

Athens Area Schools
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Bus Bond Proposal FAQ's

On July 21, 2014, the Board of Education voted to place a bus bond proposal on the November 4 ballot. Following are some frequently asked questions and answers about our bus needs.



How many buses does our school district currently have?

- 6 making two elementary and two secondary runs daily
- 1 taking students to career center and math/science center
- 2 spares (and 1 smaller lift bus in reserve)



How old is our fleet, and how many miles do our buses have?

- Two buses are 3 years old, one is 6, one 9, and three are 14 years old.
- Our spares are 15 and 18 years old.
- Except for the 2012 models (c. 70,000 miles), none has fewer than 200,000 miles.



How many miles do our buses cover each year?

- We run around 125,000 miles per year on all buses, using nearly 17,000 gallons of diesel fuel.



Who transports students with special needs to out-of-district, center-based programs?

- Dean Transportation, using their own buses, transports students with special needs to out-of-district programs, through a consortium headed by the Calhoun Intermediate School District.



How expensive is it to maintain this aging fleet?

- For 2012-13 we spent over \$64,000 on fuel, almost \$8,500 on tires and batteries, and almost \$28,000 on supplies and parts, in addition to over \$33,000 in labor to maintain our fleet.
- Although fuel costs vary year to year, older models are less fuel-efficient and in greater need of maintenance beyond just tires and brakes.
- Road conditions are taking a toll on steering and suspension gear, tires, and tired, old frames.



Who maintains our buses?

- We hire a private mechanic who is also the full-time mechanic for another school district in the county. He works very hard to keep our buses on the road through blown engines, busted suspension and steering parts, brake jobs, body maintenance, etc., right in our own garage.



What else does the district do to take care of the buses we have?

- Buses are parked overnight in our covered, enclosed bus barn—something we are very fortunate to have.
- Drivers sweep and wash their buses, and check the essentials before and after each trip.



How many buses is the district asking for?

- We will purchase 6 new buses over the next four years (2 each in spring 2015 and summer 2016 and 2018).



How much will my taxes go up from the current debt levy?

- Property owners will actually see a decrease in December 2014 of 0.14 mill, a return to the current 4.5 mills in December 2015 (the first levy including the buses and last for the current building improvement bonds), and then only 0.81 mills for the next five years for the bus bonds.



What happens to my taxes if I vote yes on another building improvement bond in 2016?

- The Board of Education is committed to keeping our total debt levy at or below the current level of 4.5 mills. The next building improvement bond we ask for would be only 3.69 mills.



How much would the bond cost a homeowner with taxable value of \$50,000 or \$100,000?

- The cost would be \$7.00 or \$14.00 in the first year, respectively. For each of the next five years, it would be \$40.50 or \$81.00.



Please remember to vote November 4!