

Fern Ridge School District Bond FAQ

(13 Feb 2019)

1. Is this ballot measure for a bond?

- Yes. A motivated group of FRSD parents and community members began to meet regularly and research ways to upgrade, and increase the number of, FRSD athletic facilities in the Spring of 2018. They brought their work to the FRSD School Board in September of 2018 for consideration. The board asked for some informal data around the level of community support on this topic and in October, they brought the Board that information which included 100's of signatures from supportive community members. In November, the Board agreed that they would put this decision in front of the voters in May of 2019.

2. How much would this cost me?

- The District's goal is to keep the rate at what we expected the rate to be following the 2014 bond. The expected average rate for that bond over the duration was approximately \$2.20 /\$1000 of assessed value. Over the last two years the rate has actually dropped by about \$.19. The passing of this bond is expected to return rates to the \$2.20 average.

3. What are the projects?

- There are two primary projects. A few years ago the District purchased the property immediately west of Elmira Elementary School. This property remains undeveloped. The first project is to develop that property into "play fields." The fields will contain baseball and softball fields, as well as soccer fields. The entire facility will be open for numerous youth and community activities year round. The second project is to install a turf athletic field at the current site of the EHS track. The facility will include a new 400 meter track, along with the appropriate grandstand, lighting, restrooms, fencing and storage. The change to turf will allow for greater usage and longevity.

4. Who came up with the list of bond projects?

- The parent group, in consultation with FRSD administration, came up with this list of bond projects that we knew could be financed, without raising taxes above the 20 year average.

5. It looks like there are some repairs listed. Doesn't the District take care of their athletic facilities?

- The facilities have been maintained well, but current capital needs for field space and activities far exceed the support the District's operating budget and facilities can provide. The current track was last resurfaced in 2013, and first put in back in 1972. The failure of the nearly 47 year old concrete substructure of the track prevents it from being resurfaced again without replacing the substructure. This project alone would be well over 1 M dollars and the district is not funded at a level that would allow that to occur without the assistance of a bond.

6. Why not continue using our current main athletic field and track:

- We could do this: however, as mentioned above the current substructure of the track is failing and will have to be replaced in a few years if EHS wants to continue to have a track facility. The main athletic field also could continue to be used, however, the level of use requested/needed far exceeds what that grass field can handle. Currently, Varsity and JV football games take place on this field, as well as Varsity and JV Soccer for both boys and girls. In addition, the District tries to make the field available for youth football teams on the weekends. This leaves very little time for the grass to repair itself, and in "wet years," the field becomes unplayable. The addition of a turf field would allow for maximum use by numerous groups seven days a week 365 days a year.

7. How will the District plan to replace the "turf" when it wears out.

- Currently, a turf field lasts anywhere from 10-12 years depending on use and care of the facility. Depending on the final size of the field, replacing the turf can cost anywhere from 400-500

thousand dollars. If the field is built, the district would ensure it was saving 40-50 thousand dollars a year to make certain that we could maintain and replace the field without another bond when it is time to replace it. While there is some maintenance for the turf, it is **much less** than that of a grass field. Those cost reductions would help fund the savings account for the turf's eventual replacement. Our current grass field requires thousands of dollars each year to be spent on mowing, fertilization, irrigation, irrigation repair, painting and repainting of lines for the various competitions. None of these expenses come with a turf field.

8. Will this plan buy more teachers or other staff?

- No. Bonds can only be used for the projects listed on the ballot. Bond funds cannot pay for salaries or operational costs.

9. What would be the potential ways the community could use the new facilities?

- Both of these new facilities/spaces could be easily accessed by the community. Protocols will be put in place regarding how to access these fields for a wide range of groups and community needs.

10. I do not have students in the District, why should it matter to me?

- Quality education isn't just an investment in our children, it's a cornerstone of our entire community. One of the most important factors families consider before moving to a new area is the quality of the schools in that area. When families move here because of the quality of life and the quality of schools the value of housing increases and businesses thrive. Our community relies on the strength of our educational system.

11. How is the District going to be able to maintain more fields than it has now with the same staff?

- The "man hours" spent each fall maintaining our current primary field for all soccer and football contests takes hundreds of man hours to maintain in the form of painting, mowing, irrigating and repair. Having a turf field for these contests will eliminate much of this time consuming and expensive work. In addition, the current infield of the track is some of the most challenging to irrigate and maintain, as it is the furthest distance from our cheapest water source, Fern Ridge Reservoir. We would no longer have a need to pump/move water to the far western side of the EHS campus, over ½ mile away from our irrigation intake.

12. Is turf as safe to play on as grass?

- A 2010 study looking at collegiate football injuries showed that FieldTurf may actually be safer than natural grass for injuries in general. This study also found no significant difference in knee injuries between surfaces. Another study in 2013 looked at injury rates between grass and artificial turf in female collegiate soccer players. This study actually showed a significantly lower total injury incidence rate and a lower rate of substantial injuries on FieldTurf. This study also showed no significant difference in knee injury rates between the two surfaces.

13. Will these improvements allow Fern Ridge to host regional competitions?

- As a part of the last bond, EHS added a second gymnasium, and the beautiful new Elmira Elementary School that has an outstanding gym. The addition of these facilities, has allowed our boys and girls basketball teams as well as our volleyball team to host tournaments during their season. This is a benefit to our players (who don't have to travel and get to play in front of their friends), to our parents (who have more opportunities to see their children play), and to both the District and team budgets. The District doesn't need to pay the cost of travel for our teams, and the events are used as fundraisers. Teams that enter the tournaments pay an entry fee, \$ is collected at the gate to enter, and proceeds from the snack bar support our Booster Club. The development of the property west of Elmira Elementary will do the same for both Baseball and Softball, as now each sport would have two quality fields where contests could be held over the spring and summer bringing revenue to the teams, and local businesses.