

Let us take a closer look at the high school portion of this bond issue:

- *New science rooms and labs.
*done as part of 1997 bond issue
- *New robotics/STEM /wood shop area
*wood shop area renovated 1998-1999
- * New art room
*art room renovated 1998 - 1999
- * New bathrooms and corridors
*done as part of 1997 bond issue
- * New media center
*renovated 1998-1999
- *New kitchen and cafeteria
*renovated 1998-1999
- *New classrooms and learning spaces
*done as part of 1997 bond issue
- *New athletic locker rooms
*done as part of 1997 bond issue
- *New auditorium
*auditorium renovated 1998-1999
- *New parking lots and improved traffic flow
*done as part of 1997 bond issue
- *Remove portables and move tennis courts to the team competition location behind the middle school
* this would only have to be done if a new high school is built.

As you can see, almost everything they want now was part of the **\$12,990,000** 1997 bond issue [over **\$7 million** of this 1997 bond issue was spent for the additions and renovations to the high school] and the two other bond issues passed in 2003 and 2010.

We believe the real reason our school board and school administration want to demolish the current high school is because the State of Michigan will not allow them to build their new high school unless some of our current facilities are demolished. The state will not allow our school district to overbuild and waste taxpayers' money simply because they **want** a new high school. The state requires that the school district facilities **must** be relevant to the district's student count. The State of Michigan's official web site shows that the Fruitport school district's student population has been **declining** steadily, year after year after year. Our student count has declined from **3221** in 2005-2006 to **2784** in 2016-2017. This is why the State of Michigan will not allow them to build new classrooms, **unless current classrooms are demolished**, even if the current classrooms are still serviceable and functional. Our current high school may not be fancy or glamorous, but it is still practical and perfectly usable for classroom instruction.

Since 2008-2009, when our school officials told us that we desperately needed a new high school, our high school student count has declined from **962** in 2008-09 to **846** in 2015-16. Again, these figures are from the official state of Michigan website. And with the reduction in the number of students attending the high school, it would seem that there would be more rooms available for the robotics class and other needs.

Alternative proposals

We believe that there are alternative proposals that should be considered before we spend **\$49,000,000** for a new high school that is not needed.

- 1-the current auditorium could be expanded
- 2-a new robotics/STEM area could be constructed
- 3-new parking can be created behind the current high school for minimal cost
- 4-the portable units and the tennis courts could be relocated for minimal cost, if this is really needed.

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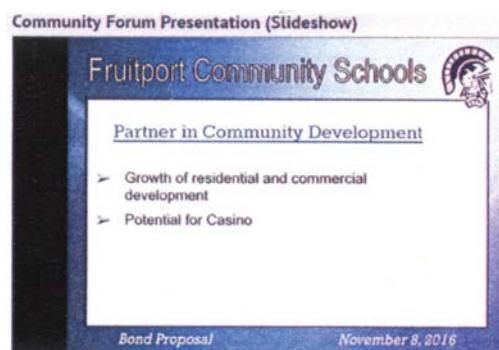
We believe the above items 1-4, plus **all** the items projected for the other schools, could be accomplished for **less than a 1/2 mill increase in taxes**. According to the schools' calculations, one additional half mill would generate over \$6,500,000. [\$51,315,000 divided by 3.9 mills = \$13,157,692 per mill divided by 1/2 = \$6,578,846]. The school administration is requesting approximately 1.3 million dollars for work to be done at Shettler School, Beach School, Edgewood School, and the middle school and \$270,000 for new buses [see image below]. That would leave over \$5,000,000 [minus architectural fees and bond costs] for the above listed 1-4 items. There is absolutely no valid reason to spend \$49,000,000 for a new high school when everything the school administration says we **need**, can be accomplished for just a few million dollars. Even a **worst case** scenario cannot justify over a one mill increase in school taxes.

More misleading information

THE BOND PROPOSAL WOULD:
(Information from school)

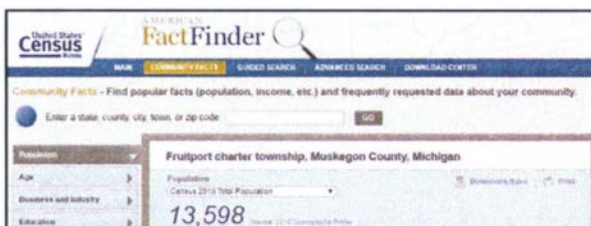
- > **Replace the 1950's portion of the high school with new construction that would attach to the 1990's additions. Newer science wing and gym would remain. (\$49 million)**
- > Address issues in each building from the Facilities Master Assessment which can be seen in its entirety at: <http://www.fruitportschools.net/community/facilities-master-plan/bond-financial-description/> (\$1.3 million)
- > Replace aging buses. (\$270,000)

This school administration is telling us that our community is going to pay for this \$49,000,000



high school through "growth of residential and commercial development" and "potential for casino" [see image above].

From 2000 to 2010, our community averaged a population increase of approximately 106 residents per year, less than a 1% increase per year. The census bureau's 5 year growth estimate for Fruitport township is less than 9 residents per year [see images below].



In 2009, the Fruitport school administration put forth a bond proposal that included building a new high school. The existing high school was to be remodeled into a 5/6 and 7/8 Intermediate school. Before this could be done, a study was conducted by the Fruitport school's architect, GMB Architects and Engineers, to determine the condition of the high school. This study basically says that Fruitport High School was in good condition, and that the conversion to a 5/6 and 7/8 Intermediate school could



What has increased in Fruitport township from 2000 to 2014 has been the poverty level, from 6.6% in 2000 to 8.3% in 2014 [source-U.S. Census Bureau]. The poverty level for seniors over 65 has increased from 4.8% in 2000 to 6.7% in 2014. For our kids attending Fruitport Community Schools, 18 years or younger, the poverty level has increased from 8% in 2000 to 10.2% in 2014. [source: U.S. Census Bureau]

If the school administration's bond proposal is passed, this will mean higher taxes for homeowners and businesses alike. It will also mean higher taxes for commercial and business entities. Businesses that rent will see their rent increased by their landlords, and so they will have to increase their prices to their customers. Families who rent will see their rent increased by their landlords as well, as the landlords for both residential and commercial properties will not be able to absorb the increase in taxes themselves, but will have to pass it on to their renters. This will mean that many Fruitport school district families, already on tight budgets, will have to pay more for rent, food, clothes, and other necessities out of an already diminished paycheck.

According to the U.S. census bureau, the median household income in Fruitport township increases approximately \$412 per year. The median price of a home in Fruitport township is \$141,000.

According to the school district's calculations, if this bond proposal passes, the increase in school taxes on a \$141,000 home will be \$275 out of the \$412 yearly median increase in income. This is 68% of the yearly median household income increase!

Will the school administration and their supporters please explain how this will be beneficial to our kids, our grand kids and their futures. How will this be beneficial to many of our seniors over 65 who are living on fixed incomes and struggling to make ends meet now? Did the school administration and their handpicked committee even discuss these issues?

Now we come to the second factor of how the administration says this new \$49,000,000 high school will be paid for. The "potential for casino". Does anything more really have to be said? The word **potential** says it all. It means possible as opposed to actual. And, as the old saying says, "anything is possible, but nothing is certain."

be accomplished with only moderate and minor remodeling. No major remodeling would be necessary! Now, only 8 years later, we are being told that Fruitport High School is in such bad condition, that it must be demolished and a new high school built. How can a school building deteriorate so much in such a short time? The truth is that our current high school is not in the terrible condition our school administration claims. The school administration has a copy of the GMB study, as we do. Ask them to post it on their website.