

Baker School District 5J
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District Will Ask Voter Approval of Bond

The Baker School Board will seek voter approval in May of a \$4 million capital construction bond to upgrade aging maintenance systems throughout the district. The proposed bond also includes funds to add a cafeteria and kitchen at Baker Middle School, which is the only school in the district without those facilities.

If the bond measure is approved, the district will receive a \$4 million state matching grant, doubling the amount of funds available for bond projects. The district also plans to contribute \$4 million from its Capital Projects and Student Investment Account funds toward bond projects.

The proposed bond would be repaid over five years, costing property owners approximately \$0.66 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. That amounts to about \$66 per year or \$5.50 per month on a home assessed at \$100,000.

The Board originally planned to seek a \$7.5 million bond in May 2020 but withdrew the measure over the economic uncertainty caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. Although the pandemic continues, Board members said aging maintenance systems and continued difficulties in maintaining them spurred their decision to move ahead with a scaled-down proposal. The opportunity to receive a \$4 million grant to help fund bond projects was another incentive.

Several schools still have their original heating units and steam piping. After 60-70 years of use, the steam pipes are corroded, and radiators and fan coil units are obsolete. Maintenance staff cannibalize parts from decommissioned units in order to make repairs because new parts are no longer available.

If the proposed bond is approved, the district plans to appoint a Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee to monitor the progress of the bond and provide project oversight. That committee would report back to the School Board on a regular basis.

Key components of the proposed bond include:

The Baker 5J schools enhance community vitality by providing opportunities for rewarding, individual educational experiences.

- Replace mechanical systems and upgrade electrical service at all schools to improve heating, cooling and ventilation
- Construct approximately 5,000-square-foot multipurpose building at Baker Middle School for use as a cafeteria/kitchen
- Upgrade security and access systems at all schools, including key card systems to control access to buildings, door sensors, upgraded security cameras, upgraded public address systems with full campus coverage and upgraded fire alarm systems
- Add secure entry vestibules at Brooklyn and South Baker schools
- Replace the roof at South Baker Intermediate School

About the Baker School District

Nationally recognized Baker School District 5J (BSD) is a major employer in Baker City, OR, serving 1,700 students locally with an additional 3,000 online students across the state of Oregon. Through enterprising, collaborative endeavors, BSD is creating an innovative educational foundation for future Oregonians. BSD believes strong school collaboration with local partners enables us to create vibrant communities that support lifelong learners.