Bond 2026 Q and A

1. **I noticed there was land on the last bond and not on this one, what happened?**
   The district still plans to purchase additional land for future growth. That goal has not changed; the district simply chose a different financing approach. By funding the land purchase separately, more bond dollars can be directed toward projects that benefit students and staff today.

2. **Why are some of the projects on this project different from the last bond?**
   The bond committee listened closely to all the valuable feedback that was shared after the last bond vote, and the committee made some adjustments based directly on the input.

3. **Why is the baseball and softball complex not on this bond?**
   The baseball and softball locker rooms and the complex parking lot expansion are on the current bond. Construction on this project is scheduled to begin in September.

4. ***When will AG get a new facility?***
   The district is working to secure a land purchase so they can build an additional elementary school and a new AG facility. After the land has been acquired, then plans for the new facility will begin.

5. **Why are athletics still on this bond?**
   Athletics are part of the student experience in Newcastle. The bond committee has tried to find a balance between instructional facility upgrades and athletic upgrades.

6. **Will my property taxes go up?**
   Property taxes will stay consistent at 36 mills. This is for the school taxes (sinking fund only). It does not include any property valuation increase by the county.

7. **What additional costs are included in the bond proposition? The cost allocated per project seems inflated.**
   All of the cost projections for each project include: architect fees, construction fees, and bond fees. The track project only includes bond issuance costs in

addition to the construction estimate. To account for future price increases and market uncertainty, all project estimates include a 12% contingency. This helps ensure the district can complete the projects even if material and construction costs rise before work begins.

8. **How is this bond connected to the 2022 bond issue?**

- *The 2025 bond would be paid off concurrently with the existing 2022 bond, so their maturities align*
- *Because of conservative planning, the 2022 bond is projected to finish paying off two years early (by 2029) and it sets up the district for a $100 million bond without changing the millage rate.*

9. **When will the bond vote take place?**
   The bond election is scheduled for August 25, 2026.

10. **Why are these projects needed?**

- *Safe rooms are needed to help keep students safe during severe weather. As we know, Oklahoma regularly experiences severe storms, and in November 2024 a tornado damaged the elementary gym roof, further reinforcing this need. This area of the school currently has limited safe room coverage compared to other parts of the campus.*

- *The restrooms, flooring and lighting are in need of significant upgrades at the 2nd and 3rd grade building.*

- *The track facility is outdated and does not meet current needs and poses a safety concern.*

- *Our aviation program is absolutely thriving! We need to expand the space to welcome all the students eager to join while offering a more hands-on approach to aviation.*

- *As our community grows, so does our bus fleet. We need to add parking and charging stations to keep our transportation running smoothly and safely.*

- *Soccer is one of our fastest-growing programs, and our athletes desperately need supportive facilities. We'll be building a new soccer locker room, a concession stand, and highly requested additional stadium restrooms for all our spectators.*

11. **How many votes are needed for the bond to pass?**

    School bond elections have to pass by a 60% supermajority vote.
    In the last bond election, we needed 66 more YES votes in order for it to pass.

12. **Why do school districts need bonds?**

    Bonds allow schools to make capital improvements such as build new buildings, renovations to existing buildings, HVAC replacements, safety and security improvements, textbooks, technology upgrades, and buses. These are items that districts can not afford by using their building fund allocation alone.

13. **Can't districts just manage their General Fund money better and save for these projects?**

    Under 70 O.S. § 1-117, expenditures from the General Fund must be noncapital in nature. Because of these legal restrictions, General Fund dollars cannot be used for capital improvements or major facility construction projects.

14. **How were these projects chosen?**

    See RACER sheet

15. **Why can't we use this money to pay teachers more?**

    Per state statute bond dollars can only be used for capital improvement projects and can not be used for salaries.

16. **What is a sinking fund?**

The sinking fund is a line item on your property tax bill that is designated only to the repayment of a school bond. The calculation is based on millage.

How much will each project cost?

Improvements at the elementary school include additional classrooms to serve as a storm shelter in the 4th/5th grade wing, and restroom and flooring improvements in the 2nd/3rd grade wing: $5,730,000.

Track and Field improvements: $905,000.

Aviation classroom expansion: $ 1,715,000.

Soccer locker rooms building to include restrooms and concession stand: $5,405,000.

Transportation Facility upgrades: $1,245,000.

17. **Who oversees spending?** The superintendent and the school board.

18. **Why not use existing money?** The district does not receive enough building fund money for significant capital improvements

19. **Why should we support this bond?** This bond addresses several safety needs of the district while addressing facilities that need to be upgraded to prepare for additional growth of the district.