

Brazos ISD Bond FAQ 2025

1. How did the board come up with the current bond packages?

Beginning in 2022, a facilities committee was formed to explore Brazos ISD's infrastructure needs. The committee included administrators, an architect and engineer, maintenance personnel, and other district stakeholders. In the 2022–2023 school year, the district partnered with TASB to conduct a full facilities audit. That report identified over \$100 million in potential upgrades. Using this data, the Brazos ISD Board of Trustees carefully prioritized projects based on *needs vs. wants*, resulting in the current bond package proposals.

2. Where did we come up with the 15 Million dollar price point?

Fifteen million dollars is the **maximum** amount Brazos ISD can borrow **without increasing the current tax rate**. Any bond proposal exceeding \$15 million would legally require the district to ask voters to approve a tax rate increase. This proposal stays within the district's current financial capacity.

3. How is it possible to take out a 15 million dollar bond, but not increase the tax rate?

In 2005, after Brazos Elementary tragically burned down, voters approved a bond to rebuild both the elementary and junior high schools, which included a tax rate increase. That bond had a 30-year term. However, for the past 20 years, the district has made **extra payments** above the required minimum, saving hundreds of thousands in interest and paying down the debt much faster than scheduled.

Because of this, Brazos ISD can now issue a **new \$15 million bond** without needing to raise the tax rate—**thanks to responsible financial management by the school board over the past two decades**.

4. Why will the ballot say “THIS IS A TAX INCREASE”?

Texas law requires this language on all school bond ballots, regardless of whether the tax rate will actually increase. This requirement was passed by the **86th Texas Legislature**, and school districts **cannot change this wording**. However, it's important to note: **this bond will NOT increase the tax rate**.

5. Does this mean my school taxes will not go up?

Only if your property value increases.

Brazos ISD sets the tax rate, but your taxable value is determined by the county appraisal district. If your property value stays the same, your school taxes will not increase. However, if your home is appraised at a higher value, your total taxes may go up—even though the school's tax rate stays the same.

Good news: A proposed increase to the homestead exemption could lower school taxes for homeowners statewide if passed by the Legislature this year.

65 and older? Your school taxes are frozen.

6. Why doesn't this bond include a gym or auditorium?

The board focused on staying within the \$15 million cap to avoid increasing the tax rate. Proposition A focuses on academic spaces and essential facility maintenance, totaling about \$8.5 million. That left approximately \$6.5 million.

A new or expanded gym alone would cost between \$10–15 million, meaning the district would have to forgo nearly all other improvements to fund it. Instead, the board chose to prioritize needs that affect the greatest number of students.

That said, the conceptual site plan includes a designated space for a future gym, should funds become available.

7. Why are we getting artificial turf?

Installing turf is a strategic decision based on **cost-efficiency, maintenance savings, and increased field usability.**

Currently, the fields are maintained by district maintenance staff and coaches, pulling time and resources away from students. Turf requires significantly less upkeep, reducing long-term costs. It also allows more flexible scheduling and play during inclement weather.

The cost to replace just the practice field with grass was **estimated at \$750,000.** Turf eliminates that expense and provides a long-term solution.

8. We keep hearing talk about growth and new subdivisions, will this bond be enough for that growth?

No—this bond addresses current needs and capacity for the next 5 years.

While projections show that Brazos ISD enrollment could double in the next 10 years, we don't yet have the numbers to justify building new campuses. It would be unfair to ask today's taxpayers to fund buildings for students who aren't in the district yet.

This bond focuses on **upgrading and preserving existing facilities** and creating some capacity for **short-term growth**, all while keeping the **tax rate flat**.

9. What if I don't like the packages and want more included?

Everyone wants the best for Brazos ISD students—and that starts with safe, updated facilities. But we also know that many voters have made it clear: they won't support a bond if it increases their tax rate.

Right now, we have a unique opportunity. Thanks to years of responsible financial planning, Brazos ISD can address a wide range of facility needs **without raising the tax rate**.

There will always be opportunities to propose another bond in the future—but this is the only chance to make significant improvements while staying within the current rate. If the majority of taxpayers are unwilling to support a tax rate increase, this bond is the best path forward.

10. What happens if this bond doesn't pass?

Right now, we're putting temporary bandages on major maintenance issues—paying for them out of our everyday operating budget.

If something critical fails—like the wastewater treatment plant—the district would be forced to cover the \$1.5 million replacement cost using funds that aren't budgeted for emergencies. That could mean cutting or delaying other priorities like purchasing school buses, fixing roofs, or making classroom repairs.

This bond allows us to plan ahead and fix these problems the right way—without pulling from the funds we use to operate our schools day to day.