

MINNETONKA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #276
District Service Center
5621 County Road 101
Minnetonka, Minnesota

Summary of August 17, 2023 Study Session

The School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District #276 met in study session at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, 2023 in the Community Room at the District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101, Minnetonka, Minnesota. Chairperson Lisa Wagner presided. Other Board members present were Mark Ambrosen, Katie Becker, Patrick Lee-O'Halloran, Michael Remucal, Meghan Selinger, Chris Vitale and Superintendent David Law, ex officio.

DISCUSSION REGARDING POSSIBLE CAPITAL PROJECTS REFERENDUM ELECTION

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Paul Bourgeois led the discussion. He began by saying that on November 3, 2015, the voters of the District approved an extension of the existing Capital Projects Referendum at the existing 6.569% of Net Tax Capacity of the District for 10 years. The 10 years approved included the 2015 Pay 2016 Levy to fund Fiscal Year 2017 through the 2024 Pay 2025 Levy to fund Fiscal Year 2026. The extension of the Capital Projects Referendum was approved by a vote of 4,770 Yes to 1,780 No or 72.49% Yes. The 2015 approval occurred in the eighth year of the Capital Projects Referendum that was approved on November 6, 2007 at the same 6.569% of Net Tax Capacity of the District.

It is prudent to request renewal of the Capital Projects Referendum in its 8th year of authorization because if the renewal would be turned down by the voters, it allows for two additional opportunities to request renewal before the Capital Projects Referendum would drop off the District Levy.

The Capital Projects Referendum is a key funding component that contributes to the success of all students and the operations of the District. Revenue from the Capital Projects Referendum pays for the following key expenditures each year:

- All instructional technology equipment, including iPads and instructional computers
- All instructional textbooks inclusive of all instructional software and traditional textbooks
- All instructional staff training on instructional software
- All instructional technology support personnel
- All administrative software including but not limited to student accounting and grading software, financial software and internet firewall software
- All network hardware and software, including but not limited to network data storage devices and wide area network fiber optic cable

- All technology network security
- All administrative technology support personnel
- Classroom equipment that is not technology hardware and software
- Security barriers of all types including but not limited to physical barriers built into the facilities, electronic barriers, and security monitoring equipment

At this time, it is prudent for the School Board to consider a renewal referendum for the Capital Projects Referendum at the same 6.569% of Net Tax Capacity to be placed on the November 7, 2023 ballot. Approval of this Capital Projects Referendum would authorize this important levy for the 2023 Pay 2024 Levy for Fiscal Year 2025 through the 2032 Pay 2033 Levy for Fiscal Year 2034 and secure long-term stability for this important funding source. For the 2023 Pay 2024 Levy for Fiscal Year 2025, under the authority approved in 2015, the Capital Projects Referendum at 6.569% of Net Tax Capacity will generate \$9,240,493.94. Approval by the voters of the District of the extension of the Capital Projects Referendum through the 2032 Pay 2033 Levy for Fiscal Year 2034 at the same 6.569% of Net Tax Capacity will not increase that amount. It will remain the same.

Mr. Bourgeois also shared the following information in powerpoint format with the Board:




Capital Projects Referendum Basics

- Capital Projects Referendums are requests to voters of a school district to provide additional revenue to fund specific capital-related needs for which ongoing Operating Capital revenue sources are insufficient to fund
- Most often associated with technology needs for infrastructure and instruction
- Provides revenue for a period of up to ten years
- Revenue is based on a percentage of Net Tax Capacity, which is a calculation based on property values of the district
- Revenue can go up or down, depending on what property values do from year to year

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Capital Projects Referendum Basics (Continued)

- Capital Projects Referendum Revenue must be spent on the same categories as allowed for use of Operating Capital Revenue
- The uses of revenue must be described to the voters in the question presented to them
- The Capital Projects Referendum uses must be approved by the Minnesota Department of Education prior to putting a question to the voters through a process called “Review and Comment”
- In Minnetonka ISD 276, it is commonly referred to as the “Tech Levy” because funding of technology is the primary use of the voter-approved funds

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Minnetonka ISD 276 Citizens Have Supported Technology-Related Referendums Since 1992

- 02/04/1992 – Citizens approved a \$4,000,000 Bond for technology
 - 5,486 Yes (60%) and 3,710 No (40%)
- 11/05/2002 – Citizens approved what was then called a Down Payment Levy for 10 years at \$2,900,000 the first year – authority to fund FY04 through FY13
 - The rate was equivalent under the property tax laws at that time to the current 6.569% of net tax capacity
 - 12,249 Yes (56%) and 9,635 No (44%)

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Minnetonka ISD 276 Citizens Have Supported Technology-Related Referendums Since 1992 (Continued)



- 11/06/2007 Citizens approved extension of what was now called the Capital Projects Referendum Levy – authority to fund FY09 Through FY18
 - The rate was equivalent under the property tax laws at that time to the current 6.569% of net tax capacity
 - 5,002 Yes (64%) and 2,850 No (36%)
- 11/03/15 Citizens approved extension of the Capital Projects Referendum Levy – authority to fund FY17 through FY26
 - Same 6.569% of net tax capacity
 - 4,770 Yes (73%) and 1,780 No (27%)

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What The Capital Projects Referendum Pays For



- All instructional technology including instructional hardware of any type
- All instructional texts of any type, including all instructional software and traditional texts
- All staff development for the use of instructional technology and software
- All administrative technology to keep the district running including administrative hardware of any type
- All administrative software from payroll to student records to budget tracking
- All the network backbone to run instructional and administrative software – the fiber cable, the wires, the network control software, the servers, cloud storage

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What The Capital Projects Referendum Pays For (Continued)



- All the staff members who deliver instructional staff development training
- All the staff members who run the network, make sure instructional software is running, and make sure administrative software is running
- All the staff members who support all the hardware, network devices, and network wiring to instructional and administrative devices
- Firewall and anti-virus, anti-malware, anti-hacking protection
- Instructional equipment of all types, including technology and traditional classroom equipment and furniture
- Security barriers to keep intruders out of buildings
- Security monitoring systems

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Amount of Capital Projects Referendum Levy 23 Pay 24



- \$9,240,483 under the current authority that funds FY17 through FY26 at 6.569% of net tax capacity of the District
- If the authority is approved for extension to fund FY25 through FY34 at the same 6.569% of net tax capacity of the District - \$9,240,483
- In future years the amount would go up or down with any increases or decreases in net tax capacity – dependent 100% on property values as is currently the case

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November 7, 2023 Potential Question



November 7, 2023		
Instructions to Voters: To vote, completely fill in the oval(s) next to your choice(s) like this: ●.		
<small>To vote for a question, fill in the oval next to the word "Yes" on that question. To vote against a question, fill in the oval next to the word "No" on that question.</small>		
School District Question 1 Revoking Existing Capital Project Levy Authorization; Approving New Authorization		
<p>The board of Independent School District No. 276 (Minnetonka) has proposed to revoke its existing capital project levy authorization of 6.569% times the net tax capacity of the school district and to replace that authorization with a new authorization of 6.569% times the net tax capacity of the school district.</p> <p>The proposed new authorization will raise approximately \$9,240,000 for taxes payable in 2024, the first year it is to be levied, and would be applicable for ten years. The estimated total cost of the projects to be funded over that time period is approximately \$92,400,000.</p> <p>The money raised by the proposed authorization will be used to provide funds for the following: The purchase and installation of software and technology equipment; costs related to the support and maintenance of technology; costs related to training staff in the use of technology; the purchase of classroom equipment and instructional texts; and building security equipment. The projects to be funded have received a positive review and comment from the Commissioner of Education.</p>		
<input type="radio"/>	Yes	Shall the school district's existing capital project levy authorization be revoked and the new capital project levy authorization proposed by the board of Independent School District No. 276 be approved?
<input type="radio"/>	No	
BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.		

Wording at the bottom is required by Minnesota Statutes
It refers to the extension of time for this levy as the tax rate is not increasing

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In the discussion that followed, Board members were supportive of bringing this question to the voters in November. Board member Vitale noted that if the public were to vote this down, the district could try again and put it on the ballot in November of 2024. Vice Chair Selinger said that it would be important to highlight the security improvements aspect of this, as that was always an important topic for parents. Board member Vitale said it would be important to have clear communications around this, so that the voting public can be fully informed and understand what they're voting for.

Chairperson Wagner noted that this item would be voted on in the special meeting to follow the study session this evening.

POLICY REVIEW

Executive Director of Human Resources Anjie Flowers led the discussion. She began by saying that Policy #509: Enrollment of Nonresident Students, would be deferred for discussion at a later meeting. There are currently discrepancies between MDE recommendations and legislative recommendations for this policy.

The following policies were then reviewed:

- #424: License Status

- #515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
- #534: Equal Educational Opportunity
- #516.1: Overdose Medication
- #419: Tobacco-Free Environment
- #418: Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School

With regards to Policy #516.1, Ms. Flowers noted that was a new policy that is now being required by the legislature. Legislation was passed during the last session that mandates the availability of overdose medication in schools. Director of Health Services Annie Lumbar Bendson noted that all health staff will be trained in how to administer the medication.

With regards to Policy #419, Ms. Flowers noted the policy reflects new requirements around vaping. There are clear expectations and definitions around what is expected of students and staff. There is also a provision to allow indigenous students to use loose tobacco for ceremonial use.

Board members agreed to all the recommended changes. Ms. Flowers noted that the bulk of these changes were being driven due to changes made at the state level in the 2023 legislative session.

CITIZEN INPUT

Chairperson Wagner extended an invitation to members of the audience who wished to address the Board on any topic. She also read the guidelines for Citizen Input, for the benefit of those who wished to speak.

Jenn McFarlane addressed the Board at this time. She noted that in 1849, MN Governor Ramsey had stolen the land and the name “Minnetonka” from the Dakota people. She asked that the Board reconsider the current Minnetonka Skippers mascot costume, and also that Native American Studies be added to the district curriculum. She said that the current curriculum and mascot show dishonor and disrespect for the eleven tribal nations in Minnesota.

Chairperson Wagner thanked Ms. McFarlane for her comments and asked that she email them to the entire Board.

MTSS/SEL UPDATE

Associate Superintendent for Instruction Amy Ladue and Health Services Director Annie Lumbar Bendson led the discussion. They shared the following information with the Board:

Identifying Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Priorities

During the 2022-2023 school year, the District sought to identify social and emotional learning (SEL) priorities to meet the current needs of students through Tier I instruction. Multiple inputs were used to identify these priorities. The data from the 2022 MN Student Survey was reviewed with key stakeholders throughout the district and feedback and insights were gathered. The Mental Health Advisory and the Student Teaching and Learning Advisory committee also provided input. Additionally, results from the SAEBRS and mySAEBRS screener, data from the schools, and best practice guidance from CAREI informed this process.

Primary and secondary groups of SEL leaders representing each school level were convened. These groups included department chairs, counselors, psychologists, teachers, and instructional coaches. These groups met to review the information gathered and to align these themes to the Minnesota and CASTEL standards for social and emotional learning. Additionally, these teams were tasked with using the identified priorities to make recommendations for a Tier 1 resource for both the primary (K-5 level) and secondary (6-12) level.

These groups determined the scope and frequency of Tier 1 lessons at both the primary and secondary level. This will provide an aligned sequence of lessons from the elementary to the secondary level with a consistent delivery structure. As the work progressed, one of the main considerations was to ensure that the resource would complement the existing programming, practices, and structures within Minnetonka Public Schools.

The following key factors were taken into consideration when identifying priority areas for selecting SEL resources:

- Skill focus
 - Improved emotional/behavioral regulation (*elementary*)
 - Improved perspective-taking (*secondary*)
 - Improved self-efficacy (*secondary*)
 - Improved conflict resolution/social problem-solving (*all levels*)
 - Improved executive functioning skills (*all levels*)
 - Improved empathy/perspective-taking (*all levels*)
 - Improved understanding of social cues (*all levels*)
 - Improved inhibitory control (*all levels*)
 - Improved positive social behavior (*all levels*)
 - Reduced problem behavior (*all levels*)
 - Improved identification of feelings/agency (*all levels*)
 - Improved school connectedness (*all levels*)
- Instructional methods
- Program components
- Implementation considerations
- Equitable SEL

At the elementary level, over 45 resources were reviewed using the identified criteria to evaluate them. These programs were categorized as “meets criteria,” “partially meets criteria,” or “does not meet criteria.” Of the 45 vendors reviewed, 11 met the criteria and were invited to present to the SEL leadership team in order to gather more information and provide the opportunities to ask questions about the resources.

At the secondary level, over 30 resources were reviewed using the same criteria. Five vendors presented to the secondary leadership team to allow the team to gain a better understanding of the resource and to gather more information.

After robust and thorough discussion and analysis of the resources, taking into consideration all of the factors indicated above, an elementary resource and a secondary resource were identified to be recommended for each level.

Next Steps:

Using the preferred resource for the elementary level, the District SEL team will partner with the elementary health chairs to evaluate, align, and incorporate this resource into the health curriculum review and adoption process during the upcoming school year.

At the secondary level, *Be Good People* was recommended by the planning team as the resource most aligned to district priorities. This resource will be piloted as a part of the “Chart Your Course” program at MME and MMW, which will incorporate social and emotional lessons into core content areas.

The overarching focus areas for each grade are as follows:

6th grade

- Executive functioning
- Responsible decision-making
- Problem-solving

7th grade

- Relationships
- Communication
- Teamwork

8th grade

- Self-awareness
- Navigating stress
- Perspective

Middle School Pilot:

- Built for school-wide Tier I instruction
- Follows best practice
- Closely aligned with State SEL standards
- Effective SEL that incorporate CASEL's four elements (SAFE):
 - Sequenced: connected and coordinated activities to foster skills development
 - Active: employing active forms of learning to help students strengthen new skills
 - Focused: dedicated time and attention to developing personal and social skills
 - Explicit: targeting specific social and emotional skills
- Schoolwide norms, expectations and routines are explicitly taught, posted and reviewed regularly
- Utilize data to inform decisions
- Utilize the MTSS framework to meet the needs of students in all tiers, with a focus on core instruction for all
- Teachers use inclusive, relationship-based and culturally responsive practices to create supportive classroom environments
- SEL-related events, posters, announcements, videos during the morning show, etc.

Further work to evaluate the effectiveness of this pilot will be completed this year. This will be accomplished through establishing and communicating a shared vision, assessing, and expanding the foundational knowledge of SEL, completing a needs assessment with staff, and continuing to strengthen adult/staff SEL competencies. Additionally, student data, survey results and teacher feedback will be used to make recommendations for resource adoptions at the secondary level.

Board members thanked Ms. Ladue and Ms. Lumbar Bendson for the great report and said they looked forward to hearing more as the school year progresses.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the study session at 7:10 p.m. A special meeting followed at 7:30 p.m.

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