

In Session with the “Oriole” Superintendent

By Guest Writer: Lee Wheaton, President, Charlotte Board of Education

November 6th Bond Election

November 6th is an important day for Charlotte Public School’s students and their families. As a member of the Board of Education, I encourage all voters to become familiar with the bond proposal.

The scope of the bond impacts every student in our school system! The Bond Steering Committee’s recommendation to the board last spring set out an ambitious, but fiscally prudent plan to MAINTAIN our school district’s assets (buildings, fields and paved areas) so that their life is extended and quality maintained. As one of the few districts in our area that doesn’t have an annual “sinking fund” millage (usually .5 to 1.0 mill levied each year), this bond is the only way large maintenance funds can be generated. Whether it’s the pool, our heating, cooling and water system, or the parking lots and drives – maintenance is needed and it’s expensive. Large scale expenses, done out of our annual budget, erode our ability to provide quality materials and staff for our students.

The reasonable fund equity the district maintains is vital to the overall financial strength of the district and is our only buffer to meet unexpected emergencies. In 2017, the district had to buy two (2) new buses during the year. This nearly \$175,000 emergency purchase was possible because we have a fund equity. This is an example but hardly the only one in the recent past.

The Bond Steering Committee also recommended, and the board approved as part of the November 6th bond proposal, a series of quality improvements that will improve the facilities for our students, their families and in some cases, the entire Charlotte community. Some of these are:

1. Classroom additions at Galewood Early Elementary and Washington Elementary that will allow us to abandon portable classrooms!
2. A new Charlotte High School gymnasium and activity room that will ease the late practice time situation that hurts our students.
3. A new Agricultural Sciences Pavilion replacing the barn we have now.
4. New tennis courts (8) so our students can be on an equal footing with all other mid-Michigan districts.
5. Improving Galewood’s entrance to make it safe and secure for students.
6. Many others, including school owned band instruments, classroom furniture and school buses.

Your Board of Education is unanimous in their support of this proposal. Raising taxes, even a modest amount is never easy or popular with all. We understand that, but our students are worth the investment!

Please vote on November 6th!