

USD 409 bond election: ballots cast show likely passage

(KAIR)--If the unofficial numbers from the special bond election for the Atchison Public Schools are to be believed-with the difference between the yays and nays so far supporting that belief- the issue will gain the voter support needed for passage.

The election was conducted through mailed-out ballots, with those ballots returned to the Atchison County Courthouse by Thursday's 12 noon deadline showing 1,193 cast in support of the \$27.3 million bond issue, while 678 voters said no.

According to Atchison County Clerk Michelle Phillips, the votes cast represent the number of ballots which had been collected as of the deadline, with some ballot signatures still needing to be collected. She says those voters who did not include a signature can correct the error prior to Tuesday's meeting of the Atchison County Commission, at which time the canvass of the votes will be conducted. Phillips says some of the received ballots will run as provisional. More ballots could be forthcoming through the U.S. Mail, and will be counted so long as they were postmarked prior to the deadline.

Once the canvass is conducted as part of the County Commission's regular Tuesday meeting, the numbers will become official.

According to the school district, the \$27.3 million bond would come with no increase to the bond and interest mill levy, meaning zero tax increase from those dollars to be used for a wide range of improvements for USD 409.

Key among them, school district officials say, is the repair and replacement of school facility HVAC systems, as well as facility roofs.

Among other planned improvements are those at the Atchison Elementary School, which would see renovation for a new entrance, a single office suite, and integrations of Pre-K into the interior of the school. Atchison High School would see renovation for a new entrance, upgrades of the band and choir rooms, new turf, for football and baseball, as well as a resurfaced track, and renovation of the locker room.