



In Michigan, a Sinking Fund is levied to fund school safety improvements, technology improvements, and the repair and construction of school buildings. It is a “pay as you go” system that does not require borrowing money or paying interest. The Sinking Fund millage is calculated using the taxable value of a home, which is usually about ½ of the assessed value. Under current legislation, a district can levy up to 3 mills for up to 10 years with voter approval. Sinking Funds cannot be used for things like regular maintenance, purchasing teaching supplies or textbooks, or paying teacher and administrator salaries. In fact, the law requires districts with Sinking Funds to keep those funds separate from other district accounts. Sinking Funds must receive a separate audit each year to ensure that the funds are being spent in the manner they were intended and according to the ballot language. However, having a Sinking Fund to pay for safety improvements, technology improvements, and repairs allows the district to preserve the money it receives from the state to support instruction, programs, and salaries.

Why is a Sinking Fund Millage Important?

The Sinking Fund Millage would help achieve the District’s goals of:

Assuring that its facilities are safe, secure, modern and attractive for the overall instruction and well-being of students, staff, and the community.

What is the difference between a bond and a Sinking Fund Millage?

A bond is a form of borrowing, which means taxpayers pay back the borrowed funds over a period of years with interest. Sinking Fund millage is levied, not borrowed, which means the revenues are generated from a tax and do not include the district taking on additional debt or interest expense.

When was the last Sinking Fund for WB-RC Area School District?

WB-RC Area School District has had a Sinking Fund for eight years and has used the Sinking Fund Revenues to pay the costs for repairs and upgrades of District buildings which would have otherwise come from the general fund budget.

How much is the Sinking Fund?

WB-RC Area Schools is proposing renewing the Sinking Fund at the existing rate of 0.668 mills for another eight (8) years.

What does that mean to me?

1 mill would be 1/1000 of the taxable value. For example, if a home's taxable value is \$50,000 then you take (1/1000) x 50,000 = \$50 per year. In our case it is 0.6680 mills (0.668/1000) x \$50,000= \$33.40 per year, or \$2.78 per month. The chart below gives some examples:

	Home Taxable Value	Annual Cost (0.6680 mills)	Approximate Monthly Cost
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$16.70	\$1.39
\$75,000	\$37,500	\$25.05	\$2.09
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$33.40	\$2.78
\$125,000	\$62,500	\$41.75	\$3.48
\$150,000	\$75,000	\$50.10	\$4.18
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$66.80	\$5.57

What is on the May 6th ballot?

On May 6, 2025, voters in the WB-RC Area School District will be asked to consider renewing a 0.668 mill eight (8) year Sinking Fund. The Sinking Fund millage would generate approximately \$653,669 each year to be used for specific purposes identified in the proposal below.

How will the proposal appear on the ballot?

This is the wording:

WEST BRANCH-ROSE CITY AREA SCHOOLS SINKING FUND MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL
<p>This proposal will allow the school district to continue to levy the building and site sinking fund millage that expires with the 2025 tax levy.</p> <p>Shall the currently authorized millage rate of .6680 mill (\$0.6680 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) which may be assessed against all property in West Branch-Rose City Area Schools, Ogemaw, Gladwin and Oscoda Counties, Michigan, be renewed for a period of 8 years, 2026 to 2033, inclusive, to continue to provide for a sinking fund for school security improvements, for the acquisition or upgrading of technology, for the construction or repair of school buildings, for the purchase of real estate for sites for school buildings, and all other purposes authorized by law; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2026 is approximately \$653,669 (this is a renewal of millage that will expire with the 2025 tax levy)?</p>

What does your vote mean?

A **“Yes”** vote means you approve the ballot question that would allow the WB-RC Area School District to levy 0.6680 mills for a dedicated Sinking Fund to generate about \$653,669 each year for an eight (8) year period for necessary repair of school buildings.

A **“No”** vote would turn down the proposal.

How often do I have to pay this?

In the way your property taxes are currently billed and collected.

What will the Fund Millage revenues be used for?

If approved, Sinking Fund Millage revenues would be used for:

- Smart Boot Security System for Classrooms and Installation (\$395,000)
- Boilers/heating System at OHHS (\$2.5 Million)
- Boilers/heating System at Surline (\$1.5 Million)
- Interior Door Upgrades at Surline Middle School (\$70,000)
- Roof Replacements (not previously completed) (\$411,000)
- Replace remaining original lighting at OHHS (\$250,000)
- Sanitary Line Replacement at Surline (\$45,000)

Historically – What have the Sinking Fund Millage revenues been used for?

Over the last 8 years, WB-RC Schools used the sinking fund money for the following projects:

- Redesigned Front Entrances with Secured Vestibules – all schools
- Redesigned Drop-Off/Pick Up Area at Surline Elementary School
- Security Upgrades including key cards and cameras at every building
- Replaced Original Heating Control System with Energy Efficient Digital Controls
- Replaced Original and Aging Window and Doors with New Energy Efficient Materials
- Classroom Asbestos Abatement and Flooring Replacements
- Replaced sections of Flat Roof at OHHS
- Replacement of Aging Student and Classroom Technology
- Renovated Student Restrooms
- Replacement of Aging Interior Doors and Locks

What work was completed with the 2022 Bond Funds?

Bond funds allowed the District to modernize, expand, and improve our facilities. Great care was taken to keep the focus on projects that have been a great source of pride for our community: our Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that include Metals Shop, Building Trades, AgriScience, and Health Occupations, the pool, the auditorium, gymnasiums, and locker rooms.

How do I vote?

Absentee ballots will be available at the end of March. Early voting at the county courthouse begins 9 days before the election. On election day, May 6, 2025, please remember to vote.

Where do I get more information?

Thank you for considering this very important WB-RC Area Schools ballot proposal. If you have questions, you can always call the Superintendent's Office at 989-343-2001.



The SmartBoot System is a comprehensive school lockdown and building security system that combines both physical and technological deterrents. It is designed to keep building occupants safe while providing first responders with the tools and critical information they need to quickly and effectively respond in an emergency. With three modes of protection and instant lockdown notifications for local law enforcement, The SmartBoot System prepares any facility for any situation.

[This flyer paid for by West Branch - Rose City Area Schools, March 2025
960 S. M-33, West Branch, MI 48661 989-343-2000]