



WEST OTTAWA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Friends,

Even though it has only been six weeks since my last bond update, much has been accomplished in the way of planning and the organization of the projects to be completed. Before I launch into the bond update, I do want to share a few of the great things happening here at West Ottawa.

I am pleased to share that Lakeshore Elementary is one of 8 in Michigan and 337 nationwide to be named a National Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education. Of the eight Michigan schools, only one other school is on this side of the state. Lakeshore was recognized as an Exemplary High Performing School, as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. This is an outstanding recognition for all of the hard work, dedication and commitment to the students of Lakeshore by Principal Jens Milobinski and the staff. Please view the [press release](#) on our website for more information.

I also want to make you aware that we finished last fiscal year with a surplus of \$885,000. This was made possible by not having to use general fund dollars to purchase buses. Our budget this year is balanced and may be a little better depending on the weather. In just three years, we have been able to eliminate a deficit of \$7 million while keeping our fund balance at 18%. As I shared in my last update, this was a major factor in securing a great credit rating and interest rate in the sale of the bonds.

As I mentioned above, we have been hard at work in the planning phase of the construction. You might recall we were planning on just one project to start around spring break and then another during the summer months. We are pleased to share that we are going to bid out the secured entrances at Pine Creek, Lakeshore, Woodside, Great Lakes and Lakewood this January with work to be completed next summer. Plans were developed after input from each of the buildings and then shared with the board at our regular meeting last week. The drawings are now available on the [bond update page](#) of our website.

A team of teachers, parents, and administration has been assembled to meet with GMB to design the secured entrance, parent and bus drop offs, and additional parking at Waukazoo. Because of the extensive nature of the work to be done (possibly relocating the office), this project will be not be completed until the summer of 2016.

A team will also be established at Mac Bay just after the first of the year to begin the design work. As you will recall, the Mac Bay work is the largest single project within the work to be done.

Preparing Students to be College, Career and Life Ready!

Our Tech Design teams continue to meet. We currently have 62 teachers piloting technology of one design or another in their classrooms. Data is being gathered and evaluated by the teams and we are learning what works well and what does not. This feedback from the staff is proving to be invaluable as we plan. The goal is to get devices in teachers hands before students. Currently, we are planning to have teacher devices installed in the high school and 4th and 5th grades next summer. An update will be made at our next board meeting by members of the teams.

The replacement to the roof at Lakeshore is progressing nicely after a brief delay due to the rain this fall. It should be completed in the next couple of weeks.

I am also pleased to announce that our bond update page is now accessible via the homepage of our website by clicking on the Investing in Our Community scrolling photos or icon. Here is a direct link to the [bond update page](#).

As projects progress we will be posting updates, videos and drawings for your perusal.

We will be giving updates on various phases of the projects at our regularly scheduled board meetings. Please feel free to attend for a more detailed update.

Again, I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation for your continued support. There is much work to be done in the planning, design and construction of the projects provided by the bond. Please know we take this work very seriously while keeping our number one focus on our mission of preparing each and every one of our students to be College, Career and Life Ready.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Martin
Superintendent of Schools