

Voters reject Bedford school funding

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Katy Roe, left, Douglas Road Elementary PTA president, Bedford school board President Mike Smith, and board trustee Lisa McCaig look over disappointing school levy results as they come in at Sidelines in Lambertville, Mich. *THE BLADE/LORI KING* [Enlarge](#) | [Buy This Photo](#)

Voters in many school districts approved tax levies on Tuesday, but in Bedford and Sylvania, they rejected an appeal for more tax money.

In a heavier-than-expected turnout, Bedford voters resoundingly defeated an additional 4.37-mill levy request for money to upgrade their school district's buildings. In Sylvania, a 3.8-mill request was defeated by more than 500 votes. In Wood County's Northwood Local School District, however, voters approved a levy to pay for a new school.

Bedford Board of Education President Michael Smith said district officials would continue to make their case to the voters and return to the ballot with another request in November.

"We have to. It's a necessity at this point," Mr. Smith said from the basement of Sidelines pub in Lambertville, where school officials gathered to await the returns. "We need to get the community behind us so we can control our own destiny."

VIEW: [Primary election results](#)

The Bedford school board's plan was to refurbish the district's aged buildings by asking voters to approve the levy, which would have generated \$70.35 million over 30 years to service bonds that were issued by the school system. Most of the district's buildings date to the 1950s and '60s.

The net additional cost to the owner of a \$175,000 home, the district's average, would have been \$178.40 per year, a number softened by the expiration of two levies this year.

The school board plan included spending \$18 million for a new elementary school, to be built at an unchosen site, and the demolition of Douglas Road and Jackman Road elementaries.