FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
2019 Proposed Bond

Q-What is a general obligation bond?
A-A bond is a low-interest loan school districts use to pay for new school construction, new school property, reconstruction and renovations. It cannot be used to pay salaries. Bonding requires approval of local taxpayers through an election and is the most cost-effective option for taxpayers to build school buildings. It’s similar to a home loan or mortgage and just like homeowners, the district borrows money and makes monthly payments.

Q-How long will it take to pay off the proposed bond?
A-Cost estimates are projected for a 20 year bond.

Q-What is the total amount of the proposed bond?
A-The proposed bond is $75,000,000.

Q-What is the estimated tax impact for a primary residence?
A-The estimated tax impact on a primary residence:

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*Market value is determined by the Summit County Assessor’s Office. Properties that are granted a primary residence exemption are only taxed on 55% of their market value.

Q-What is the estimated tax impact for a secondary residence?
A-The estimated tax impact on a secondary residence:

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Q-What is the estimated tax impact for a business property?
A-The *estimated* amount of increase on a business property:

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Q-How is the board mitigating impact to taxpayers before the peak of projected growth?
A-The Board of Education has committed to using $1.25 million annually from the capital funds (for the first seven years) towards the bond payment to lessen the tax burden on our community. The Board anticipates that at the end of the seven year period there will have been enough new growth to be able to keep the bond payment near the same amount for taxpayers without continuing to use capital funds.

Q-Is the impact amount based on current residences or does it factor in future growth?
A-The bond cost has factored in new growth which will keep the tax impact on residents fairly level.

Q-What is the breakdown of who will be paying for the bond?
A-
- Primary property 23.5%
- Non-Primary property 39%
- Agriculture 2%
- Business 35.5%

Q-What will the bond be used for?
A-The bond will be used to build a new high school for 9-12th grades on currently owned property west of Kamas.

Q-What will be included in the new high school?
A-The new high school will be a comprehensive campus that includes adequate and appropriate learning spaces for math, English, fine arts, science, technology, business,
extra-curricular clubs and organizations, indoor/outdoor athletic facilities and fields. The new school will provide adequate parking and safe drop off/pick up routes for students.

Q-Why are we building new athletic facilities when we already have a nice football field?
A-Residents in our community have communicated to the Board of Education that they support building schools but struggle with bonding for athletic fields when we already have nice facilities, especially our stadium. Certainly we do have nice facilities, in fact so nice that the demand far exceeds availability. Current facilities were built before the high school had men’s and women’s soccer or spring baseball and softball. The current soccer/football stadium will still be used for high school competitions, middle school classes and events, and recreational activities available through the Aquatics and Fitness Center. The Board considered a bonding option that did not include athletic facilities, but at a cost of just $5 more a month (for a $438,000 home market value) determined it is more responsible to include them now.

Q-When is the last time SSSD passed a general obligation bond?
A-The last time South Summit School District bonded was in 1988. (The year Superintendent Sorenson graduated from SSHS.)

Q-What has SSSD done to delay the need for a bond?
A-Responsible actions like the following have helped manage growth and delay the need for a bond for over 30 years:
- Adding portables to the elementary school;
- Adding a 5th grade wing to the middle school;
- Realigning grades in all schools;
- Relocating distance education to the district office;
- Repurposing spaces in all schools;
- Utilizing SSAFC for PE classes.

Q-What will happen to the other schools once the new high school is built?
A-All schools will be utilized with the following grade realignments:
- The new high school will house grades 9-12.
- The current high school will become a junior high with grades 6-8.
- The current middle school will become an intermediate school with grades 3-5.
- The current elementary school will remain an elementary school and will house Preschool and K- 2nd grades.

Q-Is the Kamas property even buildable? I’ve heard it’s all wetlands.
A-The property west of Kamas is nearly 150 acres. Of that, approximately 7.96 acres are designated wetlands, leaving 142 acres of developable land. The proposed structures may be supported upon conventional spread and continuous wall foundations.
Q-What will the impact be on local traffic?
A-A traffic impact study was completed by Fehr & Peers to determine the impact the proposed new High School would have. They reported minimal impact during typical weekday school AM and PM peak hours.
Traffic impact study

Q-Why doesn’t the District charge developers impact fees?
A-Utah law (11-36a-206 Effective 1/24/2018) prohibits a school district from charging a new development an impact fee in order to generate revenue for funding or recouping the cost of capital improvements for schools or school facility expansions because of the new development. Utah law can only be changed by elected legislators.

Q-What about the article in the Park Record that says they bond will be $90 million?
A-The Park Record published an article on March 13, 2019 using some preliminary numbers the Board of Education had received from Zions Public Finance Inc., the selected financial partner. The reported $90.7 million bond would have been used to build a new high school in Kamas and a new elementary school in Silver Creek. Preliminary estimates suggested a primary resident with an average home market value of $438,000 would pay about $60 per month, or $715 annually. However, in its due diligence, the Board has determined that our community cannot support this great of a tax impact and has opted for a different scenario--one that we believe aligns more with our current taxpayer's ability to financially afford and support.

Q-What happened to the plan to build an elementary school in Silver Creek?
A- Because the growth in the Silver Creek area has not happened as quickly as projected, the Board determined that our community cannot support that great of a tax impact at this time. Phase 3 of the District’s growth plan addresses this area, and we will responsibly manage the growth as it occurs.

Q-Why does South Summit need to bond?
A-Rapid Growth: South Summit School District (SSSD) has grown 16% in the past ten years and 3.49% during the 2018-2019 school year. School enrollments are reaching building capacity in all schools. Studies show that the homes that have already been presented to the planning commission(s) within the school district boundaries is projected to increase the student population in just five years to 130% of capacity at the high school. The middle school projection is 111% of capacity and the elementary school projects to be 105% of capacity. Extending that projection out another five years
shows the high school population at 140% of capacity, with the middle school growing to 105% and the elementary school at 98% of capacity.

Q-Why don’t you just build on to the existing buildings?
A-Campus Size/Safety: There are some concerns with continuing to keep a campus that houses all schools on contiguous property. The recommended size for a high school of our size is 40 acres, 15-20 for middle school and 8-12 for an elementary school. Our current campus (three schools, aquatic & fitness center and bus garage) is 40 acres, which is well below the recommended 70 acres for three schools. We are very aware that the current campus does not provide adequate parking for students and many of the extra-curricular activities that happen at the high school and that there are very legitimate concerns with student safety crossing the street and entering/exiting the building before and after school. Elementary classrooms have no room to put even an additional desk. The outside square space per student doesn’t meet the minimum suggested targets for school safety at the middle or elementary schools for playground space. Hall passing space in the middle school is similar to California rush hour traffic and certainly the design of the high school gyms in the middle of the facility does not accommodate shutting off the rest of the school to the public during non-school hours. The cost for purchasing land adjacent to the current campus was cost prohibitive.

Q-Why are we building a new high school instead of two new elementary schools?
A-After touring each building extensively, Naylor Wentworth Lund Architects put together an intensive spreadsheet that prioritized every recommended repair/renovation and the estimated costs associated with each project. Additionally, NWLA developed a conservative, estimated timeline of expected growth within the district based on housing projects that have already been approved by planning commissions within the district. With that information in hand, the master planning committee asked for cost estimates on two options: Option 1) Build two new elementary schools on district-owned property in Francis and Oakley. We would demolish the current elementary and add on to the middle school, converting both properties into a high school. Turn the existing high school building into a middle school. Option 2) Build a new comprehensive 9-12 high school within Kamas City. We would realign the rest of the grades within the existing buildings and complete recommended repairs/renovations in order of priorities suggested by NWLA. Certainly these repairs are more than a bandaid, but will extend the life of the buildings and save money for our taxpayers in the long run. The population has grown to the point that we need an additional school. All four schools will be used.

The master planning committee ultimately recommended Option 2 to the school board as it determined moving to a four level school district would help spread out the student population among four buildings instead of three. The school board subsequently unanimously passed a resolution to include a general obligation bond on the November
When the bond was defeated, the school board sought public input as to the reasons why and asked again which was the better option. 82% of survey respondents favored the addition of a new high school with 18% preferring to add an elementary school. Therefore, the board decided to revisit a proposed bond for a high school in 2019.

Q-How does building a new high school help with the already overcrowded elementary school?

A-Currently, South Summit is a three level district. It has elementary, middle and high school levels. The elementary school serves Pre-K through fourth grade students. The middle school has fifth through eighth grades and the high school serves grades nine through twelve. In addition, The Silver Summit Academy serves students from Kindergarten through 12th grade on the western edge of the school district. Option 1 relieves the overcrowding only in the bottom two levels. The high school would not receive any help to solve their growth problem. By building a new, larger high school and moving to a four level district, the student population can more effectively be balanced between buildings for a longer period of time, thus keeping taxes lower in the long run.

The proposal would be to move to a four level district with elementary, intermediate, middle and high school levels. The elementary school would serve Pre-K through second grade, the current middle school would become an intermediate school with grades three through five, the current high school would become a middle school with grades six, seven and eight, and a new comprehensive high school would be built to serve grades nine through twelve. The Silver Summit Academy would continue to serve grades K through 12. Utilizing four buildings in this way would provide space enough to meet current needs as well as the expected growth for the next decade.

Q-What are the growth projections for South Summit School District?

A-The District developed a request for proposal in 2015 soliciting expertise in the area of growth projection. An independent municipal financial advisory and consulting firm by the name of Lewis Young Robertson and Burningham provided growth projections to the Board of Education. Data from a follow up study was presented to the Board of Education in November of 2018, reported that student population will increase 48% in the next ten years. It shows enrollment increasing from 1,693 students in 2018 to 2,500 students in 2028.

Q-What about the safety concerns at our existing schools?

A-Safety is our number one priority and will always be given the first and foremost attention. Be assured, a District building will never be occupied if there is ever questionable safety issues. The District contracted with construction professionals to inspect all our buildings to ensure student and employee safety. There are significant capital improvement needs, including roofing on our existing buildings and outdated HVAC equipment. The Board is planning to address these needs as funding is
available, using resources specifically for capital improvements. During the summer of 2019 the roofing projects needed for all three schools in Kamas will be repaired. The proposed capital improvement projects will prolong the use of the buildings and ensure long-term safety.

Q-What if my property is on the greenbelt?
A-There are about 15 different classifications of greenbelt property with differing values. The property owner would still calculate the tax impact based on the taxable value of the property and not market value.

Q-Are we going to outgrow the new school before we even move into it?
A-The new high school is going to be built to serve a student body of 750 students. The Board of Education slightly increased the size of the new school based on updated enrollment projections from the previous bond. High school enrollment projections for 2022-23 is 585, allowing space for growth. However the community will continue to grow and the new high school will reach capacity. The new high school campus is designed to grow with the community. The shared spaces such as the cafeteria and open space are large enough to accommodate more students than 740 based on staggering lunches and additional common space in additions to the building. The campus is designed to build additional wings for future classroom and learning spaces. The Board and administration is diligent in planning for growth, but also building a facility that meets that needs of today’s students and not overburdening the taxpayers more than is necessary.

Q-What will happen if the bond doesn’t pass?
A-The board has not voted on anything yet but is considering the following:
● Modular campus, wherein we purchase modular buildings and place them all together on a designated area of land. We’d move one grade to that modular campus.

Q-What is the estimated timeline?
A-Based on the assumption of the bond passing in November, the District would finalize the design phase before December 31, 2019. The bidding would happen during the Spring of 2020, with construction beginning in the summer.

Q-Why do we need Silver Summit Academy?
A-The South Summit School District land boundaries are very large and include the Uintas, Silver Creek/Promontory area near Park City and the Kamas Valley. Our District is unique in the fact that up until this point there has primarily only been student enrollment on the East side. However, the Silver Creek area, which provides ⅓ of our current tax base, now has a development under construction, and considerable growth is expected in the next few years. The development when fully built will be larger than the city of Coalville. The Board of Education and Administration felt it was important to provide a school closer to these homes, rather than bus them to Kamas. The primary purpose for building the Academy is to have a school for residents living in Silver Creek
and it also offers a blended learning curriculum which allows students in our district that want to have a different learning experience the option.

Q-Why is the cost so much higher than the 2017 proposed bond? 
A- Construction costs have increased over $50 per square foot over the past year. The school board updated the scope and size of the new high school from 630 to 750 students. Additionally, the new proposal includes indoor and outdoor athletic facilities and learning space, whereas the 2017 proposal did not.

Q-What would the cost be if we didn’t build athletic facilities with the new high school? 
A-Primary residence:

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<td>$438,000 average primary residence in South Summit School District</td>
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Secondary residence:

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Business property:

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Q-Are there any tax relief programs?
A-Yes, Summit County offers property tax relief for low-income seniors, disabled veterans, active-duty military, the blind, or those in extreme hardship. You can get more information by visiting www.summitcounty.org/treasurer or by calling the Treasurer’s Office at 435-336-3267.

Q-Why are we spending money on plans before the bond has even been passed?
A-Feedback from community members after the 2017 bond failed was that they didn’t know exactly what they were going to be getting if the bond passed. The district wants residents to have the information to be prepared to vote for or against the bond in November. An important piece of information that has been requested is the size, look and spaces available in the new school. In the process of preparing this information, it lends itself well to completing the designing phase so that the project is ready for bidding if the bond passes. Historically school districts that have been able to bid in the first few months of a calendar year have received the best prices. The Board of Education wants to be prepared for the project to begin in early 2020 if the bond passes.