

Bond Referendum Public Meetings

Q&A

Meeting #1

What deferred maintenance projects are in the long-term facilities maintenance levy vs. in this bonding request?

Maintenance projects include work to repair or replace mechanical systems, windows, building exterior improvements, parking lots, and others. Most of the maintenance will be completed using a combination of long-term facilities maintenance (LTFM) levy and bonding. The decision whether to use bond or LTFM funds will be made as work is scheduled.

How many years is the debt scheduled for? Is the old debt being rolled in or is it scheduled to be paid off this year?

The bond duration is 24 years. While old debt is rolling off, the repayment schedule will assure the debt payment is flat over the 24 years and as the tax base continues to grow, the payments will be spread over more properties.

Why doesn't Hugo become their own district?

It is the norm that school district are comprised of multiple communities. The White Bear Lake Area School District serves all or part of ten communities - Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township. The district's need for additional facilities space is due to student enrollment growth happening throughout the district, with homes being built on developing land in the north and home turnover in the south and central parts of the district. It would be inefficient and impractical for each of our communities to break off into solitary school districts. Additionally, independent school district boundaries are not set by schools, cities or districts. They are set by the state legislature.

Due to how much we struggle to find indoor time and space for our activities, is there a chance that gym space will be available before building is done?

Gym space is being expanded at multiple sites, and while we have not determined the final phasing of the construction calendar, it is likely that some newer gym spaces will be available before the high school is complete. It is also possible that the field house at the high school will be completed early in the high school construction calendar.

Why not run a series of smaller bonds over a longer period of time?

The plan allows for us to maximize the use of all of our buildings to meet increasing enrollment and to unify the high school. If this plan is broken into multiple elections it would not allow us to utilize all of our current facilities and construction will become increasingly more expensive due to inflation. Inflation in the construction market has outpaced the consumer price index by over

100% in recent years. Simply put, running smaller bonds over a longer period of time would increase the cost of the projects significantly.

How is online/remote learning considered?

We currently offer some hybrid online courses in our high school. This would likely continue and could expand. The high school programming committee will consider how this might fit into the program design.

What activities besides middle school would occur at South Campus?

The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site. Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site.

Is there a plan for safely handling asbestos in old buildings?

For many years the district has removed asbestos as it completes projects. With all future projects the district will follow its normal protocols to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff members during the construction process.

Where would kids park at the new high school?

The school will have student parking on site. However, we do not expect to have parking for all the students who may wish to drive. Currently, we do not have parking spaces for all students who would like to drive to school so we have a process for students to apply for parking permits which are granted to car-pools first. It is likely this will be the case at the unified high school as well.

Does this referendum include operating funds for teachers and operations?

The bond referendum is intended to raise the funds to address the district's facilities needs, not to cover personnel or operational expenses. A good way to remember the difference in the funding sources is to remember that bonds are for building and levy's are for learning. Operational expenses are covered through other funding mechanisms, with most funding coming directly as per-pupil state aid. The district's operating levy is also used to support the costs of operations.

I am concerned putting 9-10 with 11-12. In the past they did not recommend this as the older kids might get younger kids doing things that would not be suitable. Has this been considered?

We are aware of only five high schools in the entire United States that are split into a model like our current two-campus. The benefits of unifying the high school are great. Students in grades

9-10 actually benefit from having more mature role models in the upper classmen. The benefits of a unified 9-12 high school far outweigh actual or perceived benefits of a split campus.

Besides the \$326 million for buildings, how much more for staff and teachers?

The bond referendum is intended to raise the funds to address the district's facilities needs, not to cover personnel or operational expenses. Operational expenses are covered through other funding mechanisms, with most funding coming directly as per-pupil state aid.

Why haven't buildings been updated? I thought many were (North, Central, Birch Lake).

The district has invested in buildings in the past, but have not been able to keep up with the demands of aging buildings. We have used the funding tools available to us to do ongoing maintenance, but as our buildings age, more significant investment is required.

How did you arrive at the figure you are asking for?

The school board created a committee to identify facilities needs. The committee made recommendations on how to best meet these needs in the most sustainable and cost-effective manner. Building costs were estimated by experts in the field who considered costs of construction and renovation as well factored in inflation during the construction period.

Have you discussed building a middle school and/or high school in Hugo?

The committee considered building a new middle school in Hugo, but quickly discovered the costs would make it nearly impossible to provide as many solutions as the plan they proposed. One of the important elements of the plan is that it utilizes nearly all existing square footage, allowing maximum benefit for the financial investment.

Where can we see the addition/renovation plans for the new blended high school?

A graphic representation of the proposed plan can be found in the [Public Meeting presentation](#), but the official design process cannot happen until a bond referendum has been passed because the design costs are part of the approved funding. One of our main priorities as we design our 9-12 campus will be to ensure that the small-campus feel of our two campuses isn't lost as we merge into one school campus. This will be accomplished by the ways in which we design the student learning and activities experience along with how the building is physically designed. A team will come together to research other large high schools to design a student learning experience that ensures students have strong relationships with each other and the adults in the building. Additionally, we will partner with architects in designing a building that supports these relationships in an authentic and creative way.

How will the transition process work or when will the new high school be ready for all students?

The new White Bear Lake Area High School would open for the 2024-25 school year.

Will there be a new stadium built at North along with tennis courts?

The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site. Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site.

First, I'd like to say how excited I am about the support being shown to our school community by taking on this project. What happens if this fails? Do we put trailers in for classrooms?

If the November referendum is unsuccessful we will study the results and consider the next steps. The strategic plan pressures, increasing enrollment, safety and security needs and aging facilities and deferred maintenance demands will remain regardless of whether the referendum passes. The district would need to continue to look for solutions to these issues. Utilizing mobile classrooms would be a last resort as they are less than ideal learning spaces and are expensive to provide water, heat, and electricity.

What steps are being taken to get the community on board? (volunteering, door knocking, etc.)

The District's Informational Campaign communications plan does not include the use of volunteers or door knocking. Community leaders have let us know there is an advocacy group, so the question about "Vote Yes!" signs would be best answered by someone from that group.

Please compare/contrast enrollment growth in the northern vs. the southern parts of the district.

Homes are being built on developing land in the north and home turnover is happening in the south and central parts of the district, which is leading to all of our schools nearing capacity and continuing to see enrollment growth. Over the past three years, the schools with the highest enrollment growth have been in the south end of the school district.

How long does this level of taxation last?

The bond duration is 24 years. While debt is rolling off, the repayment structure will assure the payment is flat over the 24 years.

Any chance Hugo would like their own school district in the future with other growth in the far north suburbs? Would that solve the WBL capacity issues?

It is the norm that school district are comprised of multiple communities. The White Bear Lake Area School District serves all or part of ten communities - Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township. The district's need for additional facilities space is due to student enrollment growth happening throughout the district, with homes being built on developing land in the north and home turnover in the south and central parts of the district. It would be inefficient and

impractical for each of our communities to break off into solitary school districts. Additionally, independent school district boundaries are not set by schools, cities or districts. They are set by the state legislature.

How was the dramatic impact to the immediate neighborhood (of North Campus) considered, assessed and weighed? Were any committee members from the immediate area?

The committee entered into the process with a goal of identifying needs and without a specific solution in mind. They first studied the needs of the district, then began to identify solutions. When the final recommendation was to create a unified high school on the North Campus site, district administrators met with the City of WBL, MNDOT, and Ramsey County to discuss implications of utilizing this site. The general agreement from the group was that the site could work. Shortly after the plan was presented to the board, homeowners in the neighborhood were invited to a meeting hosted by the Superintendent to learn more about the plan.

I believe the Roseville Bond was 148 million and Mounds View was 160 million. Can you explain how we are getting nearly double the money and still less tax burden than those districts?

Unique to our situation is that we have a significant amount of debt retiring and will carry very little in to the future. This allows us to invest significantly in our schools with a softer tax impact for homeowners.

Why is there a line item to purchase all the homes on Bald Eagle when you further state there is no need for the property?

A single unified grade 9-12 high school could be built on the existing property already owned by the district. The district would consider purchasing neighboring homes from interested sellers if expansion made sense. The Board has stated publicly that it will not use eminent domain. On September 23, the Board passed a resolution confirming that the district will not use eminent domain for additional land around the current White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus if the bond referendum is approved by voters. See the press release [here](#). If the budgeted funds are not used to purchase homes, the resources will be allocated to other areas of the bond projects.

When and why did we switch to two high school campuses in the first place?

In 1983, the district was experiencing declining enrollment. As explained by those who were on the school board at the time, the two high schools, White Bear and Mariner, were becoming too small to run efficiently and could no longer support the programming the community had come to expect. With no desirable options available, the board chose to implement the split campus, hoping it would not be a long term solution. Now, 36 years later, we are in a position to address this issue by unifying the high school on one site.

I have two kiddos at Birch Lake and the safety and security of our children is the #1 priority. How do we currently secure our buildings, and what will the new bond do to improve security?

Security needs across the district that will be addressed with the bond include improvements to building entrances, parking lots and bus drop-off areas, and video surveillance equipment.

What happens next if this does not pass?

If the November referendum is unsuccessful we will study the results and consider the next steps. The strategic plan pressures, increasing enrollment, safety and security needs and aging facilities and deferred maintenance demands will remain regardless of whether the referendum passes. The district would need to continue to look for solutions to these issues.

How will we accommodate the extra traffic expected around North Campus?

The district is in the preliminary stage of conducting a traffic study, which would inform a plan for the new high school. One of the benefits of North Campus' central location is that traffic would be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. Additionally, the plan calls for the bus garage to be removed from the site so there will be less bus traffic in the area. Transportation Department and District Center employees and guests who currently travel to/from the area would be moved to other district locations, which will also help alleviate traffic. An adjustment to school start time could also be part of the solution. Also, the development of the on-site traffic plan will be built to help alleviate traffic back-up and spillover onto the area roadways.

How will the investment in buildings help prepare the community's future workforce?

An emerging strength of our high school is our career pathways program. This program helps create a pipeline of skilled employees to fill high demand careers that also pay a sustainable income. Students get support to identify areas of interest and opportunities to get a head start on building career skills. The unified high school would allow us to design facilities to enhance this high demand programming.

How much would the referendum be to build a new high school in Hugo?

Because building a new high school in Hugo would mean we would not be able to utilize all of our existing square footage, the project cost would increase by an estimated \$47 million.

What is the amount of existing debt that will be retired?

Fifty million dollars in debt will be coming off the district books which helps to create the opportunity to issue building bonds that will have less of an annual tax impact than would have otherwise been possible.

Why are we resurfacing the track at Sunrise when it won't be a student building?

There is no plan to create an all-weather track or improve the dirt track at Sunrise Park Middle School. The current SPMS site would not continue to be a middle school, so a track will no longer be needed for school use.

Why put any updates into the Senior Center and Normandy Park when they would move into Sunrise?

The district must keep buildings in working order as long as they are housing students and programs. The programs that are currently at Normandy Park Education Center (Senior Center and Early Childhood) will remain at Normandy until the programs move into the current Sunrise Park Middle School building. That move will not happen until after Sunrise is moved to the current South Campus site, which will continue to serve students in the split-campus model until the 2024-25 school year when the new White Bear Lake Area High School would open. Future potential uses for the Normandy space would be explored in the meantime.

Please talk about the programs being expanded or deleted because of the bond.

It is important to note that bonds for building and levies for learning and operational costs, but the environment in which students learn does have an impact on the programs. We recently added a ninth strategy to our strategic plan: "We will imagine new strategies for learning and teaching at White Bear Lake Area High School." The unification of the high school and the opportunity to design a new space creates the opportunity for us to intentionally design facilities that will allow the expansion of our career pathway program, which serves as one example. There are no programs slated for deletion as a result of a successful bond referendum.

How were the following considered? Energy efficiency and renewable energy? Operating costs? Costs per student? Technical expertise used? Examples of similar projects success?

We will expect our architect to implement sustainable design features into the buildings. All projects will be designed for low energy use and efficient operations and wherever possible we will employ environmentally responsible products and practices in design and construction. All options will be considered including LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and Energy Star and the district will choose the best strategies that respect our environment and minimize energy use and operational costs.

Recently, we demonstrated our commitment to reducing our environmental impact by installing solar panels on six of our schools. The District will realize over \$2,000,000 of electrical savings over the life of the solar arrays.

I thank the School Board for their statement regarding not using eminent domain. However, because you have a commitment to not use eminent domain, how will the current space accommodate the addition? Will there be adequate athletic spaces?

Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events

for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site. The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site.

What are your plans to handle traffic from the expansion of both the North Campus and Central Middle School? Traffic is already overwhelming for nearby residents.

The district is in the preliminary stage of conducting a traffic study, which would inform a plan for the new high school. One of the benefits of North Campus' central location is that traffic would be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. Additionally, the plan calls for the bus garage to be removed from the site so there will be less bus traffic in the area. Transportation Department and District Center employees and guests who currently travel to/from the area would be moved to other district locations, which will also help alleviate traffic. An adjustment to school start time could also be part of the solution. Also, the development of the on-site traffic plan will be built to help alleviate traffic back-up and spillover onto the area roadways.

How many students have a split campus now?

We are aware of only about a half-dozen schools throughout the nation that have a split campus.

How will the district, high school, and teachers keep order and safety in a 3200-student school?

A task force has begun working together to determine how the high school experience can be redesigned, which includes safety and security conversations. The most current safety and security standards will be a significant part of the design phase of the project.

Additionally, one of the best ways to create an orderly, safe school community is to create an environment that builds strong relationships. Some districts have used an academy model or a house model to create smaller communities within a larger school. One of our main priorities as we design our 9-12 campus will be to ensure that the small-campus feel of our two campuses isn't lost as we merge into one school campus. This will be accomplished by the ways in which we design the student learning and activities experience along with how the building is physically designed. A team will come together to research other large high schools to design a student learning experience that ensures students have strong relationships with each other and the adults in the building. Additionally, we will partner with architects in designing a building that supports these relationships in an authentic and creative way.

I can't find a detailed breakdown of costs/finances. Will this become public? Where can I find this information?

The district's website, specifically the [Bond Referendum](#) pages and the [Facilities Planning Process](#) pages, house all of the information available throughout the process. The [Review and Comment](#) document, which recently received a stamp of approval from the Minnesota

Department of Education, includes comprehensive project data.

Will 916 remain at South Campus?

Yes. Intermediate District 916 owns the portion of the current South Campus building that houses their programs and is not in a position to sell it at this time. This will continue to be looked at.

Will we save money by no longer using AWARE/TAP and Normandy Park?

We will no longer be leasing space in Hugo to house the Transition Education Center, which encompasses the AWARE, TAPP and Transition Plus programs. Programs currently housed at Normandy Park Educational Center will be moved to the multigenerational use Sunrise Park site. Future potential uses for the Normandy space would be explored.

Meeting #2

What is the basis (data) for the growth projections? Where is it from? Is it realistic? The enrollment growth projections were completed by two independent demographers - former state demographer Hazel Reinhart and Teamworks International, a local consulting company. Both studies used different methods, but they both arrived at similar enrollment growth projections.

How many years (if passed) is the tax impact to pay for the bond?

The bond duration is 24 years. While debt is rolling off, the repayment structure will assure the payment is flat over the 24 years.

What is the estimated project completion?

If the referendum would be approved by the community in November, planning would begin right away in the fall and construction would continue in phases until completed for the 2024-25 school year.

How are the athletics/arts facilities addressed? (New stadium? New auditorium?)

The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site. Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site.

The new White Bear Lake Area High School building project includes an auditorium addition. Both middle schools would have auditoriums in their buildings, due to Sunrise moving into the current South Campus location and Central taking over the District Center and Community Auditorium space.

A gymnasium would be built at Lincoln Elementary.

Is there a Phase 2? (I heard about a Central redo.)

The Comprehensive Facilities Committee's original plan included the potential of a new middle school being built at a different location in a Phase 2 so that the land near North Campus could house the high school alone. The School Board did not accept the part of the plan and is not considering it as an option moving forward.

Is there a mismatch between a 20+ year bond and 10 years of needs?

It is typical for the repayment of school district building projects funded with bond proceeds to be paid over twenty or more years. The comprehensive nature of this plan will serve the district for decades to come, not just the next ten years.

Please describe the property tax refund and its impact.

Various property tax relief measures exist for those below a certain household income threshold. Find Tax Refund Scenario information [here](#).

Of the \$326 million - how much existing debt is coming off the books and is this actually a smaller tax impact?

Fifty million dollars of debt is expiring. Because the future debt is spread over a greater length, the tax impact is manageable.

How does enrollment growth in the northern part of the district compare to enrollment growth in the southern part of the district?

Homes are being built on developing land in the north and home turnover is happening in the south and central parts of the district, which is leading to all of our schools nearing capacity and continuing to see enrollment growth. Over the past three years, the schools with the highest enrollment growth have been in the south end of the school district.

Where are the kids going to park at the high school? It is a small, somewhat confined neighborhood and there are big concerns about traffic, Highway 61 congestion at rush hour, etc.

The district is in the preliminary stage of conducting a traffic study, which would inform a plan for the new high school. One of the benefits of North Campus' central location is that traffic would be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. Additionally, the plan calls for the bus garage to be removed from the site so there will be less bus traffic in the area. Transportation Department and District Center employees and guests who currently travel to/from the area would be moved to other district locations, which will also help alleviate traffic. An adjustment to school start time will likely be part of the solution. Also, the development of the on-site traffic plan will be built to help alleviate traffic back-up and spillover onto the area roadways. Additional parking will be added on the North Campus site to accommodate the needs of staff and students.

Instead of having this very large referendum, was there any consideration of 2 smaller referendums (improvements and HS separately)?

The comprehensive nature of the plan means that there are many interwoven parts. A simple answer to that question is that this multi-year plan is most efficient and cost-effective when built as a package. Because the plan uses all of our district facilities, with students moving into renovated space and freeing up space for other students to move into, the comprehensive plan is one that is difficult to do in stages more separated than what will naturally occur due to the building process.

I have seen 2 pieces of land purchased for a new school in Hugo - why 2 different areas of land? Also, this is very close to the current Oneka. How will boundaries be set up?

At its August 12 regular meeting, the White Bear Lake Area School Board approved two purchase agreements for land in Hugo that recently became available. The purchase agreements are contingent upon a successful bond referendum on November 5. Prior purchase agreements approved by the School Board in December 2018 and January 2019 were rescinded in order to enter into purchase agreements for the parcels of land that recently became available north of the Hugo Post Office. Find additional information in [this press release](#).

Elementary attendance boundaries would change prior to the opening of the new elementary school for the 2022-23 school year.

Does the current land at North Campus provide enough space for athletic fields? Or will kids be bussed to South Campus where current facilities are?

The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site. Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site.

Projects often overrun, overspend - what happens if 326M runs out and the project is not complete?

The \$326 million bond is a definite amount that does not fluctuate. If project costs fluctuate, the plans will need to be changed to accommodate the funding.

Why wasn't South Campus chosen as the 1 high school location?

The committee decided on the current North Campus location as the site to build the single, unified White Bear Lake Area High School because of its central location and the amount of land owned by the district. The central location allows for traffic to be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling

south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. There is significantly more land available on the North Campus site than at South Campus.

Will the boundaries for the current elementary schools change (specifically Hugo, Oneka and Otter Lake Elementary School)?

Elementary attendance boundaries would change prior to the opening of the new elementary school for the 2022-23 school year.

Can a non-US citizen vote?

No.

With a projected high school of 3500 students, how would class size be impacted?

The high school enrollment projects indicate a high point of 3,400 students. We expect that class size standards would remain the same as funding for operations is linked to enrollment.

You mentioned the bond will help with increased security. Can you share more about that?

Security needs across the district that will be addressed with the bond include improvements to building entrances, parking lots and bus drop-off areas, and video surveillance equipment.

How will a unified campus increase options for students?

A single, unified 9-12 high school will offer many programmatic benefits to students:

- Better access to comprehensive course offerings, including college & career pathway options
- Fewer transitions for students during critical adolescent developmental stages, and
- Maintained consistent, longer-lasting staff and student relationships

Does the unified high school on North Campus land plan work only with buying neighboring homes?

A single unified grade 9-12 high school could be built on the existing property already owned by the district. The district would consider purchasing neighboring homes from interested sellers if expansion made sense. The Board has stated publicly that it will not use eminent domain. On September 23, the Board passed a resolution confirming that the district will not use eminent domain for additional land around the current White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus if the bond referendum is approved by voters. See the press release [here](#).

What happens if the bond doesn't pass?

If the November referendum is unsuccessful we will study the results and consider the next steps. The strategic plan pressures, increasing enrollment, safety and security needs and aging facilities and deferred maintenance demands will remain regardless of whether the referendum passes. The district would need to continue to look for solutions to these issues.

What's the cost of waiting a year or two to pass this bond?

As construction costs increase, bond referendum requests will naturally increase. Inflation rates related to construction are generally 5-7% per year, so the cost will rise by that much each year we wait to do a project.

What is the level of support from the teachers (for the unified high school)? What are cons they list?

There has not been a formal study or survey done on the level of support from the teachers, but the single, unified high school environment will address many of the elements that were prioritized in the district and building-level Strategic Plans created by teachers, staff members, parents, community members and students.

From a '82 grad - it was a strange experience to split way back when. Why was that decision made back then?

The decision to go to a split campus was not taken lightly. At the time, the district was dealing with declining enrollment and needed to find a way to cut costs. Board members who were part of this decision have stated that this was not what they felt to be best academically for students; rather, it was done because they felt it was the only option they had at the time.

Along with the high school redesign, how will the student experience be changed? Will a block schedule be considered?

A task force has begun working together to determine how the high school experience can be redesigned. Some districts have used an academy model or a house model to create smaller communities within a larger school. One of our main priorities as we design our 9-12 campus will be to ensure that the small-campus feel of our two campuses isn't lost as we merge into one school campus. This will be accomplished by the ways in which we design the student learning and activities experience along with how the building is physically designed. A team will come together to research other large high schools to design a student learning experience that ensures students have strong relationships with each other and the adults in the building. Additionally, we will partner with architects in designing a building that supports these relationships in an authentic and creative way.

When the committee talked about North and South Campuses, did they also look at traffic patterns? Did we pick the right campus to build the unified high school on?

The district is in the preliminary stage of conducting a traffic study, which would inform a plan for the new high school. One of the benefits of North Campus' central location is that traffic would be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. Additionally, the plan calls for the bus garage to be removed from the site so there will be less bus traffic in the area. Transportation Department and District Center employees and guests who currently travel to/from the area would be moved to other district locations, which will also help alleviate traffic. An adjustment to school start time could also be part of the solution. Also, increased on-site traffic absorption will be included in the plan to help alleviate traffic back-up and spillover onto the area roadways.

Is the district growth due to open enrollment?

No. The projections reflect enrollment growth due to anticipated resident students, not open enrolled students. Our enrollment projections were based on our enrollment at the time of the study projected forward, anticipated birth rates, planned and anticipated housing developments within our district boundaries, and our historical enrollment rate of resident students only.

Would the change in the high school location result in more people needing district-provided transportation?

It is logical to conclude that transportation costs to the district would remain constant or potentially decrease on a per student basis. The district's student transportation system would be more efficient if all high school students can be picked up on one bus route with one school start time rather than two separate routes with two different school start times.

Is the 25% enrollment growth only in Hugo?

No. The need for additional facilities space is due to student enrollment growth happening throughout the district. Homes are being built on developing land in the north and home turnover is happening in the south and central parts of the district, which is leading to all of our schools nearing capacity and continuing to see enrollment growth. Over the past three years, the schools with the highest enrollment growth have been in the south end of the school district.

At what point do district borders change due to growth? Would a part of the district ever be broken off into its own district?

It is the norm that school district are comprised of multiple communities. The White Bear Lake Area School District serves all or part of ten communities - Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township. The district's need for additional facilities space is due to student enrollment growth happening throughout the district, with homes being built on developing land in the north and home turnover in the south and central parts of the district. It would be inefficient and impractical for each of our communities to break off into solitary school districts. Additionally, independent school district boundaries are not set by schools, cities or districts. They are set by the state legislature.

Meeting #3

Has there been pushback on the size of the levy?

It is the largest bond referendum to date, but no district has ever had the unique set of challenges we have in White Bear Lake Area Schools. The plan is comprehensive and all of the parts are interconnected in some way. The opportunity to address our needs caused by enrollment growth combined with the desire to change from a split campus high school has presented the district with a unique opportunity. Deferred maintenance items are completed as

part of building projects in order to be more cost-effective in the long run, as it's better to do the two types of construction projects simultaneously rather than as two stand-alone projects.

Has there been engagement with the senior community?

The Facilities Planning Committee make-up included members of our senior community. The Senior Program has included bond referendum information in their communications pieces and hosted a presentation for seniors at the Senior Center.

The bond information has been shared with all district residents in the following ways:

- The [Bear's Update](#) oversized postcard sent to all district residents back in June (which was before the School Board voted to put the bond referendum on the Nov. 5 ballot, so the info was specific to facilities planning with a mention that the Board was deciding on the ballot question)
- The [Bear's Bulletin](#) flip-book to the Community Services Catalog mailed to all district residents in August (there was a 3-page spread in the 9-page flip-book)
- The [12 Facts](#) oversized postcard postal route mailing sent to all district residents in September (this mailer is referendum-specific)

These district mailers are in addition to the other avenues being used to share the information: printed materials made available at our schools and programs, articles in the local and Twin Cities media, presentations to school and community groups, electronic communications to our families and staff members, social media share-outs, and a comprehensive www.isd624.org/Bond2019 website.

Has there been engagement with the parent community?

The Facilities Planning Committee make-up included members of our parent community, along with those whose children graduated from the district. Schools have included bond referendum information in their communications pieces to families and the information is being presented to each building's parent groups (PTA/PTO).

The bond information has been shared with all district residents in the following ways:

- The [Bear's Update](#) oversized postcard sent to all district residents back in June (which was before the School Board voted to put the bond referendum on the Nov. 5 ballot, so the info was specific to facilities planning with a mention that the Board was deciding on the ballot question)
- The [Bear's Bulletin](#) flip-book to the Community Services Catalog mailed to all district residents in August (there was a 3-page spread in the 9-page flip-book)
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families and staff members, social media share-outs, and a comprehensive www.isd624.org/Bond2019 website.

How does the expiring debt work into this?

Fifty million dollars in debt will be coming off the district books which helps to create the opportunity to issue building bonds that will have less of an annual tax impact than would have otherwise been possible.

How is the high school working on growing trades-based and career pathways opportunities?

White Bear Lake Area Schools' efforts to develop robust career pathway opportunities has been very successful and would be a key part of the planning for a new high school (expanded North Campus site). The district partners with dozens of local and regional businesses to ensure that students are offered programs that are relevant and can help each student find his or her pathway to success.

Is part of the consideration that interest rates are good right now, so if you're going to borrow money now is the time to do it?

Yes, rates are good right now and this helps keep the tax impact reasonable.

Was there a discussion about how long the bond question is?

We worked hard with our attorneys to develop the wording on the bond question that meets all legal requirements and provides a description of the plan. The phrasing includes a description of the full scope of the project so that when individuals enter the voting booth they are provided a full description on what they are asked to vote on.

Are the data points that are discussed available publicly?

The district's website, specifically the [Bond Referendum](#) pages and the [Facilities Planning Process](#) pages, house all of the information available throughout the process. The [Review and Comment](#) document, which recently received a stamp of approval from the Minnesota Department of Education, includes comprehensive project data.

If the bond does not pass, would the district use mobile classrooms in order to serve students in the over-capacity buildings?

If the November referendum is unsuccessful we will study the results and consider the next steps. The strategic plan pressures, increasing enrollment, safety and security needs and aging facilities and deferred maintenance demands will remain regardless of whether the referendum passes. The district would need to continue to look for solutions to these issues and would likely ask the voters to support a bond referendum. We hope we would not need to resort to using mobile classrooms, but it is a possible temporary solution to overcrowding.

How did you arrive at the average salary in the district being shared? The incomes of many people in the community are lower than that number and they cannot afford higher taxes.

Ehlers, the district's municipal advisors, provided us with the household income information about our district. Various property tax relief measures exist for those below a certain household income threshold. Find Tax Refund Scenario information [here](#).

The plan is set to cover 10 years but the bond is to be repaid in more than 20 years - will the community be asked for more in a decade?

The committee was asked to present a plan that provides for the district's needs for the next decade. As it is hard to predict the needs of a school district beyond a decade, we believe this plan will address our facilities needs well beyond that. It is unlikely that we will see a period of significant enrollment increase beyond this current wave. That being said, we do not expect to ask the community to support a similar bond question in the next 20 years.

Was consideration given to spreading costs over multiple referendums?

A simple answer to that question is that this multi-year plan is most efficient and cost-effective when built as a package. Because the plan uses all of our district facilities, with students moving into renovated space and freeing up space for other students to move into, the comprehensive plan is one that is difficult to do in stages more separated than what will naturally occur due to the building process. If the referendum would be approved by the community in November, planning would begin right away in the fall and construction would continue in phases until the 2024-25 school year.

How much of the \$326 million is deferred maintenance?

None of the \$326M bond question is for deferred maintenance. The district will sell \$50M in Long Term Facilities Maintenance bonds during the next decade, and those funds are already costed in to the tax impact of the referendum.

First a comment: Our four daughters liked the 9-10 grades at North, the 11-12 grades at South. What was the rational way back when for separating the high school grades?

In the early 1980's the district was facing significant declining enrollment and would not be able to continue to operate two high schools and still offer the programming the community had come to expect. The school board made the decision to combine the two high schools in to one high school with a split campus, assigning students in grades 9 and 10 to White Bear Lake Area High School site, North Campus, and grades 11 and 12 to the Mariner High School site, South Campus. As one board member explained, it was not our intent that this would be a long term solution.

How will athletic facilities fit on the North Campus land?

Athletic field improvements will be made at the new White Bear Lake Area High School site (currently North Campus). A turf field that could be used for physical education classes and multiple sports is part of the plan at the high school site. For example, an all weather track

would be included at the new school as well as multiple turf fields. It is likely that home events for lacrosse, soccer, and track and field could be held at the new high school site. The turf field stadium will remain at the current WBLAHS - South Campus, which would eventually become Sunrise Park Middle School. Home football games will be played at that site.

Land developers, realtors and builders are making a lot of money. What is their contribution?

Land developers will pay property tax on all property they own until they sell it, passing on the property tax responsibility to the buyers.

Could you please explain the homestead tax break for certain incomes?

Various property tax relief measures exist for those below a certain household income threshold. Find Tax Refund Scenario information [here](#).

What is happening to Bellaire and Normandy Park?

Bellaire will remain in 30-year lease to Intermediate District 916, so it would not be available to house any of our district programs for many years. The programs currently housed at Normandy Park Education Center will be moved elsewhere. Future potential uses for the Normandy space would be explored.

What is the timeline for building?

If the referendum would be approved by the community in November, planning would begin right away in the fall and construction would continue in phases until the 2024-25 school year.

How many kids are in each class 9-12?

Currently we have approximately six hundred students in each high school grade.

What is the plan for traffic at the new 9-12 high school?

The district is in the preliminary stage of conducting a traffic study, which would inform a plan for the new high school. One of the benefits of North Campus' central location is that traffic would be coming from all directions of the district, which is different than the current situation of all high school traffic traveling south-bound to get to the current South Campus site. Additionally, the plan calls for the bus garage to be removed from the site so there will be less bus traffic in the area. Transportation Department and District Center employees and guests who currently travel to/from the area would be moved to other district locations, which will also help alleviate traffic. An adjustment to school start time could also be part of the solution. Also, the development of the on-site traffic plan will be built to help alleviate traffic back-up and spillover onto the area roadways.

If we are at capacity now and it will take 5 years to complete building, where will we put students until then?

The students will continue to attend school at the district's current buildings. This will cause a level of overcrowding, so it is essential that the work begin as soon as possible.

Will the district include parents and community members in the various design projects? The design process for Oneka Elementary was fabulous, open and creative and incorporated the richness of various perspectives.

We will have a design process that includes input from interested stakeholders. We expect this process to be highly transparent.

Nowhere in the 12 facts does it mention buying houses by North Campus. Why?

A single unified grade 9-12 high school could be built on the existing property already owned by the district. The district would consider purchasing neighboring homes from interested sellers if expansion made sense. The Board has stated publicly that it will not use eminent domain. On September 23, the Board passed a resolution confirming that the district will not use eminent domain for additional land around the current White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus if the bond referendum is approved by voters. See the press release [here](#).

Where can I find the tax calculator?

Ehlers, the district's municipal advisor, has a tax calculator available along with other tax information at this [Property Tax Information Site](#). A link to Ehler's page can be found on the Bond Referendum page of the district's website, at www.isd624.org/Bond2019.

A lot of information has been published about the need for this bond and the desired outcome, yet nothing has been explained about how the district intends to actually accomplish the plan. Please explain the transparent process that ISD 624 will use to qualify design teams that will be awarded the actual work. Does the district intend to separate disciplines such as technology and security in order to adhere to district standards?

The district went through a comprehensive selection process when we chose our design firm, Wold Architects and Engineers, and our construction managers, Kraus-Anderson. Both firms beat out some of the top firms in the region to be selected. The decision to parcel out elements of the work for disciplines such as technology and security has not been made. We will identify technology and security standards to be applied across the district.

What is your "Plan B" if the referendum does not pass?

If the November referendum is unsuccessful we will study the results and consider the next steps. The strategic plan pressures, increasing enrollment, safety and security needs and aging facilities and deferred maintenance demands will remain regardless of whether the referendum passes. The district would need to continue to look for solutions to these issues.

Who comprised the very large committee? How were seniors represented? Was everyone "pro-levy"? (parents, staff, students)

The 90-member committee was chosen from approximately 150 applicants. The steering committee sought to choose a group of participants who could represent various views and

experiences found throughout the community. Committee members included parents, staff members, community members and students from all areas of the district and in all age groups.

What percentage of the bond referendum will be paid by businesses?

White Bear Lake Area Schools' tax base by property type using net tax capacity (NTC), which is what bond referenda are based on, breaks down like this: Residential/other residential (apartments) 72% and commercial/industrial 28%. These percentages give a general sense for how our school district's tax base is comprised but do not necessarily equate to how the voter approved school debt tax levy is applied to properties as different tax rates exist for the various property classes. Additionally, the Metropolitan Council's fiscal disparities tax-base sharing program further impacts the final tax levy allocation. Generally, about a quarter of the tax levy for the bond payments will be paid by businesses.