



**Romeo Community Schools
Community Engagement Findings
Related to a Facilities Bond Proposal
April 2025**



Background

During April 2025, MISchoolresearch, a Michigan-based research firm, conducted a series of focus panels and a community survey on behalf of Romeo Community Schools. The purpose of this engagement process was to identify citizen questions, comments, and support for a proposed November 2025 facilities bond proposal.

Seven focus panel sessions were conducted online using virtual conference software, and three additional sessions were conducted in person.

The online survey was open to all community members, parents, employees, and secondary students. Three hundred seventy-two (372) individuals responded to the survey.

In the focus panel session and community survey, participants watched a pre-recorded video by Superintendent Todd Robinson. The pre-recorded video provided background information about proposed projects being considered for the November 2025 bond proposal. After the video, participants were asked questions regarding their opinions about the projects under consideration. The most frequent feedback is categorized into the nine areas of inquiry.

1. Frequent questions or comments related to Infrastructure Improvements

In the Infrastructure Improvements category, most participants asked for clarification of various proposed bond projects, had questions related to infrastructure, or expressed support for the bond proposal and/or specific bond proposal projects.

- a. Clarification requests included suggestions related to classroom furniture, questions related to bus replacements, and requests to identify the proposed projects as “needs or wants.”
- b. Infrastructure questions related to leaking roofs, heating and cooling, classroom windows, and pick-up and drop-off concerns.
- c. Support-related feedback ranged from “everything proposed is necessary” to appreciation for proactive planning.

2. Frequent questions or comments related to Safety and Security

Most comments in the Safety and Security category included specific questions about existing or proposed safety and security projects, or made comments related to parking lots and traffic.

- a. Comments about safety and security included requests for more school resource officers, enforcement of existing protocols (such as closing windows and locking

doors), information about where additional security cameras will be located and who monitors them, and information about playground security.

- b. Comments related to parking lots centered on improvements, necessary repairs, and requests for improved lighting. Numerous citizens voiced concerns related to sidewalks and drop-off and pick-up loops.

3. Frequent questions or comments related to Learning Environment Enhancements

In the Learning Environment Enhancements category, most participants looked for clarification of proposed projects, asked questions related to facility additions, and made comments related to proposed learning enhancements.

- a. Participants questioned the need for additional renovations at Romeo High School and Powel Ninth Grade Academy, whether additional academy programs are being considered, and the need for additional special education classrooms at Hevel Elementary.
- b. Facility addition questions were related to the “why” behind an academy expansion at Romeo High School, student enrollment projections, and a perceived need for more classrooms at Romeo Middle School.
- c. Learning enhancement comments centered on requests for more detailed information about proposed media center renovations, and proposed upgrades to audio-visual systems and WiFi.

4. Frequent questions or comments related to Arts, Athletics & Play Areas

Most comments in the Arts, Athletics & Play Areas related to the need for more expenditures in the arts and play areas, and fewer expenditures on athletics.

- a. Comments related to the arts centered on updating stage curtains and arts-related equipment. There were also several comments about future investments in auditoriums at all levels.
- b. Comments regarding play areas generally supported play area projects while referencing specific needs for fencing and improved playground equipment at several schools, particularly Amanda Moore, Hamilton Parsons, and Hevel.
- c. Comments related to athletics called for a pool and auxiliary gym at Romeo High School, questioned the need for artificial turf on practice fields, and suggested that investments in athletics must be balanced by investments in other areas of need, especially the arts.

5. Frequent responses related to: *What excites you most about the proposed bond proposal?*

Participants were generally excited about the wide variety of proposed facility enhancements.

Most participants said that “additions” excited them most about the bond proposal under consideration. They mentioned additions to the high school most frequently, i.e., an auxiliary gym and more instructional space. Participants also said they were excited about proposals for expanding the Powell 9th Grade Academy, enhancing the arts, construction at Hevel, technology updates, and expanding facilities to accommodate future growth.

6. Frequent responses related to: *What proposed projects do you need more information about?*

Participants said that they wanted more information about many of the proposed projects. Participants were looking for the ‘WHY’ behind each of the projects (e.g., why more athletic improvements, why the need for electrical system upgrades, why some projects were deferred, and why the costs are high).

There were also requests for a priority timeline and requests for specific information related to many of the proposed projects.

7. Frequent responses related to: *Are there any additional projects that should be considered for inclusion in the November 2025 bond proposal?*

Many of the additional projects mentioned by participants are already on the proposed project list. Beyond that, responses to the question included:

- Landscaping at all schools
- Water filter stations
- Construct a field house
- Renovate the Croswell gym and cafeteria
- Buy land for new schools (to accommodate future growth)
- Purchase additional chairs and desks for Romeo Middle School
- Stop bullying
- Better computers for students
- Expand support services (counselors, social workers, and special education staff)
- Address inadequate parking lots
- More metal detectors
- A bus tracking app

8. Frequent responses to: *Would you favor or oppose a zero tax-rate increase bond proposal on the November 2025 ballot?*

The bottom line is that most Romeo Community Schools residents (73%) said that they would support a zero tax-rate increase bond proposal on the November 2025 ballot.

Eleven percent said they would oppose such a proposal, and 16 percent provided a “not sure/can’t say” response.

9. If opposed/can’t say to *Would you favor or oppose...: Would you mind sharing why you feel that way?*

Participants in the “tend to oppose” or “not sure/can’t say” categories expressed a belief that projects were more “wants than needs” and, hence, not essential.

Participants opposed to the bond proposal simply said that “taxes are too high,” and that was their primary reason for opposing or being uncertain about the November 2025 bond proposal.

Responses to this question also indicate that there is a need to help residents understand how this bond proposal can result in a zero tax-rate increase.

Recommended Action Steps for Romeo Community Schools

1. 2021 Bond Communications - *Clarification and Updating*

- Topics include:
 - 2021 bond projects - progress updates.
 - Outstanding 2021 bond projects, future timeline.
 - Why is the school district pursuing another bond?
 - The prioritization of projects for the 2025 bond.
 - Deferred projects process.
- Communication methods (expanded options):
 - Increase social media presence and boost content as appropriate.
 - Short video clips (ex. progress updates and impact testimonials).
 - Routine updates to the website when projects are completed.
 - District and school-level communications (not in regular weekly update).
- Districtwide communications to reach the full community:
 - Mailings
 - Host in-person informational sessions.
 - Communications directing the community to the webpage.

2. 2025 Bond Informational Campaign Plan for the November Bond Proposal

- Provide a more detailed explanation of proposed projects for each facility.

- Explain how the proposed bond projects were identified and prioritized.
- Share current enrollment status/forecasting vs. community perceptions.
- Provide more information on the purchase of buses.
- Bond funding overview - (debt retirement, millage impact).
- Sinking fund connections.
- Consider establishing a building-level initiative to share information about the bond.
- Building specific communication efforts.