

September 23, 2015

Dear EGRPS Families,

The East Grand Rapids Public Schools' Board of Education would like to welcome you to the 2015-2016 school year! We hope you are settling into your fall routines and that your children are transitioning well into the new school year. We wanted to take the opportunity to provide you with a brief update regarding the 2014 Bond construction projects.

We have received questions from EGRPS families and community members about the construction projects with respect to the budget reductions that have occurred over the past couple of years in our programs and services. As a reminder, capital/building projects, such as the ones completed this summer, are funded by residents at the local school district level and have very strict financial requirements. The money a district receives through a voter approved bond (capital/building projects) cannot be used for any other purpose (i.e., operating budget) by law per Proposal A (1994). The bond proposal was approved by voters in our district on May 6, 2014, and this summer several of the proposed bond construction projects were started at our elementary buildings. Many projects are still in progress and will continue over the next 18-24 months, specifically at the middle school and high school. All of the improvements (security/facilities/technology) were paid for using the financial resources provided through the bond and not through our operating budget. Prior to the May 2014 election, our district shared information and held numerous meetings open to all residents outlining the exact plans for the bond proposal and how resources would be allocated. If you would like to review a list of the bond approved projects, [click here](#). We are proud that our administration has worked hard to find savings with many of the projects coming in under budget (which will ultimately mean savings to the taxpayers).

The district's operating costs (i.e., general day-to-day expenses, salaries, and programs) are funded almost entirely by the State of Michigan with minimal support being provided locally. As we have previously shared, we have had several years of reduced funding from the state, funding that directly impacts our classrooms; and as a result we have had to make some difficult budget decisions. In addition, with the passage of Proposal A in 1994, the district is also prohibited from asking local voters to support a bond for general operating purposes. The State of Michigan has a funding formula that allocates a set amount per student enrollment (Foundation Allowance) which is set on an annual basis. We are grateful that our community, through the East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation, has stepped up repeatedly and helped fill the funding gap in our operating budget through contributions to EGRNow! The generous contributions have afforded us the ability to continue to provide excellent programs and services for our students during these financially challenging years.

Again, we are grateful that the community voted to approve the 2014 Bond program which will allow us to advance several capital/building projects over the next couple of years. For further information on how Michigan school districts are funded we encourage you to review the [Community Budget Guide](#). As always, your Board of Education and superintendent are willing to listen and answer any questions you might have.

Thank you for all your support!

Sincerely,



Michelle Rabideau, President
East Grand Rapids Board of Education



Sara Magaña Shubel, Ph.D., Superintendent
East Grand Rapids Public Schools



Elizabeth Welch, Vice President
East Grand Rapids Board of Education




Robert Wolford, Treasurer
East Grand Rapids Board of Education



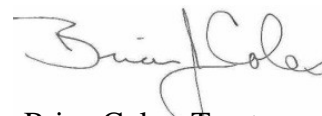
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