

Elkhorn Schools Bond

The Wording	Our Explanation
<p>“Shall Douglas County School District 0010 (Elkhorn Public Schools) in the State of Nebraska issue its general obligation bonds in an aggregate stated principal amount not to exceed One Hundred Forty-nine Million Six Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$149,615,000), to pay the costs of construction, acquisition and improvement of high school, middle school and elementary school facilities; additions, renovations and improvements to the District’s existing buildings and facilities; providing necessary equipment and apparatus for such buildings and facilities; and acquiring sites for school facilities of the District; with such bonds to be issued from time to time, to bear interest at such rate or rates, to be sold at such prices and to become due at such time or times as may be fixed by, or determined at the direction of, the Board of Education; and</p> <p>“Shall the School District cause to be levied and collected annually a special levy of taxes against all the taxable property in the School District sufficient in rate and amount to pay the principal of and interest on such bonds as the same become due?”</p> <p>  FOR said bonds and tax  AGAINST said bonds and tax </p>	<p>Special <u>Elkhorn School District</u> MAIL-IN election! Ballots were mailed February 20, 2018. Return ballots by mail (or deliver to the Douglas County Election office) with enough time to arrive (not postmarked) by March 13, 2018 at 5pm! So mail it in plenty of time and put only one ballot in each envelope – no stamp saving!</p> <p>Note: Speeding up the process of getting construction underway explains the purpose of doing the vote in March so work can happen with school not in session.</p> <p>The school administration sees the needs to be addressed as urgent giving the example of the current high school sitting at less than 50 students short of capacity. The School Board requests authorization to borrow (in increments) \$149,615,000 for use in basically three categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) New school buildings: High school, middle school, and elementary 2) Land Acquisition 3 future elementary, and 2 future middle school sites 3) Existing Facilities- See details listed on pages 2-7 at https://www.elkhornweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Dr.-Habrock-January-2018-Visits-Presentation.pdf <p>With 4200 lots available for sale in the district, growth is expected to continue as it has in the past 12 years, at an average of 7% increase each year! In light of that potential growth, leadership feels that site acquisition needs to start now because it takes time to find good locations and begin negotiations with current owners. Since property values typically increase, earlier buying should save greater cost later.</p> <p>With that growth should come increased tax revenue, with an estimate that by the 2021-2022 school year, a decrease in the levy might happen. Also by that time some of the previous bonding responsibilities, like the Spring Ridge bond, will have been paid off.</p> <p>However, estimates say the immediately preceding school year would create the largest expense to the tax payer – estimating \$150 increase for a home valued at \$150,000.</p> <p>Obviously the school district will not take on the whole debt all at once, but this vote will authorize allowing for this spending to occur.</p> <p>Not a great deal of opposition has been raised. Because the district has a commitment to major focus on reading, writing, and math, those who typically oppose non-academic expenses for schools only have a complaint concerning putting money into the early childhood services. Even though Elkhorn spends the 4th lowest amount per pupil per year in Nebraska, that still stands at \$10,000 while some private schools average \$6000 per pupil per year.</p> <p>A vote FOR this bonding will set in motion the building of new schools, land acquisition for more schools, and multiple renovations in existing schools.</p> <p>A vote AGAINST this bonding would possibly delay when the request for bonding would reappear which could be as early as the General election, but could also possibly create a way to decrease the amount of the request. It would also put a strain on the General Fund because to handle the continuing increase in student population would require using portables.</p>