

# E~SPLOST Information and Frequently Asked Questions April 25, 2022

## 1. **What is an EDUCATION SPLOST (E-SPLOST)?**

An Education Special Purpose Location Option Sales Tax (E-SPLOST) allows local school districts the option to collect a one percent sales tax to help fund schools. It can be used to pay for capital projects, equipment, and to retire debt.

## 2. **When is the E-SPLOST vote?**

The election is Tuesday, May 24th, 2022. There will be an early voting period beginning May 2, 2022.

## 3. **Is the proposed E-SPLOST a new tax?**

This is ***NOT*** a new tax or an increase. The 1% sales tax for education has been in place continuously since 1998. The proposed E-SPLSOT continues the current 1% sales tax for education for five more years. Collection of the E-SPLOST extension would begin only after the current E-SPLOST ends on December 31, 2022.

## 4. **Why do we need to extend our current E-SPLOST?**

E-SPLOST will fund system-wide repair, maintenance, and improvements (roofs, HVAC units, etc.) at all facilities. Additionally, the E-SPLOST will fund purchases of technology, buses, and safety/security equipment for all facilities. Additionally, proposed projects include:

**St. George Elementary** - playground equipment and a bus canopy.

**Bethune Middle** - canopy at the parent pick/drop off area.

**Folkston Elementary** - a redesign of the parent pickup/bus loading area to improve traffic flow, additional shelving/cabinets/storage for classrooms, possible bus canopy in front for early buses if the redesign does not resolve early bus pickups being in front of the building.

Construction of a new **Charlton County High School**.

## 5. **Why an E-SPLOST?**

The E-SPLOST helps fund the cost of educational improvements in a way in which everyone contributes. The sales tax is paid by everyone who makes purchases in Charlton County, not just property owners.

## 6. **How much money would be raised and how long would this sales tax be in place?**

The E-SPLOST would raise approximately \$6.5 million based on current collection rates, and would last five (5) years.

**7. Why isn't the money being used for teacher salaries or curriculum development?**

State laws prohibit using E-SPLOST proceeds for salaries or instructional materials. However, passing this sales tax will free up funds to meet required financial obligations without having to rely on excessive ad valorem taxes.

**8. Has the current E-SPLOST been a success?**

**YES!** Below is a list of projects accomplished with the current E-SPLOST funds:

- Complete renovation at **St. George Elementary School**
- Construction of the new Board of Education building
- Replacement of lights at the Baseball and Football fields
- Construction of the livestock barn at **Charlton County High School**
- Playground equipment at **Bethune Middle School**
- Purchase of school buses and maintenance equipment

Funds from previous E-SPLOST collections funded numerous projects, including:

- Construction of **Bethune Middle School**,
- Construction of a Pre-K facility at **St. George Elementary School**,
- Renovation of kitchen/cafeteria and roof replacement at **St. George Elementary School**,
- HVAC replacements at **Folkston Elementary School**
- New Track at **Charlton County High School**
- Replacement of lights at the softball field at **Charlton County High School**
- Technology and equipment upgrades at all schools
- Purchase of new school buses and maintenance equipment
- Dozens of additional projects

**9. Why should people who do not have children in school support the E-SPLOST extension?**

The E-SPLOST extension keeps ad valorem taxes (property taxes) stable. Additionally, the children are not the only ones who benefit from good schools. The social and economic strength of a community are greatly influenced by the school system. Good schools mean well-prepared citizens, a strong labor market, and an inviting atmosphere for both living and working. One of the key questions asked by industrial /commercial or residential prospects looking to move into a community is, "what is the quality of the schools?" Our citizens have actively supported education for years, and the passage of this E-SPLOST extension would be a strong demonstration of continued school support by our community.

**10. Is this E-SPLOST different from the Charlton County Commission SPLOST?**

YES! The Education SPLOST is a special purpose tax approved by the citizens for improvements of *school* facilities, debt reduction, and equipment. The County SPLOST is a special tax designed to fund county projects identified by the Charlton County Commissioners.