Rugby Public Schools *Fast Facts*

The District sent out a community survey to all USPS District box holders in September of 2021. What were the results?

68% Support **adding an addition** onto Ely Elementary School

543 Surveys were completed.

A video explaining the Community Survey Results can be found at the following link: https://youtu.be/TDnmgwOj54w

Why are we having a Referendum vote and how did we get here?

Our elementary school was built in 1965. Since that time, our lives have changed significantly, and education needs have changed as well. The School Board began the process of taking a more in-depth look at our elementary building in 2018, a Construction Manager was retained to study the condition and expected useful life of Ely Elementary. A Citizens Committee was created and the Committee began meeting to help the school district develop solutions for Ely Elementary. This Committee includes members of the community, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and business leaders. The role of the committee included the following tasks: review facility plan, recommend facility improvements, consider options and prioritize, and make a recommendation to the school board. After several meetings and an analysis of Ely Elementary, **the Citizens Committee recommended moving forward with an addition to address the areas of need.**

After hearing support for the plan, favorable community survey results, continued steady enrollment, availability of COVID-19 Relief Funds, and low bond interest rates, the Rugby School Board voted to call for a referendum vote on Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at a Special Board Meeting. **The vote will be held on December 1, 2021, at Rugby High School from 9:00 am – 7:00 pm.**

What current issues need to be addressed at Ely Elementary?

A facilities study completed by Consolidated Construction and Zerr Berg Architects in 2018 found that while the elementary school has been well maintained, infrastructure have exceeded their useful life and require updating.

Safety & Security:

Bus and car traffic needs to be rerouted to better separate pedestrians and improve drop-off/pick-up efficiency. Main entrances should be redesigned to better monitor and control visitor access, including routing all visitors to main offices. Some areas of the school need to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Classrooms & Learning Environments:

Teaching has changed a great deal since the elementary school was built. Classrooms lack space for flexible learning and cannot support personalized small group instruction. We also lack appropriate, centralized spaces to support our students with special needs.

Support Spaces:

The current cafeteria needs to be redesigned to increase capacity. The cafeteria is too small and inefficient. Kitchen equipment is original to the building and needs to be replaced. Gym space is lacking for both student and community needs.

What areas will be addressed as part of the school addition?

The Citizens Committee, School Board, Teachers, and Admin have suggested the following focus areas as part of this overall project.

Recommended Plan

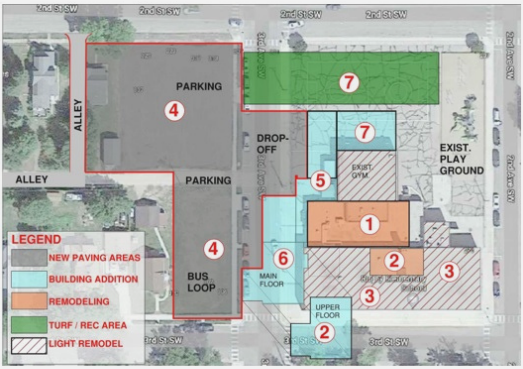
If the community supports pursuing a bond referendum, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the following updates to Ely Elementary School.

① Add classroom space with areas specially designed to support students with special needs.

② Add classrooms for band, choir, and courses in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

③ Update some existing classrooms to allow for large-group instruction, small-group learning, and better technology access.

④ Redesign car and bus traffic, which will keep students safer during busy pick-up/drop-off times.



⑤ Improve school security by installing updated safety features and creating a commons area near the school's main entrance where all visitors will report before access gaining access to the building.

⑥ Expand the cafeteria to improve meal serving, minimize scheduling conflicts, and allow students more time to eat. This would also replace aged kitchen equipment that will soon be not functional.

⑦ Expand recreation areas by renovating the current gym to regulation size (allowing for both school and community use) and enlarging the playground area.

What are the major changes in education since our buildings were built?

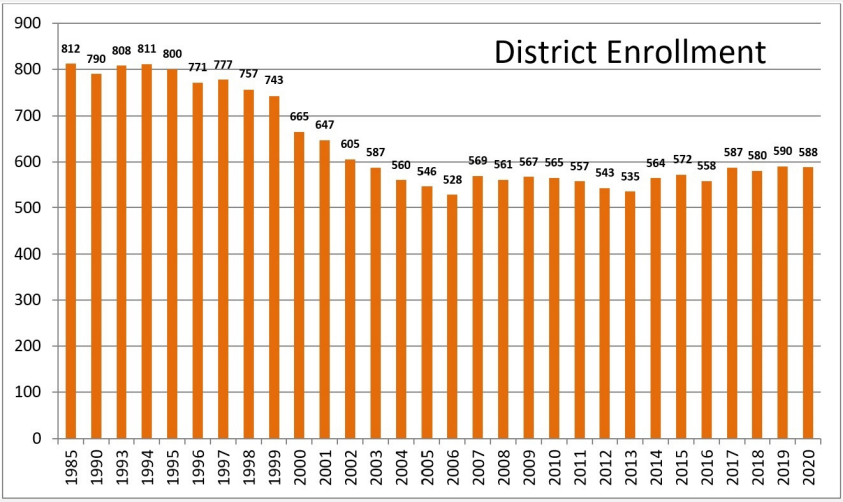
- Modern classrooms for effective use of computers and technology.
- Teaching and learning methods have advanced based on research.
- Increased focus on job skills including working in teams, problem solving, etc.
- Students with a wide range of special needs are now served in public schools.
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction has advanced.
- Libraries have become multimedia centers.

Increased student services

- Title I
- School nurse
- Mental health counseling
- Truancy and attendance support
- Social and emotional learning supports
- Handicap accessibility
- Need for safety and security

How is district enrollment?

Beginning in 2006, enrollment has increased at Ely Elementary and has held steady since. Enrollment projections indicate that our school district will hold steady and slightly increase in the future.



What is the square footage compared to other like-sized school districts?

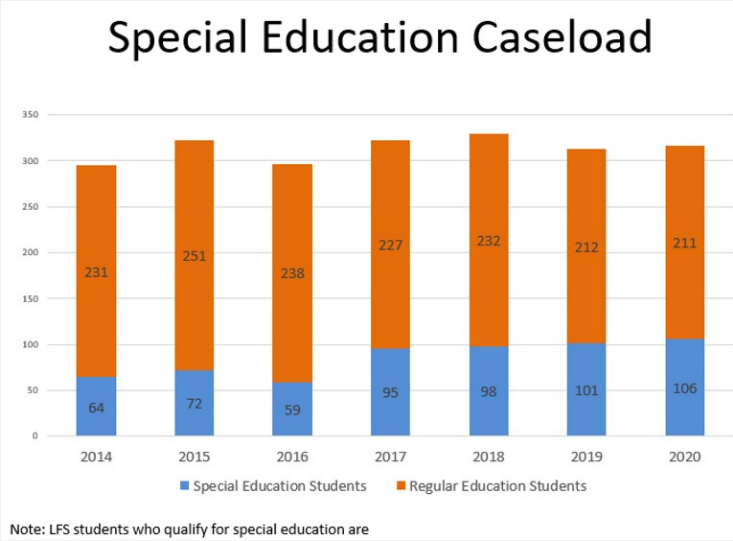
The Minnesota Department of Education recommends (ND DPI has not provided information on this topic): "Schools of less than 500 students should fall into a range of 125 to 150 square feet per student." Ely Elementary currently has 38,445 square foot which equates to 133 square feet per student. **Ely Elementary classrooms are extremely small.**

School	Square Footage	Enrollment	Sq Ft/Student	Separate Elem School
Larimore Elementary	35246	184	192	Yes
Killdeer Elementary	57119	306	187	No
Lisbon Elementary	32615	181	181	Yes
Beulah Elementary	47141	300	157	K-4
Ely Elementary	38445	290	133	Yes

Class sizes were larger in the past, why is there a space issue at Ely Elementary now?

Full Time Kindergarten	Full-time kindergarten began in 2009. Before this, kindergarten children attended half days only. This is important to consider from a space standpoint. You could use one room to accommodate 40-50 children. This could be done by splitting the group into three groups and having them attend half days. Currently, there are two to three classrooms needed to accommodate our kindergarten class sizes.
Teaching and Learning have become more personalized	Our school district has moved to an intervention model for all students. For example, if a student is behind grade level in reading, we have a timely system of supports established to accelerate that student back up to grade level. This is different than past educational practices. In the 1980s, 1990s, and the early 2000s, students were often given whole group lessons and you either succeeded or failed and the class moved on. There were rarely any organized student supports outside of special education. We have made considerable strides in this area within our school district. Our system of supports requires small groups (between 3-5 students) to accelerate students back up to grade level. A focus on small groups requires additional space and is an area of need for Ely Elementary.
Class Size Reduction	Teaching and learning have become more personalized over the past 5-10 years. We are focused on creating smaller groups to meet the needs of ALL students. In the past, it was not unheard of to have 30+ students in a classroom. The district strives to keep class sizes small and manageable. Due to the larger class sizes at specific grade levels, we have added three additional classroom teachers to support class size reduction. We are now out of classroom space to add additional sections.
Increased Special Education Caseload	Since 2014, we have seen an increase in the number of students that qualify for special education services. In 2014, our elementary special education department operated out of one small office area. We have since added a full classroom, a sensory room, a small classroom, an office inside the cafeteria, and continue to use hallway areas often to deliver services.

Special education caseload has continued to increase.

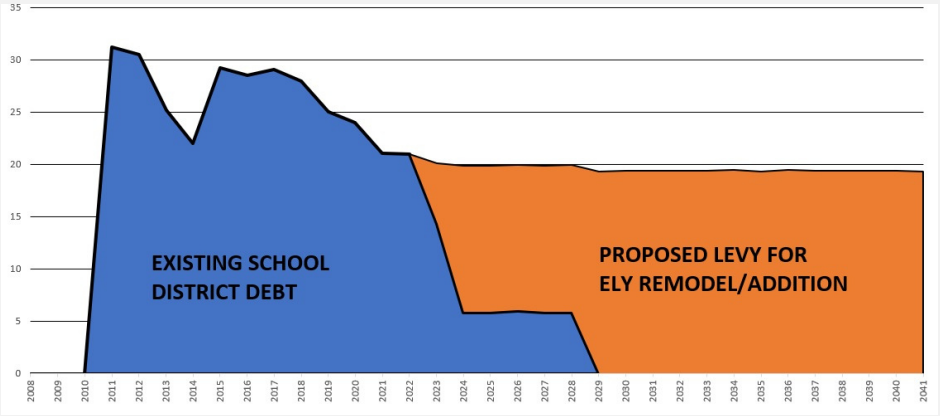


Note: LFS students who qualify for special education are

How many years would be required to pay back the bond?
A referendum is usually financed for 20 years. We will spread it out over 20 years to make the tax impact minimal, and if able, we will pay the bond off early.

Are there Federal Funds available for this project?
RPSD will receive $1,318,785 as part of the COVID-relief funds passed by Congress and signed by President Trump and then by President Biden. We will be able to use these funds to offset the costs of the new construction. RPSD intends to use these dollars, to the extent possible, to lessen the impact on Rugby taxpayers. These dollars need to be spent by 2024, we believe this is a great way to reinvest federal money that will benefit our community for years to come.

What are the costs?
The district is proposing a bond for $7,870,000. With the debt expiring on the 2010 Rugby High School bond issue, the net tax impact would not be higher than the current level of taxation.



What if the Referendum doesn't pass?
The School Board began this process by listening to the Community and will continue to do so after the referendum. If there are not enough votes to approve the project, the Board will listen to the patrons, and consider all options.

What are the risks of doing nothing?
There are several risks of doing nothing:

- Re-investing now will continue to make Rugby Public School a "School of Choice", and reducing the risk of declining future enrollment.
- We believe that interest rates and construction costs will likely rise, making this project more expensive in the future.
- Interest rates are currently at an all-time low. If we wait, it is likely that rates will rise.
- One-time COVID-relief funds require us to spend the funds in a short time frame.
- Finally – and most importantly – if nothing is done, today's students would not gain the benefit of these improvements.

Why add onto the Gym?
A gym is required for physical education and athletics. Our existing gym spaces in the district are fully utilized, and activities are scheduled early in the morning and late into the evening. The new gym addition will increase the gym to regulation size and be designed for flexible use, with a curtain dividing it into sections for school assemblies, physical education, elementary music programs, athletic practices, and community events. There will be an economic benefit to downtown businesses that will occur during events. The downtown area will be within walking distance for fans during downtime.

Would the new addition be available for Community use?
We envision a similar community use agreement found at our high school facility. Currently, the high school is used by community organizations through a rental agreement process. We welcome your ideas on how this new facility could be designed to benefit our community.

What if construction costs are different than planned?
The school board has set the max amount of a bond request at $7,870,000 and we will address our needs with that amount of funds. If bids are more than the estimated costs, the School Board will direct the Architect/Engineer and Construction Manager to re-design and re-bid the project, so costs remain at or below the amount approved by the voters.

Why doesn't the school district move a grade level or two to Rugby High School?
There is a common misconception that there are open classrooms at Rugby High School. The 2010 renovation and addition at Rugby High School redesigned many of the learning spaces. **Currently, every classroom is in use and there are no additional classroom spaces available for additional grade levels.** The committee discussed grade-level movement at length. Eventually, due to the lack of space at the high school, **concerns about the maturity of 5th and 6th graders, and the exposure to older students,** the committee decided to focus specifically on addressing the Ely Elementary site.

Will the project be up for public bid?
Yes, our Construction Manager has been hired through a competitive bid process, and all construction work will be legally advertised and competitively bid. The work will be packaged to enable local contractors to participate to the fullest extent possible.

What is the timeline for the Project?
With Voter approval on December 1st, 2021, the project will proceed as follows:
Design/Engineering/Permitting = Winter/Spring, 2021-2022
Competitive Bidding = Spring, 2022
Construction Summer = Summer, 2022 - Fall, 2023

When and where can I vote?
The referendum is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 1, 2021.** Voters can cast their ballot from **9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Rugby High School Gym.**

Will early voting and absentee ballots be available?
Absentee ballots can be picked up on October 22, 2021, at the Rugby Public School District Office, from Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:00 p.m. Absentee ballots are due to the School Business Manager by 4:00 p.m. November 30, 2021 or postmarked by November 30, 2021.

Who is eligible to vote?
To vote in the election, you must be:

- A US citizen
- At least 18 years old on Election Day
- A legal resident of the Rugby Public School District for at least 30 days preceding the election.

Valid identification will be required and could include a driver's license, non-driver's identification card, tribal government-issued identification card, or student identification certificate.

How will the question be listed on the voting ballot?
The ballot will list an increase in additional millage for the project, but due to the expired debt from the high school, there will not be an increase over your current level in taxation.

December 1, 2021

RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
COUNTIES OF PIERCE, ROLETTE AND BENSON
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

QUESTION #1

Shall Rugby Public School District No. 5, Pierce, Rolette and Benson Counties, North Dakota, issue its general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed $7,870,000 maturing within a maximum of 20 years, resulting in an estimated additional millage of 19.46 mills, equal to $19.46 on each $1,000 of taxable valuation for the first taxable year, for the purpose of providing funds, together with any other funds available, to construct an addition to the existing elementary building; to make site improvements to school property; and to otherwise improve and renovate school property.

Yes ..... ☐

No ..... ☐

Why is the parking lot so big? Couldn't we reduce the parking lot and add more playground space?
City ordinances require the District to add additional parking lot space based on the number of students and staff that attend Ely Elementary. If the referendum is successful we may ask for a variance to increase the size of the playground.

What will happen with the modular classroom?
We have used the modular as an additional classroom in the past and are currently using it for band, small group interventions, IEP meetings, and staff meetings. If the referendum is successful the modular will no longer have a need and will be removed.

The Heart of America Medical Center (HAMC) is planning on building a new hospital, will the Ely Elementary Addition/Renovation and the new hospital impact my taxes?
Approximately $1.3 million in COVID-relief funds can be used to buy down the cost of the Ely Elementary Addition/Renovation. With the debt expiring on the 2010 Rugby High School bond issue and COVID-relief funds, the net tax impact would not be higher than the current level of taxation. As for the new hospital, their business model is not dependent on local property tax, therefore in both situations there will not be an increase over your current level of taxation.

How can I find out more information? How can I get involved?
Future Public Meetings, Open House, and Referendum Election
Public Meeting #1: 10/27/21, at 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at Ely Elementary
Public Meeting #2: 11/3/21, at 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at Ely Elementary
Open House Tour: 11/17/21, at 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Contact Ely to RSVP
Public Meeting #3: 11/17/21, at 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at Ely Elementary
Referendum Election: 12/1/21, at 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 pm at Rugby High School