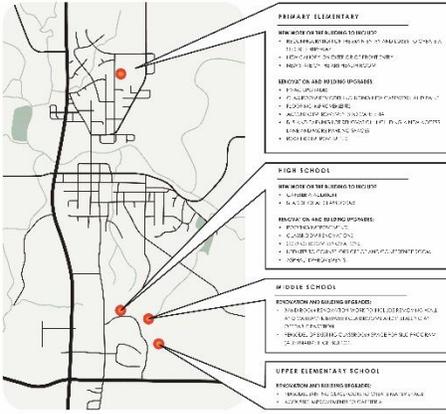
New work on current buildings include: Reconfiguration of the main entry and lobby to create a secure entryway at Smithville Primary Elementary School (SPES); new exterior canopy for the front entry at SPES; new state of the art health room at SPES; cafeteria addition at Smithville High School (SHS); and eight (8) additional classrooms at SHS.

Renovation and building upgrades include: HVAC upgrades at SPES; classrooms remodeled including new casework and paint at SPES; flooring improvements at SPES; acoustic improvements to cafeteria at SPES; bus and parking lot renovation including a new access lane and more parking spaces at SPES; roofing improvements at SPES and SHS; classroom and science lab renovations at SHS; updates to counselor offices and conference room at SHS; asphalt improvements at SHS; band room renovation work to include removing a wall and casework between classrooms and installing an operable partition at Smithville Middle School (SMS); remodel of existing classroom space for SILC program (alternative high school); remodel existing classroom to create maker spaces at Smithville Upper Elementary School (SUES); acoustic improvements to cafeteria at SUES.

SMITHVILLE
SCHOOL DISTRICT
National Excellence

ACI
ARCHITECTURE
CONSULTANTS
INC.

RENOVATION + IMPROVEMENTS



PRIMARY ELEMENTARY

NEW WORK ON THE BUILDING TO INCLUDE:

- RECONFIGURE MAIN ENTRY TO PROVIDE SECURE ENTRY
- NEW EXTERIOR CANOPY FOR FRONT ENTRY
- ADD "SILENT" ROOM FOR STUDENTS

RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS:

- HVAC UPGRADES
- ACoustic IMPROVEMENTS TO CAFETERIA
- FLOORING IMPROVEMENTS
- CASERWORK AND PAINT
- ADDITION OF HEALTH ROOM
- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS
- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS

HIGH SCHOOL

NEW WORK ON THE BUILDING TO INCLUDE:

- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS

RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS:

- HVAC UPGRADES
- CASERWORK AND PAINT
- FLOORING IMPROVEMENTS
- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS
- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO INCLUDE:

- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS
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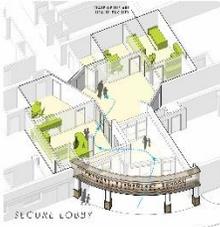
UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO INCLUDE:

- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS
- ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS



NEW FRONT ENTRY



SECURE LOBBY



ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM UPDATES

Question 2

An additional elementary school that will serve students grade Pre-K - 6.



Why is a levy increase required to build an additional elementary school?

In 1997, patrons of the Smithville School District approved a debt service levy increase that has allowed the district to implement the first five phases of its Master Building Plan. Now, 19 years later, we have limited bonding capacity and require additional operating funds to finance the master building plan.

Phase	Year	Project
Phase I	1997	\$6.25 Million for additions at SUES and SHS
Phase II	1999	\$6.8 million for classroom additions at SUES, SMS, SHS, and renovations at SPES
Phase III	2004	\$6.8 million for classrooms at SMS and SHS, and activity upgrades
Phase IV	2007	\$9.8 million for classrooms at SPES and SUES; District Office and Early Childhood Center; and activity upgrades
Phase V	2010	\$8.5 million for Performing Arts Center, FEMA gym, additional parking and renovations

This is the exact amount calculated to make “lease purchase” payments to fund Phase VI of the Master Building plan and to operate the additional square footage. If the \$0.79 levy is approved, approximately \$0.64 will fund construction and approximately \$0.15 will fund operations (utilities, staff, maintenance, supplies). The approved levy increase will expire after a period of 25 years, or after full payments are made on the obligation rolling back patrons’ taxes.

How has the District sought input regarding this proposal?

How were the projects determined?

The projects were determined through community engagement. A series of activities have taken place since the previous two issues in April 2013 and November 2014 to gather input from the community. Activities included focus group sessions, key communicator meetings, grade configuration committee, and community forums.

The result of these activities was the development of a revised [master plan](#) to address our current issues relating to student enrollment, building capacity, and program needs. The plan aligns to our strategic goal to establish a premier learning environment through fiscal responsiveness and responsibility that supports a capital improvement plan which accommodates the ever-changing needs of our student population.

How much will this cost the average patron?

Question 1

The no tax bond will not increase the district debt levy. This means there will be no increases to the taxes paid by patrons.

Question 2

The operational levy will increase by 79-cents for every \$100 of real property assessed valuation. The chart below illustrates the tax payer impact based on the market value of a home. Personal property, agricultural property, and commercial property will also be affected based on its assessed value.

Market Value of Home	Monthly/Annual Cost of no tax bond increase (Question 1)	Monthly Cost of 79-cent increase (Question 2)	Annual Cost of 79-cent increase (Questions 2)
 \$150,000	\$0.00	\$18.76	\$225.15
 \$175,000	\$0.00	\$21.89	\$262.68
 \$200,000	\$0.00	\$25.02	\$300.20
 \$250,000	\$0.00	\$31.27	\$375.25
 \$325,000	\$0.00	\$40.65	\$487.83
 \$415,000	\$0.00	\$51.91	\$622.92

How do I determine my Assessed Value of real estate and personal property?

Residents in Platte County Real Estate and Personal Property

Steps to determine your Assessed Value:

1. Go to the Platte County Collector's website: <http://www.plattecountycollector.com/>
2. On the tool bar on left, click on either *Real Estate Tax Search* or *Personal Property Tax Search, Receipts, Statements*
3. Complete the required search field by entering a parcel #, Name, Physical Address, or Subdivision. Click search
4. Check the check box indicating the desired property and click view.
5. This will show a copy of prior year tax receipts.
6. View the most recent statement. Here you will find the assessed value of your property.
 - a. For example, a residential property has an assessed value of \$43,793 (market value \$230,489)
 - b. This individual currently pays the Smithville School District \$1,938.93 in school taxes ($\$43,793 \times \$4.4227 = \$193,893.50 / 100 = \$1,939.93$)
 - c. If patrons approve Question 1, the \$12.5 million GO Bond, this individual would not pay any additional tax because it is a "NO TAX RATE INCREASE" issue.
 - d. If patrons approve Question 2, a \$0.79 LEVY INCREASE, this individual would pay an additional \$344.97 annually in school taxes. ($\$4.4275 + .79 = \$5.2175 \times \$43,793 = \$228,489.97 / 100 = \$2,284.90 - \$1,938.93 = \$344.97$).
7. The same steps may be used for personal property once the assessed value is confirmed on the collector's website.

Residents in Clay County Real Estate and Personal Property

Steps to determine your Assessed Value:

1. Go to the Clay County Collector's website
[https://collector.claycountymo.gov/ascend/\(mg5xwe45detwjc45r5pj31ae\)/search.aspx](https://collector.claycountymo.gov/ascend/(mg5xwe45detwjc45r5pj31ae)/search.aspx)
2. Complete the known search field (parcel, name, or address), hit enter
3. Click on the desired receipt (in most cases two will be listed one for personal property and one for real property). This will provide your property's assessed value.
 - a. For example, a patron has an assessed value of \$52,820 for their real property (market value \$278,000). They would pay \$2,338.61 in school taxes. ($\$52,820 \times \$4.4275 = \$233,860.55 / 100 = \$2,338.61$)
 - b. If patrons approve Question 1, the \$12.5 million GO Bond, this individual would not pay any additional tax because it is a "NO TAX RATE INCREASE" issue.
 - c. If patrons approve Question 2, a \$0.79 LEVY INCREASE, this individual would pay an additional \$417.27 in school taxes ($\$4.4275 + 0.79 = \$5.2175 \times \$52,820 = \$275,588.35 / 100 = \$2,755.88 - \$2,338.61 = \417.27)
4. The same steps may be used for personal property once the assessed value is confirmed on the collector's website.

Unfortunately, Clinton County does not have an on-line tool. However, if you know your assessed value, the same calculations apply.

How is this proposal different from the 2013 and 2014 proposals?

The proposal demonstrates fiscal responsibility by introducing a different financing structure than previous proposals. As a result, this proposal is more comprehensive and it will allow us to address all of the immediate needs resulting from our growing student population.

In 2013, the proposal included an additional elementary serving K-6, district-wide roofing projects, enhancements to building entrances, remodeling the office and front entrance of the Primary Elementary School, a two-story addition at Smithville High School, security improvements, other various improvements, and an upgraded communication system.

In 2014, the proposal included an additional elementary school.

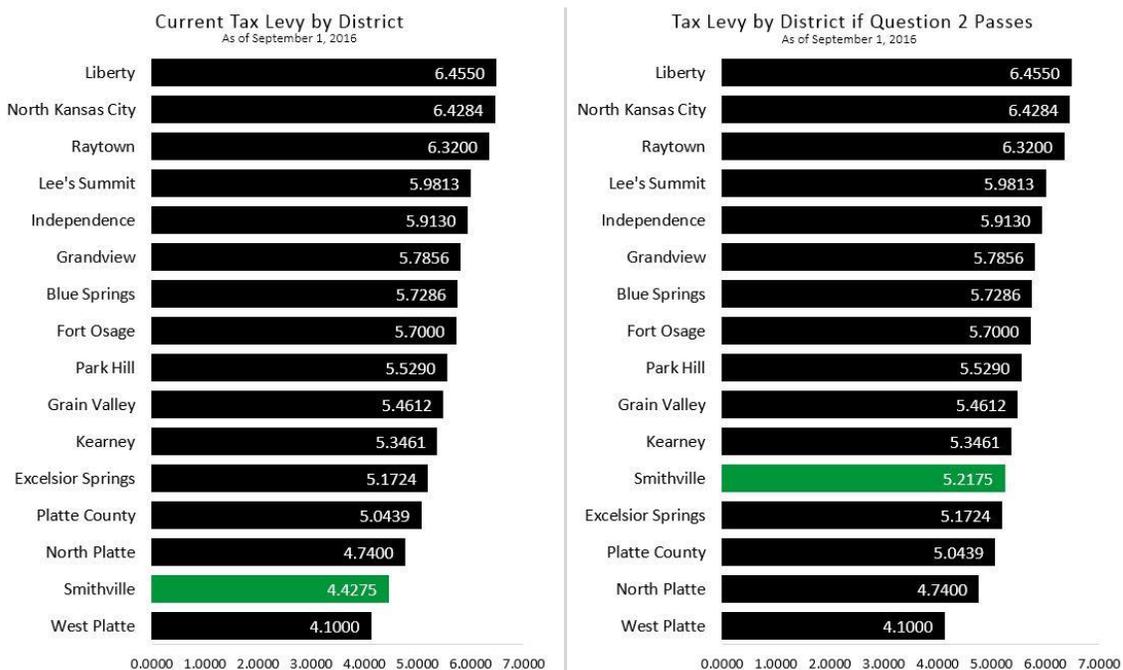
Question 1 allows an extension of the timeframe during which taxes are levied. This means that current debt for the general obligation bonds would be extended from the year 2030 to 2036. The no tax increase bond will allow the district to enhance existing space for our students at Smithville Primary Elementary School, Smithville Upper Elementary School, Smithville Middle School, Smithville High School (including SILC), and add additional space for our students at Smithville High School.

Question 2 will allow for an additional elementary school to serve students Pre-K - 6.

Where does our levy currently rank compared to other districts?

Where will it rank if this levy increase passes?

The District's tax levy is one of the lowest in the Kansas City Metro area (\$4.4275), as shown in the graphic below. The total tax levy rate is composed of \$3.3808 for operating and \$1.0467 for debt services. The rate is applied to \$100 of assessed valuation for residential, agricultural, commercial, and personal property.



Has the Smithville R-II School District been good stewards of patrons' tax dollars?

Yes, the patrons of the district have not voted a tax increase since 1997. The Smithville School District operates on the second to the lowest tax levy in the Kansas City Metro area and spends only \$8,656 per pupil; the state average is \$10,473 per pupil. The district operates within its means; however, since additional square footage is required, additional funds are needed to support this immediate need.

Where will the additional elementary school be built?

The district owns approximately 10 acres located on the northeast corner of 188th Street and Highway F. This property is located on the district's northern boundary.

How will students be selected to attend the three Pre-K - 6 elementary schools?

Students will be selected to attend one of the three Pre-K - 6 elementary schools based on where they live. The school district will adopt boundaries that define attendance areas within the Smithville School District. The process of establishing the Pre-K - 6 boundaries will be stakeholder driven, transparent to the community, and approved by the Board of Education. The process of developing boundary lines will be assisted by a 3rd party demographer to consider logistical issues associated with defining attendance areas such as enrollment balance, socio-economic balance, transportation distances and safety, maintaining neighborhoods and subdivisions, and future growth considerations.

What is the timeline for construction?

A competitive bidding process will begin immediately after passage on November 8, 2016. Construction will begin following the bidding process with the building projects planned to be ready for occupancy in the fall of 2018 or at the start of the 2018-19 school year.

When is the election?

The election is November 8, 2016.

How do I register to vote?

Any individual 18 years of age who is a resident of the Smithville School District and is registered to vote may vote in this election. Individuals may register to vote at the Mid-Continent Public Library in Smithville or at Smithville City Hall. Additionally, individuals may register to vote in any of the Smithville School District facilities or at the Board of Election office. Persons may register by mail through

<http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/goVoteMissouri/register>.

What is the last day to register to vote?

The deadline to register for the November 8, 2016 election is October 12, 2016.

What happens if the no-tax bond and levy do not pass?

If the no tax bond and levy do not pass, our schools will become more overcrowded, and services may be compromised for Smithville students. We will be required to continue implementing a creative list of ideas to deal with increased student enrollment. That list may include: allowing class sizes to increase, putting art and music classes on a cart to travel among homerooms, adding additional mobile classrooms to provide additional square footage, continuing to convert spaces not intended for instructional space. Ultimately, to provide the much needed square footage and to maintain the quality programming our student's deserve, the district will continue to come to the voters asking for their help and investment in our

community's future. Additionally, patrons will bypass lower construction costs and borrowing costs that are present today, but may not be present in the future.

Why not add on to our current buildings rather than build another school?

Based on recommended best practice, a non-secondary school building reaches capacity at approximately 600 students before it becomes counter-productive for the learning environment. Additional classrooms could be added to the current Primary Elementary School, Middle School, and Upper Elementary School increasing their capacity; however, there would also be a need for additional art, music, library, kitchen space, cafeteria, health room, administrative space, parking, bus drop off/pick-up, etc. to accommodate the additional student capacity, which the current building footprint cannot support.

Why not just add more mobile classrooms where they are needed?

Mobile classrooms are temporary classrooms and eight are already in use at the Smithville School District, with 300+/- students per day, to handle growth until more permanent space could be constructed. They are temporary solutions and present significant quality and security concerns.

Why the PK-6 School Model?

In 2006 and 2015, a committee of parents and educators met to consider current research and the experiences of area school districts in formulating a recommendation regarding the future grade configuration of elementary schools in the Smithville School District. Both committees recommended reducing student transitions by way of neighborhood schools.

In addition to fewer transitions for students, the PK-6 concept:

- Provides for greater efficiency with fewer miles driven by buses and reduces travel time for students on the bus (approximately 20 fewer minutes each way)
- Gives teachers and administrators more time to build quality relationships with students and their families
- Provides a convenience for many parents by increasing the opportunity for several of their children to attend the same school.

Finally, this PK-6 model is fiscally responsible. The district consulted with architects for a plan to add necessary square footage while utilizing our current attendance center concept. The result was to convert the Primary Elementary School to a PK, K, 1 building; build a new 2, 3, 4 center; and convert the Upper Elementary School to a 4, 5, 6 center. Since the new building would have to accommodate three grades, it would require building it for 900 students. The size and infrastructure required to accommodate this many elementary students would put the price tag at over \$32 million dollars. This model also puts the current Upper Elementary School over capacity. The projected price tag of the additional PK-6 neighborhood school is just over \$20 million dollars, making the K-6 more fiscally responsible.

Another attendance center option is PK, K, and 1; a 2-3; and a 4-5. This, however, does not help the Middle School, which is busting at the seams.

Why were stadium renovations completed in 2007?

In 2007 voters approved a \$9.8 million NO TAX INCREASE bond issue to complete several projects. Among them was the installation of the turf field at an estimated cost of \$750,000. The turf field is an extension of the classroom as Physical Education classes frequently utilize this space for instruction. In addition, please consider the following:

- Football, soccer, and the band utilize this space for practice and games where grass fields required limited access to preserve the field for football games only.
- Maintenance on a turf field is very minimal saving time and money.
- Advancements in turf have provided a new standard for safety for players through efficient absorption of impact.

Why were voters asked to consider a NO TAX INCREASE for the construction of a Performing Arts Center (PAC) in 2010?

In 2010, voters approved an \$8.5 million dollar NO TAX INCREASE bond issue to construct a Performing Arts Center (PAC) and FEMA gymnasium. Like the stadium, the PAC is used daily as a theater classroom and is utilized by students in all grades. In addition, please consider the following:

- Community groups utilize the PAC.
- The PAC has allowed for enhanced programming by providing an appropriate venue for our students to perform. Previous performances were held in the main gymnasium.
- The PAC was in the architectural plans when the current High School was built in 1969. The project was cut in order to save money.

Through the years, the district has found it necessary to utilize bonding capacity to add classroom space to keep up with enrollment. With the recent recession, the economy provided a drop in construction costs and interest rates, reducing the overall cost of the project from approximately \$16 million dollars to just over \$8 million.

Where can I find more information about the no tax bond increase and the 79-cent levy increase issue?

Please visit the district website - www.smithvilleschooldistrict.net - to learn all the details of the no tax bond and levy increase issues. Be an educated voter when you cast your ballot on November 8.

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