

# YOUR GOVERNMENT

| Description                                                                                                      | Current | Previous | Change |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------|--------|
| Resident Public Students Attending your District (1)                                                             | 469.00  | 446.00   | +23    |
| Resident Public Students Attending another Iowa Public School (2, 3) - Open Enrollment Out                       | 185.90  | 169.20   | +16.70 |
| Non Public Shared Time and CPI Students Dual Enrolled for District Classes (4, 5)                                | 0       | 0.29     | -0.29  |
| Non Public Shared Time and CPI Students Dual Enrolled for PSEO Classes (4, 5)                                    | 0       | 0        | 0      |
| Residential Facility Students Enrolled for District Classes (5)                                                  | 0       | 0        | 0      |
| Actual Enrollment (7) - Certified Enrollment                                                                     | 654.90  | 615.49   | +39.41 |
| Non-Resident Public Students Attending your District (8, 9) - Open Enrollment In                                 | 25      | 22       | +3     |
| PK 4 Students Attending your Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (10) - Each student is worth .5 in weighting. | 16.5    | 18.5     | -2.00  |
| Total School Age Students Provided Instructional Programs/Services by your District                              | 494.00  | 468.29   | +25.71 |
| Limited English Proficient Weighting (13)                                                                        | 0.42    | 0.68     | -0.26  |
| ESA Funded Students                                                                                              | 5       | 4        | +1     |

## BOND

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that — to help us heal, rebuild, and move forward together.

“I wish I could wave a hand and put something back in Gladbrook tomorrow. I wish I could make it easier for everyone to see what I see... a district full of heart, talent, and people who all want the same thing deep down... something we can all rally behind and be proud of.

“But instead of focusing on what we could build together, too much time is being spent correcting misinformation, half-truths, and statements that try to paint me or this district as something we’re not. That part hurts, not because of pride, but because it takes energy away from what matters most... serving kids.

“I didn’t get into this work to divide people. I didn’t choose this role to stand in the middle of conflict. I became an educator and a superintendent because I believe schools can be the heart of a community... because I believe in the power of education to unite... and because I believe our students — the ones who walk our halls wearing rebel gear and their rebel spirit with pride — deserve our very best.

“They’re why I keep showing up. They’re why I keep pushing forward, even when it’s hard. And they’re why I’ll keep doing everything I can to lead with honesty, care, and the hope that someday... we’ll all pull in the same direction again... for them.”

The newspaper is publishing the response letter, signed by Bonjour, in full below.

### Introduction

Recent social media posts have spread misleading information and half-truths about district finances, facilities, and leadership decisions. These claims, often recycled and taken out of context, are being shared under the pretense of “accountability.”

Public oversight is both valuable and necessary in public education. However, when partial data, misinterpreted accounting procedures, or out-of-context remarks are used to cast doubt on integrity, it becomes damaging to the district and misleading to taxpayers.

Each time these inaccuracies are posted, hours of administrative time are spent fact-checking, compiling documentation, and clarifying information that has already been addressed. That is time and taxpayer money diverted away from serving students, improving schools, and advancing district

goals.

Our intent in providing this response is not to compare ourselves to other districts or claim to have done more than anyone else. We recognize that every school system works hard to serve its community transparently. What we can speak to is our own commitment: Gladbrook-Reinbeck has consistently worked to communicate clearly, share accurate information, and invite community dialogue. Transparency is not always easy, and it often opens the door for misinterpretation, but it remains essential to who we are.

The following clarifications are shared in that same spirit of openness to ensure that facts, not speculation, guide the conversation about our schools.

### 1) Bond & Facility Scope

Claim: The bond proposal does not address all of the district’s long-term facility needs, meaning taxpayers will face additional projects and costs in the future. It also appears that the district intends to move forward with HVAC projects whether the bond passes or not.

Fact: These claims are misleading because they remove critical context about the district’s phased, responsible planning and about the necessity of maintaining part of the existing 1921 building.

The \$17.3 million General Obligation Bond proposal focuses on replacing the district’s oldest and most urgent systems and needs including HVAC, electrical, ADA compliance, and safety improvements while adding new learning spaces that meet current needs. It does not include demolition or a complete replacement of the 1921 structure, because doing so would require a much larger bond and a higher tax burden than what is being proposed today.

The district’s approach is phased and fiscally responsible. It addresses what must be done now while maintaining flexibility for future planning when enrollment, capacity, and community readiness align. The intent is not to avoid future work, but to ensure that today’s investment solves the problems that can no longer wait.

The comment that HVAC work will continue regardless of whether the bond passes has been repeatedly taken out of context. What was stated and remains true is that the 1921 heating system must be replaced in some capacity because it has reached the end of its life.

–If the bond passes, the HVAC system for the remaining use of the 1921 building will be strategi-

cally addressed to ensure that systems are stronger, efficient, and reliable.

–If the bond does not pass, the district will still need to pursue an interim solution to ensure safe heating and ventilation for the parts of the 1921 building that will remain in full use.

That reality does not reflect defiance or waste; it reflects responsible maintenance of facilities that are still essential to our operations. The lower gym, auditorium, and other spaces will continue to serve students and the community for years to come, and they require functional systems until long-term replacement becomes financially possible.

A useful comparison is that of a farming operation. Right now, our district is operating with the equivalent of a 1921 Waterloo Boy John Deere tractor. It still runs, but it’s outdated and inefficient. This bond allows us to purchase a modern tractor to handle today’s workload safely and effectively. Will we still need to use the Waterloo Boy for some jobs? Yes, because it still serves a purpose. In the future, when the timing and resources are right, we would love to fully replace that old tractor with equipment designed for the next generation. Speculating now about what that will look like does nothing to fix what is broken today.

As one of our task force members recently said, this project is also like planting trees. We may not immediately benefit from the shade they will provide or the fruit they will bear, but we plant them anyway because it’s about forward thinking, stewardship, and investing in future generations.

This bond proposal does not attempt to solve every future challenge in one step. It solves what cannot wait, in a way that respects taxpayers, preserves flexibility for future decisions, and keeps the district moving forward responsibly.

### 2) Special Election Costs

Claim: The Superintendent misled the public about the cost of holding a special election.

Fact: Misrepresented and out of context.

During a public town-hall Q&A, a community member asked about special election costs. Without invoices in hand, I stated “a couple thousand,” knowing the total was under \$10,000. The actual cost, approximately \$8,800, includes county auditor fees, publication costs, ballot printing, and required staffing.

That answer was an informal estimate, not a

formal financial report. Within a \$10+ million annual budget, the distinction is immaterial, but the allegation of dishonesty is not. All expenses are publicly listed and board-approved.

### 3) PPEL Fund & Accounting Misrepresentation

Claim: The district used General Fund dollars for PPEL-eligible projects.

Fact: False and based on misunderstanding of school finance.

The district maintains three active bank accounts: General, Nutrition, and Activity. Within those accounts, all expenditures are tracked by state-mandated fund codes such as General, SAVE, and PPEL.

Payments may be issued from the General account for efficiency, but each expenditure is coded to its legal funding source. When a reclassification is needed, it is completed through a journal entry that is reviewed and verified by the district’s independent auditor as part of the annual audit process.

This practice is standard across Iowa school districts.

–PPEL funds are being used exactly as intended for infrastructure, maintenance, and equipment.

–No misappropriation of General Fund dollars has occurred.

–Every transaction is publicly reported, board-approved, and audited annually.

Suggesting mismanagement based on partial snapshots of the accounting system is inaccurate and misleading.

### 4) Enrollment, Tax, and Revenue Questions

Claim: District leadership cannot answer basic financial or enrollment questions.

Fact: False.

Figures such as certified enrollment, valuations, and revenue projections are verified through state systems (SRI, BEDS, and county-auditor data). These numbers are not static and can change during the certification process.

District leaders often choose to verify data before answering publicly to ensure accuracy over immediacy. That is a reflection of integrity, not avoidance.

At a recent town hall, when asked by an audience member about the specific increase associated with the new voted PPEL, I shared that I wanted to look up the exact numbers through the Iowa Department of Management rather than provide an estimate. Accuracy matters when discussing

# ARRESTS

## Thursday, Oct. 2

• Trudi Ann Mathes (42) of Cedar Rapids was arrested for violation of probation by the Tama County Sheriff’s Department in Toledo. She was released on bond the same day.

## Friday, Oct. 3

• Teya Noelle Mauskemmo (19) of Toledo was arrested for public intoxication and disorderly conduct — threat by the Tama Police Department in Tama. She was released the same day after pleading guilty.

• Shawn David Goodman (43) of Searsboro was arrested for possession of a controlled substance — first, second, third, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana first and driving while barred by the Meskwaki Tribal Police in Toledo. He was released the following day on a promise to appear.

• Leann Morgan (55) of Tama was arrested on an out of county/state warrant by the Toledo Police Department in Toledo. She was released the same day on a miscellaneous transfer.

## Sunday, Oct. 5

• Chaise Kiya Hinshaw (24) of Cedar Rapids was arrested for domestic abuse assault — bodily injury first, fifth degree criminal mischief and obstructing emergency communication by the Toledo Police Department in Toledo.

• Wesley Thomas Rebik (50) of Haverhill was arrested for driving under suspension by the Toledo Police Department in Toledo. He was released the following day after pleading guilty.

## Tuesday, Oct. 7

• Twyla Roxanne Kapayou (37) of Tama was arrested on a warrant for failure to appear by the Tama County Sheriff’s Department in Toledo.

## Wednesday, Oct. 8

• James Garrett Roberts Jr. (25) of Tama was arrested for violating conditions of pretrial release and violation of probation by the Tama County Sheriff’s Department in Toledo. He was released on bond the same day.

• Jodi Leigh Williams (41) of Deep River was arrested for two counts of violation of probation by the Tama County Sheriff’s Department in Toledo. She was released on bond the following day.

• Scott William Haugan (65) of Le Grand was arrested on a warrant for failure to appear by the Tama County Sheriff’s Department in Toledo. He was released on his own recognizance the following day.

# Last week’s Tama County Board of Supervisors meeting

MICHAEL D. DAVIS  
CORRESPONDENT

TOLEDO — In the drizzle of Monday morning on Oct. 6, the usual crowd made their way to the Tama County Board of Supervisors’ meeting to discuss the big issues, which this week mostly concerned the roads department.

Starting off the meeting was none other than Tama County Engineer Ben Daleske with his report. He stated that they are doing some ditches over by 260th Street and C Avenue. Also, Iowa Bridge & Culvert has finished up, and they are waiting on the pavement, gravel, and guardrail to be completely finished. PCI has finished the piling and is waiting for the deck to form. The E66 Cold-In-Place is finished. They have also purchased a loader to help with salt, sand, gravel, and dirt at the Garwin shed.

After his report, Daleske went on to go through an extensive equipment plan with the supervisors. After that, they went on to discuss the reorganization of the management structure of the whole department. After much thought, the supervisors

decided to move forward with a two-foreman structure and approved posting for the positions.

A public hearing to update the Zoning Ordinance Fees in the Tama County Zoning Ordinance of July 7, 1998, was held, and no comments were received.

A work session for the Supervisors and the Tama County Zoning Commission to meet and review or make changes on the recommended Commercial Solar Ordinance was set for Oct. 16 at 6 p.m.

The supervisors also approved removing Supervisor David Turner from the Region 6 Board and appointing Supervisor Mark Doland in his stead.

Claims totaling \$77,274.84 were approved.

## Tama County Humane Society’s Pet of the Week



### MEET POE!

This handsome boy is read to find his forever home. Poe is a unique cat who truly thinks he’s a parrot - He loves perching on your shoulders and keeping you company wherever you go. He’s also quite the talker and will happily carry on conversations with you. At around 3 years old, Poe is the perfect mix of playful and sweet, and he can’t wait to find a family who will adore him just as much as he’ll adore them.

Visit the  
Tama County Humane Society  
on Saturdays from 9 am - Noon  
1406 E. 5th St., Tama  
or call 641-481-7001  
to make an appointment

This Pet of the Week is sponsored by

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