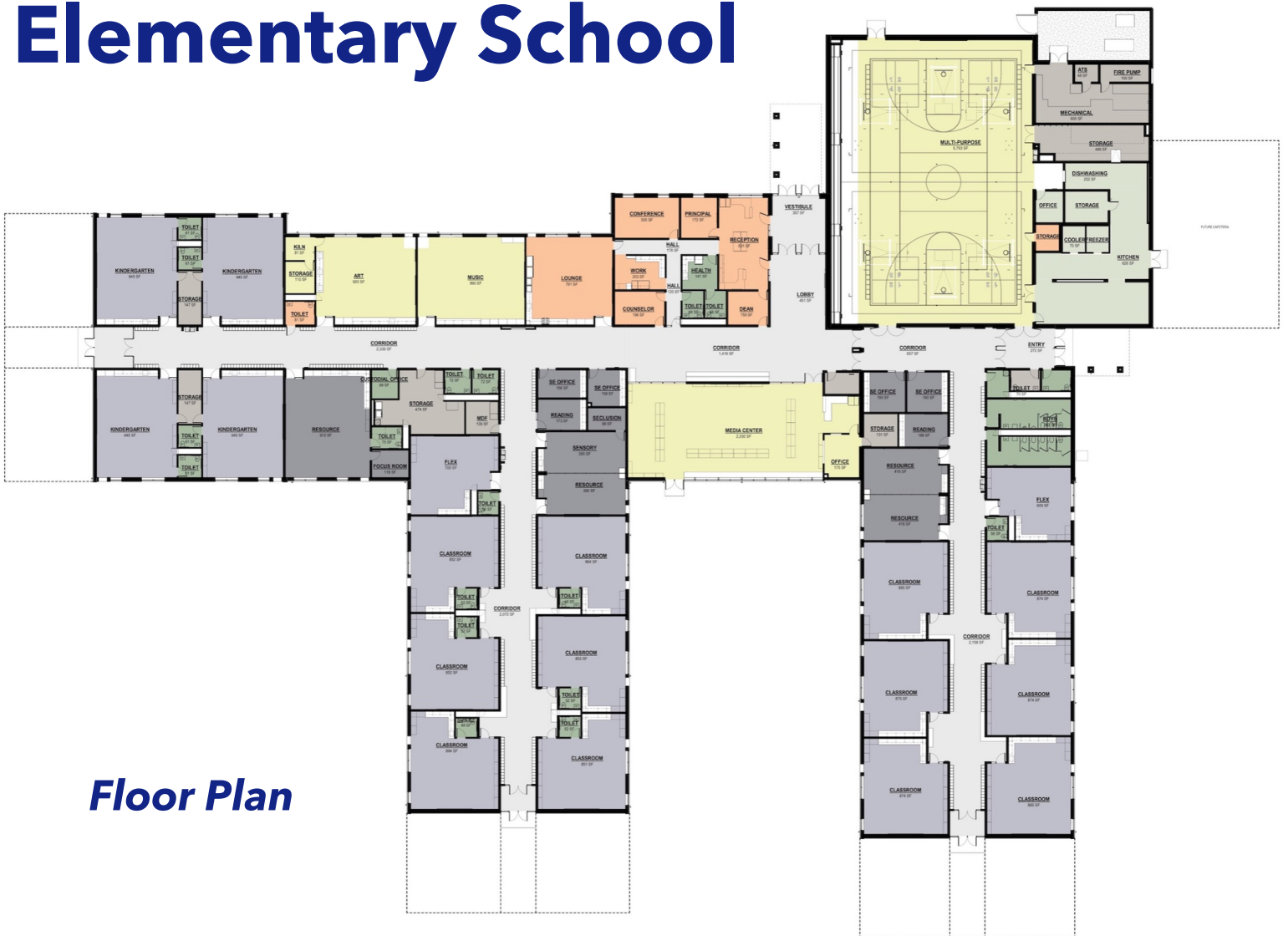


# BOND UPDATE

July 2023

Building a Better School System for the Community

## The New Wacousta Elementary School



**Floor Plan**

## Timeline for the New Wacousta Elementary School

The goal is to have the new Wacousta Elementary School built by the end of August 2024 and ready for students and staff to use for the 2024-2025 school year. District staff and Wacousta staff have been working with our partners to design the new school for the past year. Site work – moving earth, preparing to build the new entrance, etc. – began July 2023, and the district is planning a brief groundbreaking ceremony in August 2023 to mark the beginning of construction on the new Wacousta Elementary School.

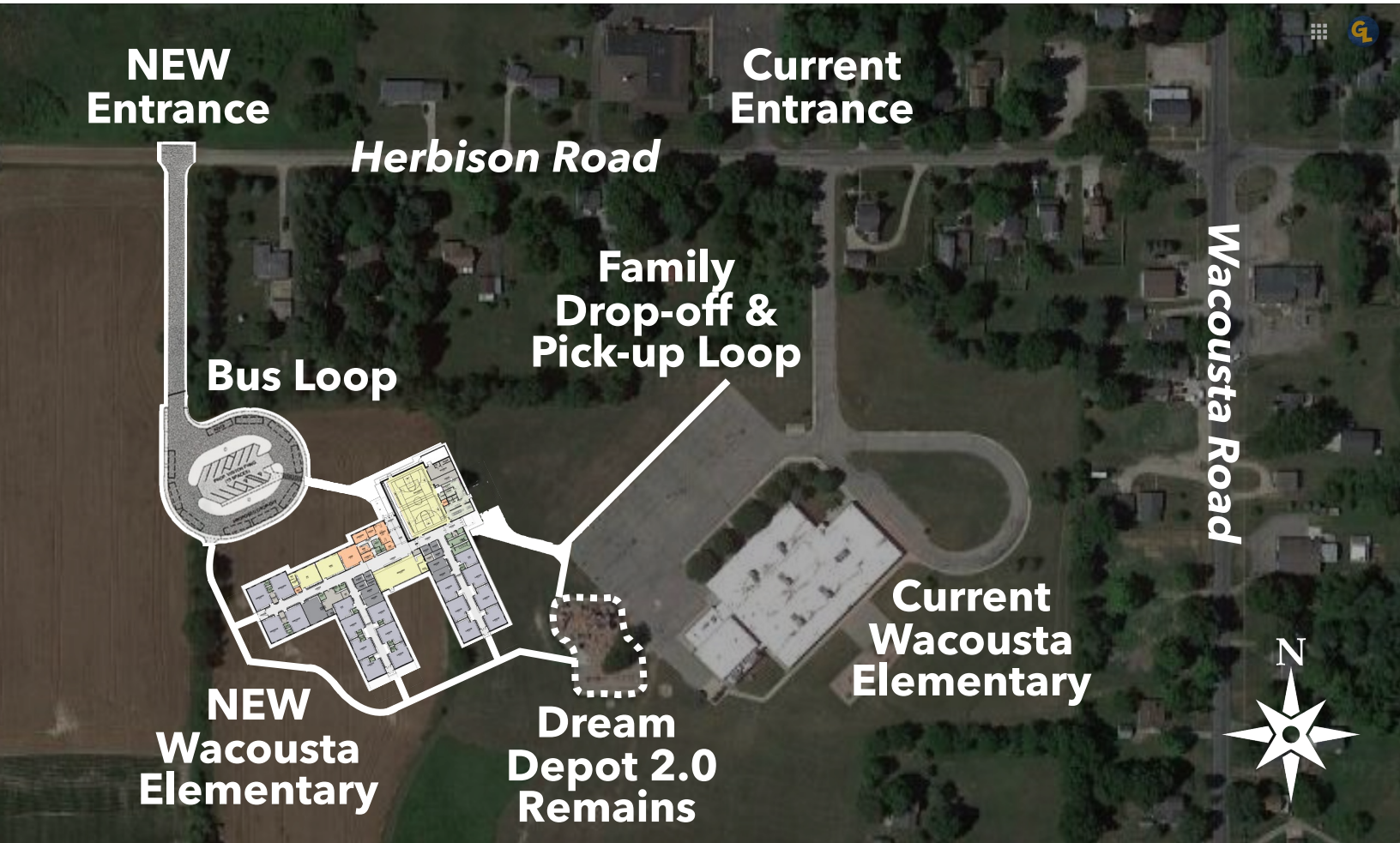


*Architectural Rendering*

## What will happen to the current building?

There is not yet a definitive answer to what will happen to the current building. Money was reserved in the bond budget for the demolition of the current Wacousta. However, Watertown Charter Township asked about purchasing the current Wacousta to use as their new township offices. At their September 19, 2022 meeting, the Watertown Charter Township Board of Trustees authorized their Township Manager to begin negotiations. Then at the October 10, 2022 meeting, the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education authorized Superintendent Bill Barnes to begin negotiations with Watertown Charter Township on the possible sale of the current Wacousta building. The School Board and Superintendent discussed the sale of Wacousta again at the February 13, 2023 meeting, and there was agreement to get an appraisal and to continue negotiations. If an agreement between the school district and township can be reached, not only will it free up the bond funds that were set aside for the demolition of the current building so they could be used for other bond expenditures, but it also will represent a great partnership between the school district and its community.

## The Future Wacousta Elementary School Campus



### Improving Traffic Flow and Pedestrian Safety

Adding a second entrance to the Wacousta Elementary School campus has been part of the thinking from the beginning in order to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety. Having two entrances will allow bus traffic and family traffic to be kept apart during the high-volume start of the day and end of the day. The new entrance – or west entrance – will be used for buses in the morning and in the afternoon. During the day, there will be visitor parking available so people can approach the main entrance easily. The current entrance – or the east entrance – will be used by families for drop-off and pick-up. During the day, the east parking lot will not be accessible to vehicles – similar to the parking lot connected to Green Street at Holbrook Elementary – so kids can safely play and use the basketball hoops. The east lot will also provide parking for after-school events (parent-teacher conferences, community use of the new multipurpose gym, etc.).

### Academic Wings Designed with Future Growth in Mind

Both the academic wings on the south side of the new school have been designed to make possible future growth as easy as possible to accommodate. The plan for the new building is that if additional classrooms are needed in the future, they could be added with relative ease by simply extending one of the north-south hallways and adding them there – no major redesigning needed! The same is true for the Kindergarten pod of classrooms on the west side of the new school.

## The New Wacousta

The new Wacousta Elementary School is designed for grades K-4. The new school will replace the existing outdated, open-plan building. It will provide age-appropriate, secure classrooms along with the technology infrastructure to maximize connectivity, access, and learning. The building will have up-to-date mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems that increase operational efficiencies.



*Architectural Rendering*



*Architectural Rendering*

## New Secure Entrance

There will be a secure entrance at the new Wacousta Elementary School. Once the school day has started, people must be buzzed in by the school office to gain entry. People will not get access to the school until they have reported to the office and completed a check with our Raptor Visitor Management System. The Raptor system enhances safety by screening visitors, flagging concerns, and issuing visitor badges.

## New School Office

The new school office at Wacousta will welcome students, families, and the community. In addition to the reception area for two secretaries, there will be offices for the principal, dean of students, and counselor. Plus there will be a work room, conference room, and private staff bathroom. There is also a health room (called a "sick room" by some) with a secure space to store student medications and its own bathroom. The office will be adjacent to the staff lounge.



*Architectural Rendering*

## New Classrooms

There will be 16 classrooms in the new school, plus a dedicated art classroom and music classroom. There will also be two additional flex classrooms, one large resource room, three smaller resource rooms, one sensory room, and offices for reading services and other specialized services. There will be a private bathroom inside each classroom for students in grades K-2, and there will be traditional bathrooms for students in grades 3-4.



## New Library

The library is at the center of the current, open-design Wacousta, and the plan for the new library will carry forward Wacousta's open tradition. The new library will also be in the center of the building, nestled between the K-2 classroom wing and the 3-4 classroom wing. The large hallway-library windows will add an open feeling to the space. The library will be a welcoming place for students, PTIA meetings, staff meetings, and more.

## New Multipurpose Gym

During the school day, the new multipurpose gym will be used for physical education classes and for a cafeteria at school meal times. After school hours, the space can be used by our growing community recreation program as an additional gym for the activities it offers. The gym will have a separate entrance, vestibule, and bathroom, allowing it to be used without giving people access to the rest of the school building.



## Phase 1 is Done

Major projects **completed** in Phase 1:

- Holbrook Transformed into a K-4 Elementary School
- Beagle Transformed into a 7-8 Middle School
- NEW Competition Pool Built
- M-43 Connection Added to the Secondary Campus

## Phase 2 is Now

Projects done or being done in Phase 2:

- NEW Track & Field Facility Built
- Fine Arts & Athletic Improvements at Grand Ledge High School
- Delta Center Elementary Improvements, including Connection to Michigan Ave.
- Build NEW Wacousta Elementary

## Phase 3 Priorities

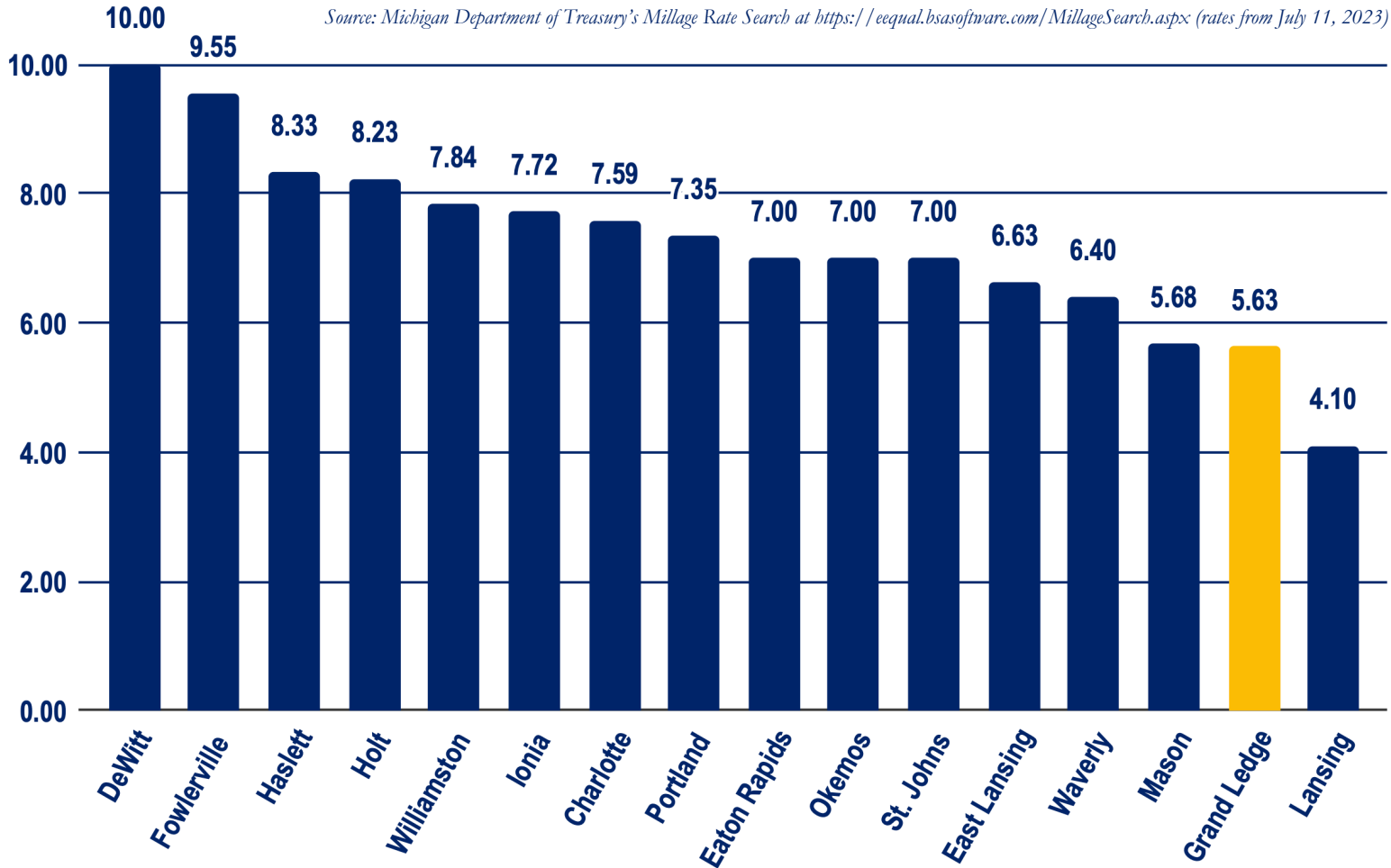
Some project priorities for Phase 3:

- Districtwide HVAC (heating & cooling)
  - Safety & Security Upgrades
  - Roofs at GLHS, Hayes, & Neff
  - Road & Parking Lot Improvements for Hayes & Willow Ridge
  - Add NEW Classrooms to Willow Ridge
- Full list of priorities at [GLcomets.net/Bond](https://GLcomets.net/Bond)

## GLPS Debt Millage Rate is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lowest in the CAAC!

The community passed both bond proposals on November 6, 2018, yet Grand Ledge Public Schools has the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest debt millage tax rate in the Capital Area Activities Conference (CAAC). Grand Ledge Public Schools is fiscally responsible with the tax-payers' money and provides a great value as we educate our community's children.

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury's Millage Rate Search at <https://equal.bsasoftware.com/MillageSearch.aspx> (rates from July 11, 2023)



### For More Information...

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