

# Sinking Fund Election Results

By, Mark D. Rosekrans, Superintendent of Charlotte Public Schools

On Tuesday August 4, 2015, the Charlotte community voted upon the sinking fund (building and site) millage for Charlotte Public Schools. The vote tally was 1612 NO votes, and 807 YES votes. Thus, the results of the election were not supported by the residents that voted for this school millage request.

Although the election results did not go in the school district's favor, the needs within the school district identified by the facility audit will not go away. Our Board of Education will need to have conversation about how to proceed regarding this sinking fund millage election going forward with the community. The Board and administration want to protect the facility investments already supported by the Charlotte community and this millage election is the means to do so for maintenance and repair projects.

I personally feel the school district has "done its homework". We have identified the maintenance issues the district will face for maintaining its facilities and grounds for the next twenty years with the associated costs attached in a detailed facility audit.

A sinking fund millage election is what is needed to take care of the almost 800,000 square feet of buildings and facilities the district is responsible for, along with 120 acres of grounds which include athletic fields, playgrounds, the stadium complex and all other site components including parking lots. Our district is in good shape now; the plan is to protect what we have in place. I believe this is good management and what you would expect us to do. Again, these maintenance projects will not go away for the school district and will have to be addressed over the next 20 years. The school district's general operating fund cannot support the facility maintenance, nor is it intended to be the revenue source to take care of them. The general fund is for annual operating expenses which is dedicated for and directed to educating our youth.

For clarification, the school district does do annual operation and maintenance work. These operational efforts and the associated revenue to address them annually are mostly associated with utilities (natural gas, electric and water) and the maintenance work is related to snow removal, lawn care and routine maintenance activities such as building cleaning efforts, mechanical / electrical preventive maintenance (filter changes, belt replacements, boiler chemicals, motor replacements, etc). These annual operation and maintenance efforts are routine for our district as well as for other school districts. We plan for these annually.

The projects associated with this recent sinking fund millage election request, focus on a plan that forecasts out significant infrastructure components over the next 20 years which are substantial in cost and scope.

The voters clearly did not support the millage at this time. The message was clear. What I am questioning and sincerely want feedback upon is: What does the community want the district to learn from this result, and how should we proceed knowing the needs are not going away now and into the future? Please share your thoughts with us at our "[contact us](#)" [link on our website](#). We must learn from these election results and formulate a plan that can be supported by the community. I think this is what the community would expect us to do – learn and plan. We must find balance and with that, some form of community support for maintaining district assets, which are community assets.

Go Orioles! Oriole Pride!