

# NOVEMBER 7, 2023 BOND ISSUE

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. When and where are the upcoming Community Forum dates related to the bond issue?

The Community Forums are scheduled for September 14, 2023, September 26, 2023, October 10, 2023, October 26, 2023 and November 2, 2023. All meetings will be held at 6 PM in the Northeast Elementary Multipurpose Room. Please note that the October 12th meeting was moved to October 10 due to a previously scheduled community event.

### 2. How will this affect our taxes? What is tax neutral?

Impact on Taxes: The \$39.9 million bond issue will have a minimal impact on your taxes, increasing the tax rate by less than 10 cents. To find out the exact impact on your property, use the provided tax calculator. For instance, a \$350,000 assessed value home would result in just \$1.55 per month or \$18.64 annually.

What is "Tax Neutral"? "Tax neutral" means that the bond issue won't increase the tax rate. This is possible because the High School bonds will expire in 2025, offsetting the new bond's impact on your taxes. So, your overall tax rate won't rise due to this bond.

### 3. Why are renovations happening at Northeast Elementary over Middle School or West Elementary?

Here is a breakdown for each location:

Northeast Elementary:

- Northeast's functionality and space allocations are limiting the effectiveness of the building. The limited office space and foyer cannot maximize safety precautions for students and staff. The building lacks an adequate gymnasium that does not also function as a meal space for students, decreasing class time due to set up/take down.
- Maker spaces will also be added, enhancing creative learning opportunities for students.

West Elementary:

- West Elementary is receiving classroom renovations to create a more engaging learning environment, including maker spaces that foster student creativity and innovation.

Middle School:

- The Middle School project focuses on sustainability and energy efficiency.
- Interior lighting will be upgraded to energy-saving LED lighting.
- The HVAC system will be replaced with a 98% efficiency boiler, significantly improving energy efficiency compared to the current 55% efficiency boiler.

- A transformed space for an innovation lab/maker space for creation and innovation for students.

In essence, each school has specific renovations tailored to its needs, with a shared commitment to providing students with improved facilities and resources for a better learning experience.

**4. Aside from the entrance security upgrades, what other measures will be implemented for safety?**

Outside of the bond issue the district has written for over \$200,000 in grants from Homeland Security to:

- install background checked visitor badging system
- additional exterior cameras tied to artificial intelligence for better monitoring
- upgrading exterior doors with flat panel handles to avoid being locked in

**5. Are teachers currently having to spend their own money because of the state of the building to prepare their classrooms? Will the update be able to reduce that and maybe attract or help retain teachers?**

Currently we are unaware of teachers spending their own dollars to prepare their classrooms because they have no allocation from the building. Some choose to go above what is allocated and may be spending their own money. The update to the classrooms will provide an innovative and creative theme within each classroom and diminish the need/desire to do more by individual teachers.

**6. Why does Northeast need a new gymnasium?**

Northeast needs a new gym because the current gym doubles as a lunchroom, causing disruptions and inequity among students. The existing multipurpose room is too small to meet the needs of physical education and extracurricular activities.

- What's wrong with the current multipurpose room?  
The current multipurpose room is insufficient for physical education and extracurricular activities, impacting students' opportunities for sports and exercise.
- How does this affect students at Northeast?  
The lack of a dedicated gym leads to disparities among students, affecting their access to quality physical education and extracurricular programs.
- What will the proposed gym offer?  
The proposed gym will have a main court equivalent to a typical high school court size, addressing the current limitations and providing better opportunities for all students.

7. **For what are the \$1 million in improvements at the district's central office on the campus of the Glenwood Resource Center?**

- Why invest \$1 million in central office improvements?  
The state of Iowa lease for the current building exhausts in 2024. The GRC administrative building, received at no district cost, will require the central office to have its own heating and cooling systems, separate from the main power plant. The improvements are for more than just administrative/business offices but to also include district technology, THRIVE, and a newly launched Innovation Center for career academy coursing through Iowa Western Community College.
- Does this impact the bond issue?  
No, it's a separate project, NOT linked to the bond issue.
- What else is covered by the \$1 million?  
We're applying for a C.A.I.F. grant to equip and remodel the High School Innovation Center, housed in the same location.
- How does this benefit students and the community?  
It improves the office environment and supports innovative learning at the High School Innovation Center for maximum 21st century career exposure and workplace learning for students.

8. **What happens to Kid's Place if the bond doesn't pass?**

If the bond doesn't pass, it impacts our ability to relocate Kid's Place. Currently, we have been granted two one-year extensions to stay in the current building until June 30, 2026, which also houses Kid's Place. However, without a positive bond vote in November 2024, we won't have sufficient time to build a new Kid's Place on Northeast before we must vacate the GRC campus building in 2026.

9. **Can you explain the cost breakdown for the new pool and sports complex, and address concerns about tax implications?**

Here is a breakdown of each:

- **New Pool:** The School District's involvement with the City of Glenwood pool was simply to provide the land for the aquatic facility. The decision to build the pool was made solely by the City of Glenwood, not the school district. They are separate entities with no shared bonds.
- **Pool Usage:** We do have an agreement with the City that allows our students to use the pool for a limited time after it closes to the public in the fall and before it opens in the spring. In return, the City leases our land for just one dollar for 99 years.
- **Sports Complex:** The Activity Complex was a school issue, and it was funded through a combination of sources. We used a Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) bond, which does result in a tax increase. Additionally, we secured funding through the Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) program, which is a revenue bond. SAVE dedicates a portion of the revenue received by the district to pay for projects like this.
- **Budget Overruns:** While the Activity Complex did go over budget, it's important to note that it did not cost taxpayers more than what was originally voted on. The

additional costs beyond the initial budget came from the SAVE funding that the district had in reserve.

In summary, the pool was not a school district initiative, and the Activity Complex was funded through a combination of bonds, with the costs staying within the approved budget. We are committed to being transparent about these projects and their financial implications. If you have more questions or need further information, please feel free to ask.

**10. How will the new innovation curriculum benefit our students and justify the investment, especially in terms of preparing them for the 21st century workforce?**

The new innovation curriculum is designed to have a significant impact on our students. It will focus on fostering creativity and innovation while complementing our existing content curriculum when relevant. Importantly, it's a supplement to our current curriculum and won't replace any existing programs. This approach maximizes our students' opportunities to learn and think in spaces that best prepare them for 21st-century skills and workplaces.

**11. What is the operational model for Kids Place under the bond issue?**

Kids Place is part of our school district and operates as an enterprise fund. This means it needs to be self-sustaining, with all income and expenses managed within the program. Currently, Kids Place offers daycare services from birth to preschool and provides wrap-around care for children up to age 12 or sixth grade. As part of our plans, Kids Place will transform into an educational birth-to-preschool center when it relocates to the Northeast while continuing to offer wrap-around care. Currently, Kids Place serves 76 students, ranging from birth to sixth grade in wrap-around care, with a capacity for up to 100 students. In the new facility we're planning, Kids Place will have the capacity to serve up to 200 students.

**12. Can you provide more information about the goals of the bond program?**

The goals of the bond program include improving safety and security, expanding educational and curriculum programs, updating older facilities to meet changing educational standards and energy conservation goals, and seeking guidance from the community. Additionally, the program aims to provide convenience and access to families by establishing Kids Place on the Northeast property.

**13. Why is it important to proceed with these renovations now?**

These renovations are essential for enhancing safety, and energy efficiency and creating innovative learning spaces. The improvements will make traffic patterns more efficient and safer during arrival and dismissal. Upgrading outdated facilities is vital for achieving energy efficiency goals. The bond issue also aims to create a convenient and accessible location for families with the Kids Place facility.

**14. How will the bond issue directly benefit my child's education and school experience?**

If you have an elementary-aged student or a student at the Middle School, the renovated rooms will provide an environment where your child will be immersed, helping them be creative and innovative with higher-order thinking skills. Additionally, increased security and safety measures will be installed in the buildings.

**15. Are there any specific special education and support services plans within the bond program?**

All students, including those with special needs, will benefit from an innovative learning space with the bond's passage.

**16. Will any disruptions to the school schedule or my child's routine during the construction phase of these improvements?**

We will not cancel school or delay learning. However, the bond issue passing on November 7 is critical to minimizing disruptions. The Kids Place addition will be constructed first if the bond passes this November. This area would then be used to rotate classes into new classroom spaces and not into something like portable classrooms. Kids Place would then move in following the completion of work at Northeast and after their lease extensions at the current location on the GRC campus.

If the bond were to fail in 2023 but pass in 2024, there would not be sufficient time to construct that addition to use it in the rotation due to the lease extensions for the current Kids Place location expiring. This would then require that the project incorporate portable classrooms, which would increase the project's cost, cause significantly more disruption, and put teachers and students in a position to transition between buildings for things like specials and lunch regardless of weather and introduce a security/safety issue.

**17. How could energy inefficiency impact the school district's budget?**

Older buildings often lack energy-efficient systems. Delaying upgrades can lead to higher energy costs, straining the school district's budget and diverting resources from educational programs.

**18. Could the lack of funding affect educational opportunities for students?**

The lack of funding may limit opportunities such as modern classrooms, technology, and specialized learning spaces, which would be potentially disadvantageous to students.

**19. Is there a connection between school facilities and property values?**

Schools are a key factor in property values. A decline in school quality due to delayed improvements can impact property values in the district.

**20. How might teacher and staff morale be affected by outdated facilities and limited resources?**

Outdated facilities and a lack of resources can affect teacher and staff morale, which, in turn, can impact the quality of education and staff retention.

**21. Could delaying improvements put the district at a competitive disadvantage?**

Districts with modern facilities and resources may attract families and educators from districts facing challenges due to delayed improvements. Several districts around Glenwood are improving their facilities and choosing a district has become a competitive process for districts in having families choose them over another district.