FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Nov. 14, 2019

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Public Invited to Give Input on Bond Recommendation

The Baker School District Board of Directors is looking for feedback about a citizen committee’s recommendation to seek a school bond.

The board will discuss the recommendation and invite public comment at its meeting on Nov. 21 at 5:30 p.m. at Baker City Hall, 1655 1st Street, Baker City.

An 11-member citizen committee recommended that that board submit a significantly scaled-down bond package to voters in May 2020. Their proposal calls for a $7.5 million measure that would relieve overcrowding at the elementary and middle school levels and also address safety and security at all schools.

The bond would be repaid over a 10-year time period, costing taxpayers approximately 66 cents per $1,000 of assessed property value. That would amount to $71.49 per year (less than $6 per month) for the owner of a home assessed at $108,320, which is the median price of a home in Baker County.

The committee considered a five-year term due to the amount of interest, but felt it was important to keep the cost as low as possible.

The bond dollars would be combined with a $4 million state matching grant (OSCIM) and $5 million from Baker School District for a total investment in schools of $16.5 million. The district’s contribution would consist of $3 million from Student Success Act funds and $2 million from capital project funds.

The committee, after reviewing post-bond feedback that the district collected from surveys and public meetings, said any new bond needed to be smaller and shorter term than the $48 million proposal that voters rejected in November 2018. The committee also advised remodeling existing spaces instead of new construction.

Key components of the recommendation include:

- Move Grades 7-8 to Baker High School
  - Safety/security upgrades, including secure entry

The Baker 5J schools enhance community vitality by providing opportunities for rewarding, individual educational experiences.
○ Dedicated commons area for Grades 7-8
○ Modernize existing physical education locker rooms
○ Add Grades 7-8 physical education locker room
○ Remodel science classrooms for Grades 7-8
● Move Grades 5-6 to Helen M. Stack
  ○ Safety/security upgrades, including secure entry, reconfigured parent/student drop-off
  ○ Refresh historic character with new windows, historic entry, exterior upgrades
  ○ 7,000 SF addition with multi-purpose room (serving as cafeteria/kitchen) and physical education locker rooms
● Grades 3-4 at South Baker
  ○ Safety/security upgrades, including secure entry
  ○ Additional parking to increase accessibility for patrons
● Grades K-2 at Brooklyn
  ○ Safety/security upgrades, including secure entry
  ○ Additional restrooms
  ○ Safety/security upgrades at North Baker, Haines and Keating

About Baker School District 5J
Nationally recognized Baker School District 5J (BSD) is a major employer in Baker City, OR, serving 1,700 students locally with an additional 2500 online students across the state of Oregon. Through enterprising, collaborative endeavors, BSD is creating an engaging educational foundation for future Oregonians. BSD believes strong school collaboration with local partners enables us to create vibrant communities that support lifelong learners.