



June 11, 2026

Dr. Carlondrea Hines, Superintendent
St. Louis Park Public School District, ISD #0283-01
6300 Walker Street
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Dear Dr. Hines:

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 are required for St. Louis Park Public School District, Independent School District #0283-01, 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 48 days, but not more than 70 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 plan

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 to discuss the review and comment prior to the sale of general obligation bonds.***

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. Thank you for working with us to improve school facilities for Minnesota students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Willie L. Jett II'.

Willie L. Jett II
Commissioner

cc: Colin Cox, School Board Chair

Enclosure

**The Commissioner of the Department of Education
Review and Comment on the School Construction
Proposal of St. Louis Park Public School District, ISD #0283-01**

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

St. Louis Park Public School District, ISD #0283-01, is proposing a single question referendum on August 11, 2026, that would authorize two funding sources, including \$50 million in bonding authority and the revocation and replacement of the district's existing capital project levy with a larger levy amount.

The \$50 million in bonding authority would finance comprehensive Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) improvements at the high school and middle school. The proposed, bond-funded projects would be scheduled for completion in calendar years 2027 and 2028. HVAC-related cost estimates by location are as follows:

Project Cost Estimates - Bond Funding			
High School		Middle School	
HVAC Improvements	\$26,289,000	HVAC Improvements	\$14,812,000
Asbestos Remediation	\$200,000	Asbestos Remediation	\$500,000
Fees/Permits/Services	\$3,418,000	Fees/Permits/Services	\$2,428,000
Contingencies	\$802,000	Contingencies	\$476,000
	\$30,709,000		\$18,216,000
Districtwide		Total Cost Estimate	\$50,000,000
Capitalized Interest (Net)	\$316,592		
Bond Issuance	\$758,408		
	\$1,075,000		

The capital projects levy component would revoke the existing capital projects levy tax rate of 4.287% on the district's net tax capacity (NTC) and replace it with a higher tax rate, 10.127% of NTC. For the Payable 2026 levy cycle, the district levied \$4,157,873 for capital project at the lower, 4.287% tax rate. If approved by voters, the district would levy \$9,860,228, beginning with the Payable 2027 levy for a ten-year period. The annual levy amount in the nine subsequent years would be computed by multiplying 10.127% times the preceding year's NTC and would be authorized for annual certification by the school board. The estimated total cost of the capital projects to be funded over the ten-year levy period is \$98,602,280.

The school board is aware that capital projects levy proceeds are only authorized to fund the capital projects proposed in this review and comment submission and eligible for funding under Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.10, subdivision 14. Proposed projects include:

- technology upgrades (classrooms, infrastructure)
- student / staff devices
- software
- technology personnel
- security equipment

The district currently has approximately 4,400 students currently enrolled in K-12 programming and is projecting a slight increase in enrollment to around 4,600 students over the next five years.

The existing middle and high school boilers are original equipment and at or near 70 years of age. Annual maintenance costs approach \$125,000. The proposed HVAC system replacements would significantly reduce maintenance costs and would also reduce operational costs with more efficient systems. The proposed capital projects levy tax rate increase would more than double the amount of the district's capital projects levy and would be the highest capital projects tax rate in the entire state. The proposed projects appear to be in the long-term interest of the district.

If the referendum is successful and bonds are sold, the debt service on the bonds will be eligible for debt service equalization under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.53, subdivision 3, if the bond schedule is approved. The amount of debt service equalization aid, if any, the district receives is determined annually and is dependent upon property wealth, student population, and other statutory requirements.

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.



Willie L. Jett II
Commissioner

June 11, 2026