



July 6, 2022

Julie Nielsen, Superintendent  
South Washington County Schools, ISD #0833-01  
7362 E Point Douglas Rd S  
Cottage Grove, MN 55016-3025

Dear Superintendent Nielsen:

Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.71, requires a review and comment statement on the educational and economic advisability of your proposed school construction project. Information supplied by your school district and from Minnesota Department of Education sources is the basis of this review and comment. With this positive review and comment, voter and school board approval is required for South Washington County Schools, Independent School District #0833-01, to proceed with the proposed projects.

***The district shall publish a summary of the review and comment statement (the final two pages) in the legal newspaper of the district at least 20 days, but not more than 60 days, prior to holding a referendum for bonds or soliciting any bids for the construction, expansion, or remodeling of an educational facility.*** The department may request a statement certifying the publication, and require the submission, review, and approval of preliminary and final construction plans.

Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.71, requires the commissioner to include comments from residents of the school district in the review and comment. As of the date of this letter, no public comments have been received. In addition, Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.71, ***requires the school board hold a public meeting to discuss the review and comment prior to the date of the bond referendum election.***

Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.71, ***requires that a school district, prior to occupying a new or renovated facility after July 1, 2002, must submit a certification prepared by a system inspector to the commissioner and the building code official that will provide an occupancy permit.*** The certification must verify that the facility's installed or modified heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system operates according to design specifications and code, a system for monitoring outdoor airflow and total airflow of ventilation systems has been installed, and any installed or modified heating, ventilation, or air conditioning system provides an indoor air quality filtration system that meets ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) Standard 52.1.

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Kubesh, Education Finance specialist, at 651-582-8319 or [chris.kubesh@state.mn.us](mailto:chris.kubesh@state.mn.us). Thank you for working with us to improve school facilities for Minnesota students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Heather Mueller, Ed.D.'.

Heather Mueller, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

cc: Tracy Brunnette, School Board Chair

Enclosure

**The Commissioner of the Department of Education  
Review and Comment on the School Construction  
Proposal of South Washington County Schools, ISD #0833-01**

A review and comment must be provided on a school district construction project proposal before the district conducts a referendum, solicits bids, or issues bonds for the project. A project proposal has been submitted for review and comment according to requirements set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.71, subdivisions 9 and 10, and Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.72. The district provides the following information:

1. The geographic area and population to be served:
  - a. preschool through grade 12 student enrollment for the past five years, and
  - b. student enrollment projections for the next five years.
2. A list of existing school facilities:
  - a. by year constructed,
  - b. their uses, and
  - c. an assessment of the extent to which alternate facilities are available within school district boundaries and in adjacent school districts.
3. A list of specific deficiencies of the facility:
  - a. demonstrating the need for a new or renovated facility to be provided,
  - b. the process used to determine the deficiencies,
  - c. a list of those deficiencies that will and will not be addressed by the proposed projects,
  - d. a list of specific benefits that the new or renovated facility will provide to students, teachers, and community users served by the facility.
4. A description of the project, including:
  - a. specifications of site and outdoor space acreage,
  - b. square footage allocations for classrooms, laboratories and support spaces,
  - c. estimated expenditures for major portions of the project,
  - d. estimated changes in facility operating costs, and
  - e. dates the project will begin and be completed.
5. A specification of the source of project financing, including:
  - a. applicable statutory citations,
  - b. the scheduled date for a bond issue or school board action,
  - c. a schedule of payments, including debt service equalization aid, and
  - d. the effect of a bond issue on local property taxes by property class and valuation.
6. Documentation obligating the school district and contractors to comply with the following items:
  - a. Minnesota Statutes, section 471.345 governing municipal contracts,
  - b. sustainable design,
  - c. school facility commissioning under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.72, certifying the plans and designs for heating, ventilating, air conditioning and air filtration for an extensively renovated or new facility meet or exceed current code standards, including ASHRAE air filtration Standard 52.1,
  - d. American National Standards Institute (ANSI) acoustical performance criteria, design requirements and guidelines for schools on maximum background noise levels and reverberation times,
  - e. state fire code,
  - f. chapter 326B governing building codes, and
  - g. consultation with affected government units about the impact of the project on utilities, roads, sewers, sidewalks, retention ponds, school bus and automobile traffic, access to mass transit and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Description of Proposed School Construction Project

South Washington County Public School District, ISD #0833-01, is proposing a single question bond referendum on August 9, 2022, that would authorize \$462.66 million in bonding authority to finance districtwide facility upgrades and two new elementary schools. The proposed projects would be scheduled for completion in calendar years 2023 through 2026. Cost estimates by location/project component are as follows:

<b>Newport Elementary- Convert to ELC</b>		<b>Armstrong Elementary</b>		<b>Bailey Elementary - add 240 seats</b>	
Remodel	1,166,400	Remodel	911,750	Remodel	938,080
Contingency	211,410	Additions	794,812	Additions	1,741,529
Permits/Fees/Services	183,708	Contingency	309,314	Specialized Space (kitchen)	2,072,800
FF&E / Technology	122,472	Permits/Fees/Services	268,784	Site Work	500,000
	<b>1,683,990</b>	FF&E / Technology	179,189	Storm Shelter Allowance	500,000
<b>Cottage Grove Elementary - Add 291 seats</b>			<b>2,463,849</b>	Contingency	1,042,624
Additions	4,672,923	<b>New Elementary - Crestview</b>		Permits/Fees/Services	906,005
Site Work	650,000	Construction	45,552,000	FF&E / Technology	604,003
Storm Shelter Allowance	500,000	Site Work	2,000,000		<b>8,305,041</b>
Contingency	1,055,405	Storm Shelter Allowance	1,885,000	<b>Grey Cloud Elementary - Add 190 seats</b>	
Permits/Fees/Services	917,110	Contingency	8,960,456	Remodel	880,000
FF&E / Technology	611,407	Permits/Fees/Services	7,786,328	Additions	2,787,940
	<b>8,406,845</b>	FF&E / Technology	5,190,885	Specialized Space (kitchen)	2,055,600
<b>Hillside Elementary</b>		Land Purchase	6,700,000	Site Work	500,000
Remodel	901,120		<b>78,074,669</b>	Storm Shelter Allowance	500,000
Additions	1,660,990	<b>Liberty Ridge Elementary</b>		Contingency	1,218,642
Site Work	50,000	Remodel	6,236,783	Permits/Fees/Services	1,058,958
Contingency	473,444	Site Work	500,000	FF&E / Technology	705,972
Permits/Fees/Services	411,407	Storm Shelter Allowance	500,000		<b>9,707,111</b>
FF&E / Technology	274,272	Contingency	1,311,666	<b>Middleton Elementary</b>	
	<b>3,771,233</b>	Permits/Fees/Services	1,139,793	Remodel	495,450
<b>New Elementary - Pine Hill (850 seats)</b>		FF&E / Technology	759,862	Contingency	89,801
Construction	38,444,500		<b>10,448,105</b>	Permits/Fees/Services	78,033
Site Work	1,656,250	<b>Pullman Elementary</b>		FF&E / Technology	52,022
Storm Shelter Allowance	1,000,000	Remodel	1,025,250		<b>715,307</b>
Contingency	7,449,512	Additions	1,729,920	<b>Red Rock Elementary</b>	
Permits/Fees/Services	6,473,368	Site Work	150,000	Remodel	317,304
FF&E / Technology	4,315,579	Storm Shelter Allowance	300,000	Contingency	57,512
	<b>59,339,208</b>	Contingency	580,937	Permits/Fees/Services	49,975
<b>Royal Oaks Elementary</b>		Permits/Fees/Services	504,814	FF&E / Technology	33,317
Remodel	1,012,250	FF&E / Technology	336,543		<b>458,108</b>
Additions	1,728,880	<b>Woodbury Elementary</b>		<b>Woodbury Middle School</b>	
Site Work	150,000	Remodel	1,041,480	Remodel	1,961,080
Storm Shelter Allowance	300,000	Additions	1,672,218	Additions	1,497,788
Contingency	578,393	Site Work	50,000	Specialized Space (kitchen)	4,137,200
Permits/Fees/Services	502,603	Contingency	500,922	Site Work	905,400
FF&E / Technology	335,069	Permits/Fees/Services	435,283	Contingency	1,540,891
	<b>4,607,194</b>	FF&E / Technology	290,188	Permits/Fees/Services	1,338,981
<b>Cottage Grove Middle School</b>			<b>3,990,090</b>	FF&E / Technology	892,654
Remodel	463,320	<b>Lake Middle School</b>			<b>12,273,995</b>
Additions	5,054,110	Remodel	463,320	<b>Oltman Middle School</b>	
Site Work	500,000	Additions	5,725,870	Remodel	232,320
Storm Shelter Allowance	1,000,000	Site Work	500,000	Additions	15,242,426
Contingency	1,271,909	Storm Shelter Allowance	1,000,000	Site Work	750,000
Permits/Fees/Services	1,105,245	Contingency	1,393,665	Storm Shelter Allowance	1,250,000
FF&E / Technology	736,830	Permits/Fees/Services	1,211,047	Contingency	3,167,297
	<b>10,131,414</b>	FF&E / Technology	807,365	Permits/Fees/Services	2,752,272
			<b>11,101,267</b>	FF&E / Technology	1,834,848
					<b>25,229,164</b>

East Ridge High School - add 825 seats		Park High School - add 342 seats		Woodbury High School - add 357 seats	
Remodel	1,015,520	Remodel	4,385,485	Remodel	6,583,060
Maintenance	1,500,000	Maintenance	2,500,000	Additions	22,296,481
Additions	25,068,006	Additions	19,098,451	Site Work	4,312,500
Site Work	2,300,000	Site Work	6,800,000	Storm Shelter Allowance	1,500,000
Storm Shelter Allowance	1,500,000	Storm Shelter Allowance	1,500,000	Contingency	6,287,932
Contingency	5,688,263	Contingency	6,213,963	Permits/Fees/Services	5,463,996
Permits/Fees/Services	4,942,905	Permits/Fees/Services	5,399,720	FF&E / Technology	3,642,664
FF&E / Technology	3,295,270	FF&E / Technology	3,599,813		
	<b>45,309,965</b>		<b>49,497,432</b>		<b>50,086,634</b>
Crestview Elementary - convert to ALC		District Service Center		Next Step Pathway to DSC Building	
Remodel	6,089,565	Additions	14,950,000	Remodel	3,568,191
Additions	2,609,593	Site Work	1,250,000	Contingency	646,734
Site Work	1,000,000	Contingency	2,936,250	Permits/Fees/Services	561,990
Storm Shelter Allowance	500,000	Permits/Fees/Services	2,551,500	FF&E / Technology	374,660
Contingency	1,848,598	FF&E / Technology	1,701,000		<b>5,151,575</b>
Permits/Fees/Services	1,606,367				
FF&E / Technology	1,070,912		<b>23,388,750</b>	<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>466,102,928</b>
	<b>14,725,035</b>				
Other Project Costs		Transportation Storage Building			
Land for Future School	14,000,000	Construction	1,500,000		
Bond Issuance	3,609,485	Land Purchase	3,500,000		
	<b>17,609,485</b>		<b>5,000,000</b>		

The district is expecting enrollment growth in excess of 20%, or 4,000 students over the next ten years. Much of the anticipated enrollment growth is due to the numerous residential property developments under construction or in the planning phases for future construction. An estimated 4,000 single family homes and 3,000 multifamily units are expected to be completed in the school district over the next ten year period.

The district has supplied cost estimates to operate and staff the additional building space and it appears existing revenues, along with future revenue increases from serving additional students, will be sufficient to fund the associated operational cost increases. The proposed project appears to be in the long-term interest of the school district.

### Review and Comment Statement

Based on the department's analysis of the school district's required documentation and other pertinent information from sources of the Minnesota Department of Education, the Commissioner of Education provides a positive review and comment.

### Additional Information is Available

Persons desiring additional information regarding this proposal should contact the school district superintendent's office.

*Heather Mueller, Ed.D.*

Heather Mueller, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

July 6, 2022