

RIPON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT REFERENDUM



JULY 1, 2014 - NOVEMBER 4, 2014

pra

PLUNKETT RAYSICH
ARCHITECTS, LLP



CGSCHMIDT^{INC.}

Entry Summary



Project Name

Ripon Area School District “Facility Improvement” Referendum Campaign

Target Audience

Registered and likely voters in the Ripon Area School District

Budget

\$8,000

Goals and Objectives

Our goal was to offer compelling information to encourage voters in the Ripon Area School District to vote in hopes of passing a \$29.1 million referendum. We hoped to educate the Ripon area residents on the District’s facility needs.

Research And Planning

Research and Planning can be divided into the following steps:

- a) Created a Core Planning Team for facility decisions
- b) Completed a community survey to determine referendum support
- c) Consulted with our architect and construction manager to determine referendum dollar options
- d) Distributed and presented referendum information to District constituents

Execution

The execution of the campaign is supplied in the timeline portion of this submittal with accompanying attachments.

Project Information

Our creative and educational referendum campaign was based off of our strategic community surveys, board input, and consultation with our architect, Plunkett Raysich Architects, and our construction manager, CG Schmidt.

Evaluation

After compiling the survey results and gathering information from community engagement sessions, we designed our campaign to coordinate with the informational needs of the community. While the survey predicted the question to pass with 50% of the vote, our campaign resulted in the referendum passing with 62% of the vote.

PROJECT EXECUTION TIMELINE

JULY 2014

A Core Planning Team was formed that met once a week throughout the entirety of the referendum process.

Survey Results were distributed to the community. A combined facility had generated the most support amongst district residents.

Please Refer to Section 1



The referendum Brand and logo were created. The "Key Messages" of our campaign were finalized.

Please Refer to Sections 2 and 3

The School Board officially adopted ballot resolutions for the November 2014 election. 

Next, we developed a campaign communication plan and corresponding timeline.

Please Refer to Section 4

AUGUST 2014



We created a community engagement calendar.

Please Refer to Section 5

A fact sheet was produced to inform the Ripon Area community on district needs, the upcoming referendum, project details and the potential tax impact.

Please Refer to Section 6

A Frequently Asked Questions document was prepared based on survey comments, community engagement sessions and other questions received.

Please Refer to Section 7

We worked with local media to ensure the referendum process was communicated correctly.

Please Refer to Section 8

Website updates and our social media campaign were important components to our efforts.

Please Refer to Section 9

SEPTEMBER 2014


An informational 7x11 inch direct mail piece was delivered to every door in the District.



Please Refer to Section 10

Referendum Business Cards were created and distributed at community events.


Please Refer to Section 11

We presented to various organizations within the community about the upcoming referendum. 

Please Refer to Section 12

Informational displays shared site plans and project details with area residents.


Please Refer to Section 13



Banners were positioned in highly visible areas as a reminder to learn more about the referendum.

Please Refer to Section 14


OCTOBER 2014

Social media was a focus of our campaign during the month of October. 

We prepared a special referendum insert for the October district newsletter. A Spanish translation was also included.


Please Refer to Section 15

Community engagement continued with more presentations to district residents.



A second informational 7x11 inch direct mail piece was delivered to every door in the District.

Please Refer to Section 16

School tours were hosted at the Middle and High schools to allow voters to see the aging buildings. 

Please Refer to Section 17

NOVEMBER 2014

Voting Reminders were sent out through Infinite Campus and district social media accounts. A press release discussing potential outcomes was published in the paper.

Please Refer to Section 18



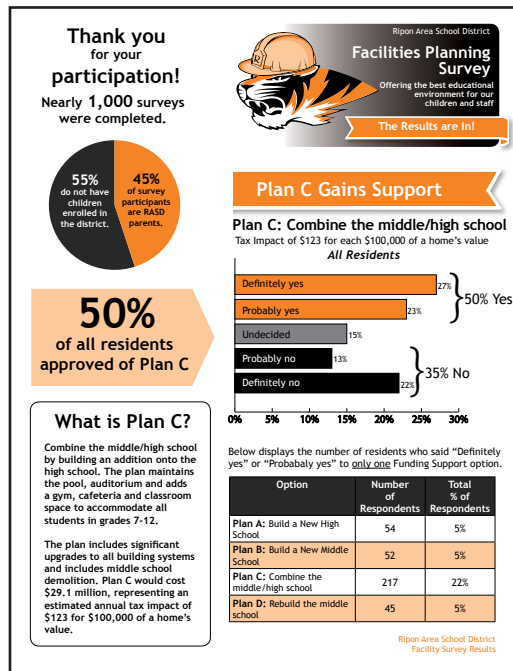
Referendum Passes!

Please Refer to Section 19

Following the passage of the referendum, we continued to engage the community with news and updates on the design and construction process.



SECTION 1: SURVEY RESULTS



Ripon Area residents participated in a community-wide survey during the final months of the 2013-2014 school year. During the summer months, we focused on communicating the results of the survey with the community through several different methods. The complete results were publicly shared at a Board meeting and were published online at the district website. We also created a two-sided handout that summarized the highlights and key information. Sharing these results demonstrated how residents' opinions were influencing the facility planning process and allowed complete transparency between the District and community.

JULY 2014

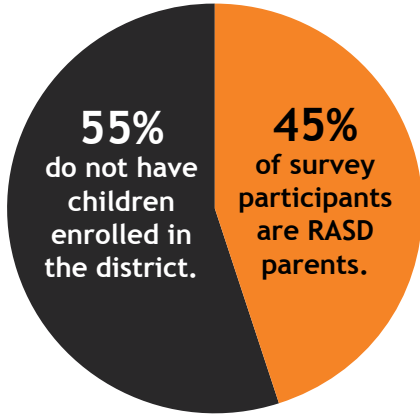
Facilities Planning Survey

Offering the best educational environment for our children and staff



The Results are In!

Thank you for your participation!
 Nearly 1,000 surveys were completed.



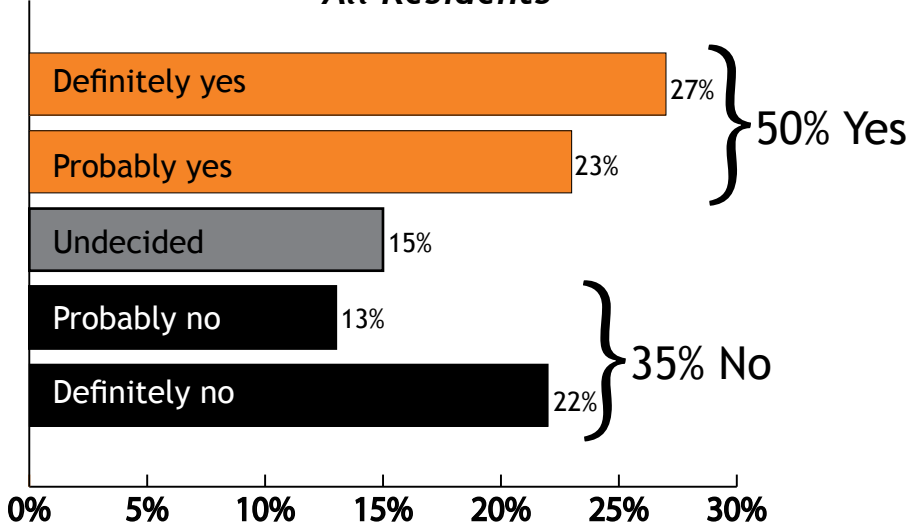
50% of all residents approved of Plan C

Plan C Gains Support

Plan C: Combine the middle/high school

Tax Impact of \$123 for each \$100,000 of a home's value

All Residents



Below displays the number of residents who said "Definitely yes" or "Probably yes" to only one Funding Support option.

What is Plan C?

Combine the middle/high school by building an addition onto the high school. The plan maintains the pool, auditorium and adds a gym, cafeteria and classroom space to accommodate all students in grades 7-12.

The plan includes significant upgrades to all building systems and includes middle school demolition. Plan C would cost \$29.1 million, representing an estimated annual tax impact of \$123 for \$100,000 of a home's value.

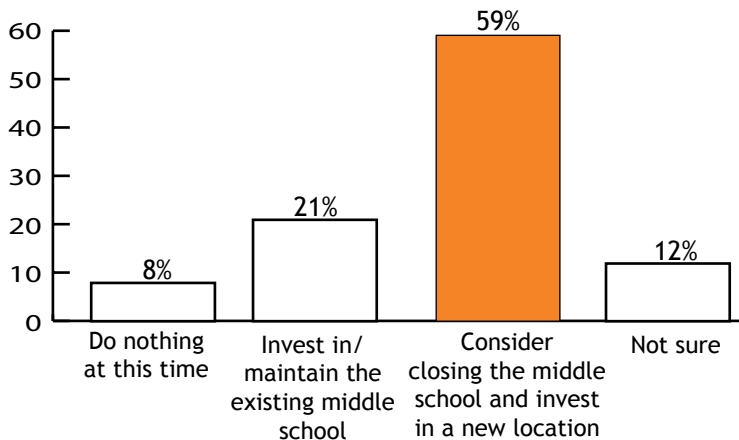
Option	Number of Respondents	Total % of Respondents
Plan A: Build a New High School	54	5%
Plan B: Build a New Middle School	52	5%
Plan C: Combine the middle/high school	217	22%
Plan D: Rebuild the middle school	45	5%

The **Ripon Middle School** needs a significant investment. Educationally, many classrooms and the site are significantly undersized compared to modern schools. The school also lacks flexible space for large group meetings and today's evolving technology. Some people have questioned if the District should make any future investment in a 75 year-old building.

When residents were asked how the Board should proceed with planning for the Middle School...

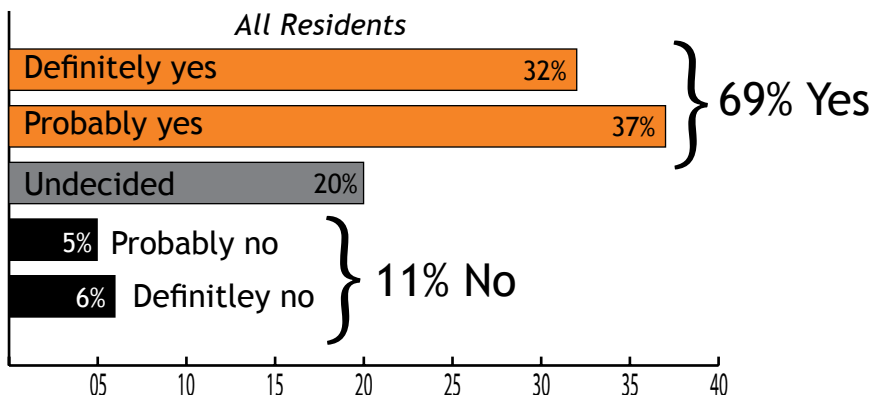
59%
support closing the middle school.

What advice would you give the board?



Operational Referendum

Would you likely support the continuation of the current \$500,000 operational referendum which would maintain the current tax rate?



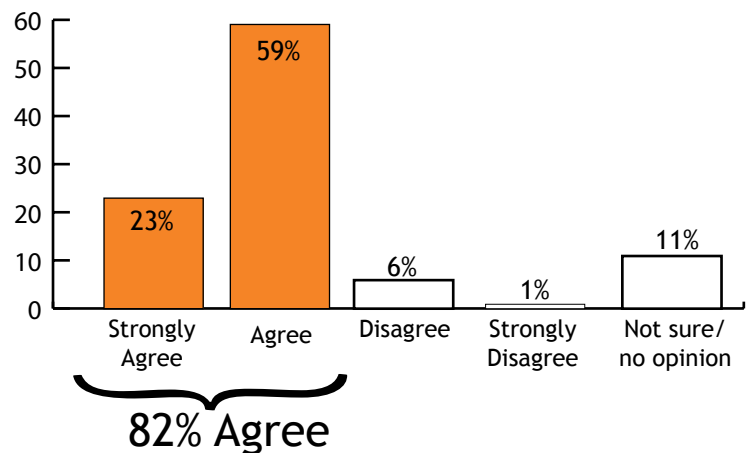
How important are the following factors?

Very Important (3), Somewhat Important (2), Not Important (1)

Item	Average
Develop student employability skill	2.77
Helping students develop a plan for life after high school	2.77
Programming for students with disabilities	2.61
Programming for students at-risk of not graduating	2.57
Improving school safety/security	2.55
Providing access to the latest technology	2.51
Operating energy efficient buildings	2.51

District Communications

Am I satisfied with the communications that come from RASD?



Next Steps

Upcoming Board Workshops
May 27th and June 9th

For complete survey results, please go to the Facilities Planning Section on the District Website
www.ripon.k12.wi.us/

SECTION 2: LOGO AND BRANDING



Our campaign used both a logo and tagline to brand the referendum process in the Ripon Area School District. The logo featured the Ripon Area mascot donning a construction hard hat. The tiger is very recognizable in the community and, therefore, helped establish a sense of familiarity with the referendum. The hard hat corresponded with both the potential projects and our tagline.

Our tagline was “Building Our Future.” The referendum proposed a drastic change in the Ripon facilities and a significant amount of construction. Due to the age of the schools, these changes were needed. However, they also provided an opportunity to enhance the district’s environment. Considering this, our campaign focuses on ensuring an improved future for the district.

The logo was displayed on all print and digital mediums used during the campaign. It was also included in PowerPoint presentations and informational displays.

JULY 2014

SECTION 3: KEY MESSAGES

Ripon Area School District


Mission Statement
"We invest in learning today for our tomorrow."

**Facility Master Planning
Key Messages**

The Plan Benefits the Entire Community: The District needs to revitalize our facilities to deliver and support a rigorous and relevant curriculum that prepares students for technical and four year colleges and the demanding job market. The Ripon schools, students and staff are known for excellence. To continue that tradition, Ripon has the opportunity to re-envision and offer state of the art programming and partnerships to students to position the district for decades to come. These facility improvements will create an optimal environment for students to learn and staff to teach. Quality public schools make communities strong, and the Ripon Community has an opportunity to maintain our status as the area District of Choice.

The Need is Urgent: The District has been a good steward of the facilities. However, the current maintenance needs in the high school, and especially the middle school, exceed the annual operational budget. Doing nothing is not an option. Significant short-term expense is needed to maintain the existing 75 year old middle school building. The most cost-effective way to provide updated facilities for both the high school and middle school is to combine the two at one location. Recognizing this, the District has developed a long range facilities plan to address safety needs, proactively maintain our assets, and position the district for the next 25 years and beyond.

The Timing is Right: Interest rates are low and the construction market is competitive, so construction costs are low. In addition, debt is falling off as the District will make the final payment on its existing referendum debt in 2016. As a result, beginning in 2016, property taxes will decrease by approximately \$127 for each \$100,000 of a home's value. This drop will reduce the tax impact of any new spending.



Key Messages reflected the most important information to be communicated with the community during our campaign. One of the goals of our campaign was to educate Ripon Area residents on the district's needs. We also wanted to show the due diligence practiced by the school district and increase voter confidence in the board and administration's choice.

By creating Key Messages, we were able to ensure concise, consistent communication. Each document we prepared or conversation we had with community members reflected the ideas originally outlined in this document.

JULY 2014

Ripon Area School District

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SECTION 4: PLANNING OUR CAMPAIGN



Referendum Engagement Plan: July - November, 2014				
Referendum Phase				
Communication Milestones	Select Plan, Finalize Dollar Amount, Budget, Brand, Pros and Cons, Land Purchases, Approve Resolution, Important Events to Attend, Voting Reminders			
Action	Deadline	Responsible?	Notes	Completed
Finalize Plan C (\$29.1 M)	June of 2014	Board	Explore Land Options; Revised Plan	X
Brand the Referendum	July of 2014	Georgina	Logo, Tagline, Present Few Options for Review	X
Referendum Communications Plan (Road Map)	July of 2014	Kelsey	Draft Plan to Review; Create Referendum Roadmap	X
Referendum Cost		Board	Determine Final Cost; Update Tax Impact	X
Key Messages	July of 2014	Sarah & Kelsey	Finalize Draft with Board	X
Referendum Fact Sheet	July or August	CGS, PRA & District	Newspaper Inserts, Newsletter Insert, Website, Initial Question	X
Master Engagement Calendar	July or August	Sarah & District	Finalized for July, August, September, October	X

We created a specific communications plan that would allow us to share our key messages and project details with the community. This plan outlined all avenues we would utilize to disperse referendum information to the community. These include community presentations, social media, print media, informational displays, press releases and more.

We also utilized corresponding schedule with exact deadlines that unified the entire team.

JULY 2014



Referendum Engagement Plan: July - November, 2014

Referendum Phase				
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Master Engagement Calendar	July or August	Sarah & District	Finalized for July, August, September, October	X

Action	Deadline	Responsible?	Notes	Completed
Identify District Events	July of 2014	Jamie	Back-to-School Nights; Football games; Registration; etc	X
Website Updates	Ongoing	District	FAQ, Plan C, Survey Results, Add Branding	X
Community Engagement Session	7/14	CGS, PRA & District	Discuss survey results	X
Board Meetings	7/21 8/18 ; 9/15 10/20		Schools During School Day + Media Closed Session 48 Hour Notice	X
Board Materials Due	7/16 ; 8/13 ; 9/10 ; 10/15	CGS, PRA & District	Materials Due Wednesday Prior to Board Meeting	X
Board Workshops	7/14	CGS, PRA & District	Closed Session at 6, Open Session at 7	X
Core Planning Team	Every Friday	CGS, PRA, Board & District		X
Ripon News Republic	Wednesday		Submit Press Release Monday; On-Line Tuesday; Published Wednesday	X
Create Teacher Facility Team	7/9		Modern Learning Environments?; Now Plan C	X
Meet with Editorial Board at RCP	Week of 7/7	Sarah & Mary	Ripon Commonwealth Press; Map Out Communication	X
Press Releases	Ongoing	Kelsey	Board Meetings, and Refer to Communication Milestones	X
Spanish Translations	Ongoing		Translate materials as needed	X

Action	Deadline	Responsible?	Notes	Completed
Identify Referendum Supporters	July of 2014		Neighborhood Captains, Parent Leaders	X
Draft Initial Resolution	7/7 - 8/15	District & Board	Bond Counsel will Draft; Authorize the Borrowing; State the Purpose and Maximum Amount to be Borrowed; Include Alternative Questions	X
Public Hearing on Resolution		District & Board	Board will Specify in Resolution the Date, Time and Place for Public Hearing on the Resolution - Within 10 Days After Posting	X
Adoption of Initial Resolution		District & Board	Within 10 Days After Adoption of Initial Resolution District Clerk Publishes Notice	X
Board Notifies DPI		District & Board	Within 10 Days After Adoption of the Initial Resolution, Board Notifies DPI of 11/4 with Resolution	X
Board Publishes Adoption Notices		District & Board	Initial Resolution	X
Submit Referendum Question(s)	8/18	District & Board	Submit Official Question(s) to Official Preparing Ballots. Drop Dead Date is 70 Days Before (8/25)	X
District Arranges Ballot Prep		District & Board		X
District Publishes Election Notices		District & Board		X
Advocacy Training for Board	August		Training on how to communicate positively about Plan C without advocating for the referendum	X
FAQ	Ongoing		Continue to update	X

Action	Deadline	Responsible?	Notes	Completed
Social Media	Ongoing	Kelsey & District	Facebook, Twitter, E-alerts	X
District Newsletter	October	Kelsey & Georgina	Prepare special Referendum insert	X
Direct Mailers	1 - September 2 - October	Georgina & District	Every Door Direct Mailer	X
Posters	September	Georgina & District	Sizes: 8.5 x 11; 11 x 17; 36 x 24	X
Referendum Business Cards	September	Georgina & District		X
Q&A with Teachers and Staff	Sept/Oct	District	Meetings by Building when Teachers Return Fall	X
Informational Displays	Fall of 2014	Kelsey & Georgina	Village/Town Halls	X
Community Outreach	Fall of 2014	CGS, PRA & District	Roadshow, Identify Speakers (i.e. Board Members), Powerpoint Presentation	X
Referendum Information Nights		CGS, PRA & District	3 Community Sessions	X
Host Rotary Lunch	10/27/2014	Mary	At MS or HS so they can see the buildings	X
Municipality Outreach	Fall of 2014	CGS, PRA & District	Websites, Informational Displays, Presentations with Boards	X
Absentee Ballot/Early Voter Registration	October	District		X
School Tours	10/27, 10/28, 10/29	District		X


Action	Deadline	Responsible?	Notes	Completed
Voting Reminder Campaign		Kelsey & District	Phone System, Email, Website, Social Media	X
Vote	11/4			X
Referendum Results	11/5	Kelsey	Report Success	X

RIPON SCHOOL DISTRICT - NOVEMBER 4, 2014 REFERENDUM COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Major Activity for the Week of:	6/9	6/23	7/7	7/21	8/4	8/18	9/1	9/15	9/29	10/13	10/27	11/4
Finalize Communications Plan												
Finalize Key Messages												
Adopt Ballot Resolutions												
Draft - Print - Distribute Referendum Fact Sheet												
Build & Update Master Events Calendar												
Website Updates (FAQs, Site Plans)												
Media Outreach												
Social Media Posts												
Draft - Print - Mail Postcard #1												
Draft - Print - Distribute Referendum Business Cards												
Staff Meetings by Building												
Draft - Design - Print Building Informational Displays												
Creative Development of Short Videos												
Distribute Building Informational Displays												
Parent/Community Group Presentations												
Municipal Presentations												
Draft - Print - Mail Postcard #2												
Distribution - Launch Referendum Video Projects												
Absentee Ballot & Early Voter Registration												
Host School Tours												
Host Referendum Information Nights												
Vote Reminders: Flyers, Posters, Email, Website, Etc.												
Draft - Print - Mail Postcard #3												
Vote Tuesday, November 4, 2014												



SECTION 5: RIPON AREA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

CGSCHMIDT		September 2014					Ripon Area School District
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1 Labor Day	2 First Day of Classes Twitter	3 Ripon College Back-to-School Cookout	4	5 CPT Meeting Facebook	6	
7	8 Direct Mail #1 to Printer	9 Ripon Education Club Luncheon - 12:00 pm Ripon City Council Meeting - 7 pm Twitter	10	11 ADVOCap/Head Start Open House 4-6 at Barlow Park	12 CPT Meeting Whooping Crane Festival Facebook	13 Whooping Crane Festival	
14 Whooping Crane Festival	15 8:30 - 7:30 Community Engagement - Middle School Submit Press Release	16 Kiwanis: State of the District - Noon Board Meeting - 6pm Twitter	17 RC: Greek Council Meeting	18	19 CPT Meeting 7 pm - Education Foundation Board Meeting Facebook	20 Ripon Septemberfest Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast Night at the Movies	
21 RC: Homecoming Week	22 Annual Meeting Ripon City Council Meeting - 7 pm Twitter	23	24 5 pm—ELL Family Night	25	26 CPT Meeting HOME COMING 4 pm - Parade 7 pm - Game Facebook	27	
28	29	30 Ripon College Heritage Room Pickard Commons 4:00-5:00 p.m.		Rotary - Noon on Mondays Kiwanis - Noon on Tuesdays			

The community engagement calendar allowed us to organize and be aware of community events, district functions and our own presentations. As a result, we were able to have Board members at football games to answer questions and have a booth where families could pick up information at Parent Teacher Conferences.

Our events calendar allowed every team member to be aware of the schedule weeks in advance and ensure all materials were prepared ahead of time.

AUGUST 2014



August 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 CPT Meeting	2
3	4 Draft Initial Resolution Approve Land Purchase Submit Press Release	5	6	7	8 CPT Meeting	9
10	11 Resolution 1st Read Submit Press Release	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Adopt Resolution Board Meeting Approve R. Questions Submit Press Release	19 8 am - New Teacher	20 8 am - New Teacher	21 8 am - New Teacher	22 CPT Meeting Last Day to Approve R. Questions	23
24	25 8 am - New Teacher Curriculum	26 ACT Press Release 8 am - Staff 4:30 pm - Open House at MP/Q and MS/C	27 8 am - Staff 4:30 pm - Open House at BP/J and HS/L	28 8 am - Staff CPT Meeting - 10am	29	30
31						

September 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day	2 First Day of Classes Twitter	3 Ripon College Back-to-School Cookout	4	5 CPT Meeting Facebook	6
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28	29	30 Ripon College Heritage Room Pickard Commons 4:00-5:00 p.m.		Rotary - Noon on Mondays Kiwanis - Noon on Tuesdays		





October 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 CPT Meeting Facebook	4
5	6 Rotary: State of the District - Noon	7 Twitter	8 6:30 - 7:30 Community Engagement - High School	9 5:30 pm - Title I Family Event (MP) Parent-Teacher Conferences	No School Ripon Senior Center, 11:15 AM CPT Meeting Facebook Parent-Teacher Conferences	11
12	13 Columbus Day No School	14 5:30 - 6:30 pm City Council Meeting Twitter	15	16 5:30 pm - Title I Family Event (BP)	17 CPT Meeting Facebook	18 Ripon Octoberfest
19 Direct Mail #2	20 Concert @ RHS/ Lumen	21 Kiwanis Lunch & Tour @ MS Board Meeting - 6pm	22	23 6 pm - Quest Project Showcase	24 CPT Meeting Facebook	25 Halloween Children's Parade
26 Trick-or-Treat: 3-5 In Schools??	27 Rotary Lunch @ MS - 12:00 pm MS/HS Building Tours - 4:30-5:30 Ripon City Council Meeting - 7 pm Submit Press Release	28 MS/HS Building Tours- 4:30-5:30 Twitter	29 MS/HS Building Tours- 4:30-5:30 League of Women Voters - 6:30	30	31 CPT Meeting Facebook	Rotary Tweets "Get out and Vote"




November 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 GLAAS Lucky Dog Cat-sino Night and Dinner - 5:30 pm
2	3	4 Twitter VOTE!	5	6	7 CPT Meeting	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Board Meeting - 6pm	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27		
30						

SECTION 6: PROJECT FACT SHEET

**Facility Improvement
Referendum Fact Sheet**



**Ripon Area
School District**
Building Our Future
Vote November 4

Two referendum questions to appear on the ballot:

Question 1

Question 1: requests permission to borrow funds not to exceed \$29.1 million for paying the cost of constructing additions to, renovating and remodeling the high school to create a combined middle school and high school on one campus; demolishing the current middle school to convert the space into a parking lot and tennis courts; undertaking safety, security and other improvements at the elementary schools; and acquiring furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

Question 2

Question 2: requests the continuation of the existing \$300,000 operational referendum for the 2015-2016 school year through 2020-2021 for non-recurring purposes consisting of updating curriculum, updating technology, performing maintenance and replacing vehicles.

Why this plan?

**Average Life Expectancy of a School Building:
40 Years**

Renovations help to extend the building's life, but the Middle School has been in use for 75 years, 35 years longer than the average expectancy.

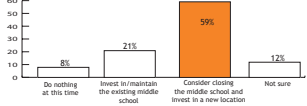
The District has the responsibility to provide learning environments that meet the basic physical and emotional needs of students while being fiscally responsible and good stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

In recent years, the District has been focused on developing educational initiatives to better prepare our students for careers, college and life after high school. The District has made a commitment to provide students and staff with the training, support, and resources needed for success.

It's now time to address our outdated school facilities by providing safe, affordable, accessible, and equitable schools for all students and staff. The District has been working with the community for more than a year to define a long-term Facilities Master Plan to cost-effectively repair and revitalize our aging facilities.

Our schools have become inefficient and outdated. Furthermore, the Middle School has exceeded its useful life. The proposed plan would demolish the existing school and create a combined Middle School and High School facility. With renovations and additions, the existing High School building can continue to be used. This project maintains the pool, improves the auditorium and adds a gym, cafeteria, and classroom space to accommodate all students in grades 4-12. The combined facility can still accommodate an increase in enrollment, while maximizing operating efficiency by consolidating from two schools into one school. This plan provides a long-term solution for Ripon Area School District.

School	Year Built
Middle School	1939
High School	1963
Murray Park Elementary School	1992
Barlow Park Elementary School	1999



When residents were asked how the Board should proceed with planning for the Middle School...

59% support closing the middle school.

The goal and purpose of the referendum fact sheet was to start informing the community on the referendum and the needs behind the proposed questions. It addressed project details, site plans and the potential tax impact. This sheet was distributed in print and posted on the District website. A Spanish translation was also available.

AUGUST 2014

Facility Improvement Referendum Fact Sheet



Facility Improvement Referendum

Ripon Area School District

Building Our Future

Vote November 4!

Two referendum questions to appear on the ballot:

Question 1

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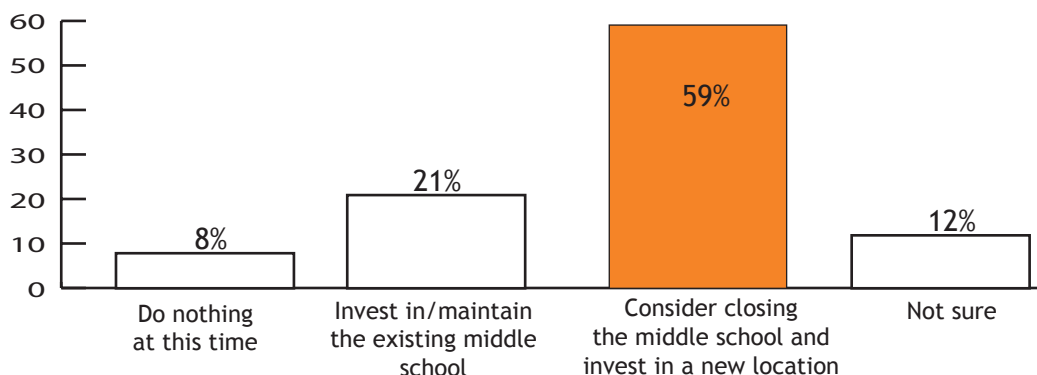
The District has the responsibility to provide learning environments that meet the basic physical and emotional needs of students while being fiscally responsible and good stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

In recent years, the District has been focused on developing educational initiatives to better prepare our students for careers, college and life after high school. The District has made a commitment to provide students and staff with the training, support, and resources needed for success.

It's now time to address our outdated school facilities by providing safe, affordable, accessible, and equitable schools for all students and staff. The District has been working with the community for more than a year to define a long-term Facilities Master Plan to cost-effectively repair and revitalize our aging facilities.

Our schools have become inefficient and outdated. Furthermore, the Middle School has exceeded its useful life. The proposed plan would demolish the existing school and create a combined Middle School and High School facility. With renovations and additions, the existing High School building can continue to be used. This project maintains the pool, improves the auditorium and adds a gym, cafeteria, and classroom space to accommodate all students in grades 6-12. The combined facility can still accommodate an increase in enrollment, while maximizing operating efficiency by consolidating from two schools into one school. This plan provides a long-term solution for Ripon Area School District.

School	Year Built
Middle School	1939
High School	1963
Murray Park Elementary School	1992
Barlow Park Elementary School	1999

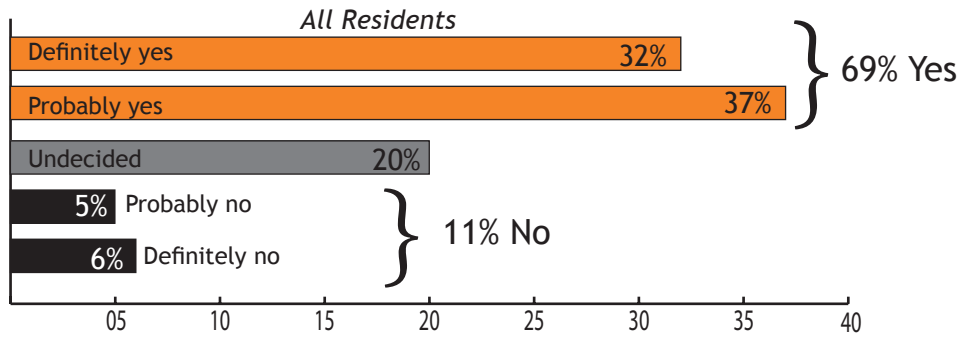


When residents were asked how the Board should proceed with planning for the Middle School...

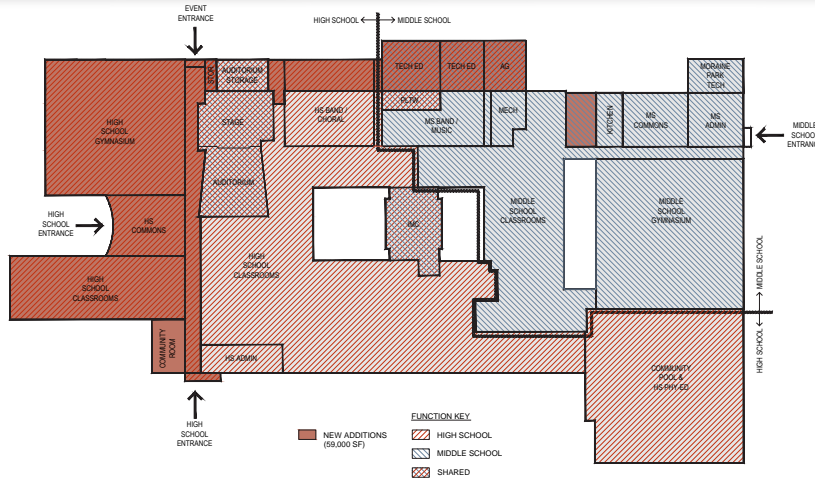
59%
support closing the middle school.

69%

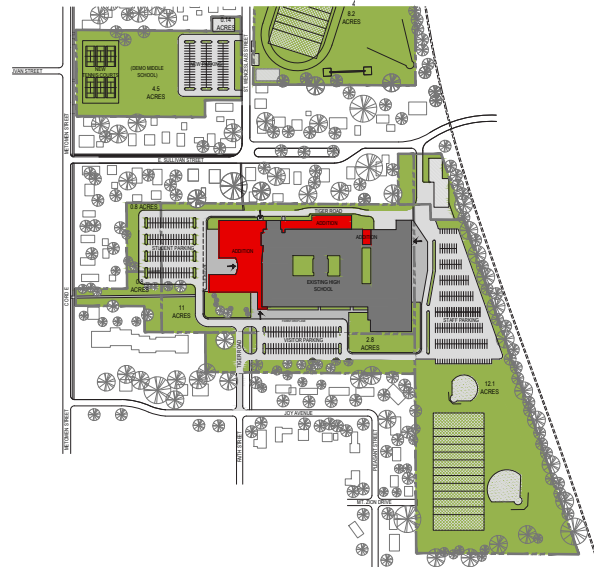
of district residents indicated they would likely support the continuation of the \$500,000 operational referendum.



What is included in this plan?



- ✓ Increased Safety and Security
- ✓ Updated HVAC Systems
- ✓ All Schools Meet ADA Regulations
- ✓ Improved Annual Operating Budget
- ✓ Flexible/Adaptable Learning Spaces
- ✓ Energy Improvements and Savings
- ✓ New and Improved Middle School and High School Facility
- ✓ New Gymnasium
- ✓ Buildings Operate More Efficiently
- ✓ New Tennis Courts
- ✓ Expands School and Event Parking
- ✓ Access to Latest Technology
- ✓ Updated Pool and Locker Rooms
- ✓ Proximity to Ingalls Field
- ✓ MS Students Have Access to HS Programming
- ✓ Spaces for Community Use
- ✓ Reconfiguration of Under Utilized Spaces



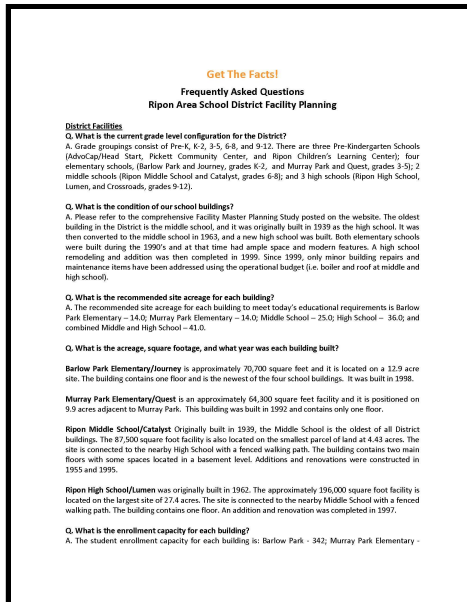
What is the tax impact?

NOT TO EXCEED TOTAL Project Cost: \$29,100,000	Estimated AVERAGE ANNUAL Prop-erty Tax Impact:	Estimated AVERAGE MONTHLY Property Tax Impact:
Increase per \$100,000 of property value	\$123.00	\$10.25
Increase per \$200,000 of property value	\$246.00	\$20.50
Increase per \$300,000 of property value	\$369.00	\$30.75

Principal repayment & borrowing of funds extended over 20 years at 4.5% interest rate.

Visit the District website for more information. www.ripon.k12.wi.us

SECTION 7: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS DOCUMENT



A referendum frequently asked questions document was created based upon inquiries received, the community engagement sessions and survey comments. The document was posted online and updated frequently, as new questions were asked and as the facility planning and referendum process progressed. Printed copies were also available at our presentations.

AUGUST 2014

Get The Facts!

Frequently Asked Questions Ripon Area School District Facility Planning

District Facilities

Q. What is the current grade level configuration for the District?

A. Grade groupings consist of Pre-K, K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. There are three Pre-Kindergarten Schools (AdvoCap/Head Start, Pickett Community Center, and Ripon Children's Learning Center); four elementary schools, (Barlow Park and Journey, grades K-2, and Murray Park and Quest, grades 3-5); 2 middle schools (Ripon Middle School and Catalyst, grades 6-8); and 3 high schools (Ripon High School, Lumen, and Crossroads, grades 9-12).

Q. What is the condition of our school buildings?

A. Please refer to the comprehensive Facility Master Planning Study posted on the website. The oldest building in the District is the middle school, and it was originally built in 1939 as the high school. It was then converted to the middle school in 1963, and a new high school was built. Both elementary schools were built during the 1990's and at that time had ample space and modern features. A high school remodeling and addition was then completed in 1999. Since 1999, only minor building repairs and maintenance items have been addressed using the operational budget (i.e. boiler and roof at middle and high school).

Q. What is the recommended site acreage for each building?

A. The recommended site acreage for each building to meet today's educational requirements is Barlow Park Elementary – 14.0; Murray Park Elementary – 14.0; Middle School – 25.0; High School – 36.0; and combined Middle and High School – 41.0.

Q. What is the acreage, square footage, and what year was each building built?

Barlow Park Elementary/Journey is approximately 70,700 square feet and it is located on a 12.9 acre site. The building contains one floor and is the newest of the four school buildings. It was built in 1998.

Murray Park Elementary/Quest is an approximately 64,300 square feet facility and it is positioned on 9.9 acres adjacent to Murray Park. This building was built in 1992 and contains only one floor.

Ripon Middle School/Catalyst Originally built in 1939, the Middle School is the oldest of all District buildings. The 87,500 square foot facility is also located on the smallest parcel of land at 4.43 acres. The site is connected to the nearby High School with a fenced walking path. The building contains two main floors with some spaces located in a basement level. Additions and renovations were constructed in 1955 and 1995.

Ripon High School/Lumen was originally built in 1962. The approximately 196,000 square foot facility is located on the largest site of 27.4 acres. The site is connected to the nearby Middle School with a fenced walking path. The building contains one floor. An addition and renovation was completed in 1997.

Q. What is the enrollment capacity for each building?

A. The student enrollment capacity for each building is: Barlow Park - 342; Murray Park Elementary -

373; Middle School - 450; High School - 600; combined Middle School and High School - 1050.

Q. Has RASD completed an enrollment projection analysis?

A. Yes. Applied Population Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin – Madison was hired to complete an Enrollment Projection Analysis for 2013-2022. The projection process uses a combination of historical enrollment data, birth trends, and projections, housing starts data, and population trends and projections to create reasonable assumptions about future growth scenarios. District enrollment has increased by 88 students over the last ten years, but in the past five years enrollment has declined by - 3.3%. These numbers include 4K enrollment. When enrollment history was broken down by grade groupings, elementary and middle school have both decreased over the last ten years, declining by 20 and 12 students. High school enrollment on the other hand has increased by 43 students since the 2003/04 school year.

Q. How many students will attend RASD schools 10 years from now?

A. The long-term trend shows a slight increase in kindergarten enrollment. However, outgoing 12th graders were not fully replaced by incoming kindergarteners. The information provided in the school enrollment projection report points to a slight decrease in enrollment in the RASD over the next five to ten years.

Q. What were the building deficiencies identified in the teacher and staff survey?

A. While the buildings have been well maintained, the list of deficiencies identified by teachers and staff includes items such as IT infrastructure, food service equipment, and HVAC issues. The survey also identified the lack of space for small group learning and break out spaces throughout the buildings, and the condition and layout of co-curricular spaces for students, staff and the community (i.e. speech and language support).

Q. Is it true the District owns a parcel of land?

A. Yes, the District purchased a parcel of land in 2004 on Eureka Street.

Q. Why is the community more concerned with the middle and high school buildings?

A. The community participants have focused on the operational and educational deficiencies at all schools, but they have mainly focused on the middle and high school. They are concerned with handicap accessibility, security improvements, water drainage, and addressing educational inadequacies.

Facility Planning Process

Q. What is a facilities study?

A. A facilities study surveys and documents the physical characteristics of all district buildings. The study reviews the appearance, condition and current uses of the buildings. The data is used to determine the feasibility and cost of space reallocation, remodeling and/or expanding of the buildings. The process also includes a review of existing floor plans and a thorough walk-through of all district facilities and systems.

Q. Why did the District conduct a facility study?

A. With the help of the community, the School Board, Administration and the Facilities Planning Team, the District carefully evaluated the facility resources. A thorough review was conducted on the condition of the two elementary schools, middle school and high school.

Q. What are the goals of the facility planning process?

A. The goals of the facility planning process are to obtain a detailed understanding of the facility needs and wants; support current and future educational programs; explore all factors with planning, designing and building schools; determine scope of repairs, modernization, or new construction; facilitate technology and environmental upgrade discussions; explore all facility options and solutions; and present options to the community that support the core responsibilities of the Board.

Q. Why develop and maintain a long-range facility plan?

A. A long range facilities plan is meant to gather and organize factual information from which present and future educational program needs can be determined; estimate pupil populations as to numbers, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds, so that facilities may be planned for and provided; make an objective appraisal of the quality and capacity of existing school facilities; allow more effective decisions regarding the quality of new and existing school facilities; coordinate a program of total school and community planning to benefit and support economic development; develop a system of educational programming and facilities prioritization; and maintain a program of continuous comprehensive planning and financing of school facilities.

Q. Why is the Board and District committed to conducting such a comprehensive plan?

A. The Board of Education and District Administration want to establish credibility with the community; gain a solid understanding of the education system, buildings, and the people; and develop a roadmap for long-term facility solutions.

Q. What is the Facility Planning Team, and who serves on it?

A. The Facility Planning Team consists of four Ripon School Board of Education members (David Olson, Gary Rodman, Tom Stellmacher, and Dan Zimmerman), with Mary Whitrock, Superintendent, Rick Ketter, Business Manager (Retired 6/27/2014), and Brian Pepler, Director of Facilities representing the District. Following Rick Ketter's retirement, his position on the Facility Planning Team was filled by the new Business Manager, J.J. Gutman.

Q. Who are the consultants hired to lead the facility planning process?

A. The team of CG Schmidt Construction and Plunkett Raysich Architects out of Madison and Milwaukee has a long history of planning, designing and building exceptional educational facilities. After a comprehensive interview process, the Board unanimously approved hiring the CGS/PRA team. This team of experts will help with prioritizing the building needs, while determining which projects can be addressed within yearly operational budgets and which require long-term capital expenditures.

Q. Did the planning team tour the district facilities?

A. The buildings were toured and evaluated on August 21st, 2013 by Plunkett Raysich Architects and KJWW Engineering with additional support from CG Schmidt Construction. The planning team also met with the principals, athletic, and music directors for each school.

Q. Has the planning team looked at the daily use of space for the choirs and bands?

A. Yes, the architects have looked at the daily use of the choir and band spaces at our schools. Currently the middle and high school have a full schedule of daily class sections, so overall space is being reviewed.

Q. What was the range of potential facility options?

A. The planners explored the full range of potential facility solutions such as continuing with small maintenance repairs at the four schools using funds from the operational budget, upgrading and adding

a partial building replacement to the middle and high school, repurposing the current middle and high school, building an all new middle and high school on existing and vacant land, to renovating and building an all new high school on district owned property. The costs and overall impact on the community was evaluated. These potential solutions were generated based on the ability to address the short and long-term needs of the District. For example, the District could reduce operational costs by utilizing existing space more efficiently.

Q. What was the range of projects outlined in the seven facility options?

A. The seven options included continuing with small maintenance items and minor repairs; five-year capital maintenance projects with safety and security improvements; remodeling the middle school and high school; all new middle school in current location and remodeled high school; all new middle school on new site and remodeled high school; consolidating the middle school and high school on high school site; new high school on alternative site and high school becomes middle school; and a new combined (grades 6-12) middle and high school on an alternative site.

Q. What was the process for narrowing from seven facility options down to four plans?

A. The process included reviewing the existing facilities study; completing an educational space analysis; conducting a teacher and staff survey; interviewing the principals and custodial staff; hosting seven community engagement sessions, meeting with principals and staff, Ripon City Officials. After all of these steps were taken, the Board was able to determine the four plans that would be the most favorable and beneficial to the community.

Q. What is the Criteria Matrix used by the Board, District and Community to evaluate the options?

A. The Criteria Matrix is just one means of evaluating proposed facility solutions to assist with the Board in narrowing of options. Criteria includes: available space around the existing schools for athletics and parking; increased space for community uses; pool reconfiguration and repairs; long-term educational needs; flexible learning spaces; high school event spaces; improved learning environments (i.e. heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and daylight), deferred maintenance needs; abatement; Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility; safety/security and traffic flow; maximizing existing space; energy efficiency; and future information technology needs.

Q. How did the District identify the needs of the District?

A. For several months the planners have been reviewing and compiling information from the superintendent survey, staff survey, one-on-one meetings with principals, enrollment projections, and several technical assessments (i.e. deferred maintenance list, energy study, safety and security review, and technology plan). Once armed with data, the planners began conducting an existing facility condition assessment and an educational space analysis for each building. The community also provided input on their needs and wants for the District.

Q. Who participated in the Community Engagement Sessions?

A. The first of seven Community Engagement Sessions was held on September 19, 2013 and the last was held on May 19, 2014. Any resident who lives in the district was welcome to attend any or all of the seven community engagement sessions. District residents provide a community voice for the planning process. The goal was to represent the interests of the overall community, consider the long-term facility needs of the District, develop and give feedback on plan options, and make a recommendation to the Board. A series of listening sessions will be scheduled once the options are further refined. Community members have provided valuable insight into the planning process, and participants communicated the diversity of opinions that exist within the District.

Q. How do we plan to prioritize the needs of our school buildings?

A. Numerous options were formalized after the planners spent several months assessing the condition of the facilities, and the Board, District, staff and community had several opportunities to provide input on the day-to-day operations of the buildings and improvements needed. At the fourth community engagement session in December, the planners presented six options to the community for feedback. Numerous community members asked the planners to explore additional options, such as buying properties between the middle school and high school; consolidating the middle and high school so there are fewer buildings to maintain; to combining the middle school and high school on another site. At the January engagement session, the community outlined a set of criteria to be used to review the options to be sure they address the identified needs of the District and help prioritize needs moving forward. These criteria were then used to narrow down the original seven options to four plans. These four plans were also featured on the community-wide survey. This survey provided additional insight on the needs and opinions of the district and the community's priorities. All of these factors have contributed to decision-making about what needs should be prioritized.

Q. How will the facility planning process address the educational needs of the District?

A. Making more efficient use of the under-utilized space at the middle school and high school allows the District the opportunity to create personalized learning environments for students. Flexibility and variety are critical to supporting the myriad activities that occur every day within a modern school. Movable furniture and walls, flexible building configurations, a variety of room sizes and types and better utilization of passageways all represent this type of student centered learning environment. Cafeterias, auditoriums, and "multi-purpose rooms" also need to be designed to support learning in many more ways than in years past.

Q. Why is the timing right for the District to consider addressing our aging facilities?

A. We've made great progress developing educational initiatives to better prepare our students for careers, college and life after high school. We've also been developing a plan to update our aging facilities. This is a particularly good time to consider our options because in 2016 the District will pay off a large loan associated with the last building project. This drop in debt payments will reduce the tax impact of any new spending.

Q. What will it cost to improve our school facilities?

A. The preliminary estimates for the options range from \$0 borrowing to \$63 million that addressed varying degrees of repair, renovation and new construction. At this point, the building cost estimates were based on how many square feet are needed in a new building and historical data on the cost per square foot. The Board considered numerous ways to scale back on the new building options to reduce costs. The residents approved Plan C, which includes significant upgrades to all building systems and includes the demolition of the Middle School. Plan C will combine the Middle and High Schools by building an addition onto the existing high school for \$29.1 million

Q. What does the "revitalization" of a school building entail?

A. "Revitalization" typically includes the replacement or renovation of: site improvements (parking, bus loops, student drop-off, playing fields, storm water management and utility improvements); building envelope (roof, insulation, exterior wall repair, windows and doors); finishes (floors, ceilings, walls repairs, casework, specialties); mechanical systems, plumbing and electrical systems (including life safety systems); Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA compliance; furniture, fixtures and equipment; and technology equipment.

Q. Will area businesses and subcontractors be able to participate in the project?

A. Yes. While the School Board hired CG Schmidt last fall to serve as construction manager, the Board remains committed to providing qualified area contractors, distributors, and suppliers the opportunity to openly bid on any future work, provided any project is ultimately supported by the community. CGS will be reaching out to area qualified companies to bid and encouraging them to use school district residents for labor projects. Through the course of the project, CGS will be required to track how many local labor hours are completed by residents. When the time arrives, interested local companies or suppliers are encouraged to inquire with CGS or the District Office for more information on future opportunities.

Q. If combining the middle school and high school is approved, what will happen to the existing middle school?

A. The building will be demolished, and the site will be used for additional parking and athletic facilities.

Q. How do we protect our community's investment in schools?

A. Facilities kept well-maintained will improve the education of Ripon children. Additionally, Ripon Schools can be very active after-hours as community space. The positive reputation of a community's schools plays a major role in the enhancement of long-term real estate values, and attracting families to the area.

Q. How does Ripon compare to other schools on the cost per student?

A. Ripon currently spends \$401 less per student than the State Average.

Community Survey

Q. What was the community survey process?

A. The Board sought input from the entire community through the facilitation of a community-wide survey. The District sent out a Request For Purchase (RFP) to survey vendors and the Board approved contracting with School Perceptions out of Slinger, WI. School Perceptions is an independent educational research firm that works with school districts to gather, organize and use data to make strategic decisions. They have expertise in conducting community surveys. All survey responses are confidential and returned directly to School Perceptions. The community survey reached households beginning April 22nd, 2014. To save on District expenses, we encouraged the community to take the survey online by going to the website: www.survey2000.com and enter the Survey Access Number found on the survey. All survey data was returned to School Perceptions.

Q. What was the survey response rate?

A. Nearly 1,000 surveys were completed.

Q. Who participated in the survey?

A. Participants were residents of the Ripon School District of voting age. 55% of the participants did not have children enrolled in the District, while 45% are parents of RASD students.

Q. Did any facility plans stand out as more favorable?

A. Based on results of the survey, Plan C was found to be the most favorable option. A majority of residents approved of this plan; 368 residents only supported one option and 217 of these voters selected Plan C. Additionally, 59% of residents supported closing the middle school and investing in a new option, such as combining with the high school. Plan C received significantly more support than any

other plan.

Q. Were participants supportive of continuing the current \$500,000 operation referendum and maintaining the current tax rate?

A. Yes, 69% of all residents said they would support the continuation of this rate.

Q. Where can the final survey results be found?

A. Final survey results are available on the District website at www.ripon.k12.wi.us.

Combining the Middle School and High School

Q. How does the District address combining 6-12 grades in one building?

A. The combined Middle School / High School building will maintain distinct identities for each school and separate entrances and administration areas. Some areas of the building, such as the pool, library and auditorium will be shared by all students but most areas will be organized to support the separate school functions.

Q. Has the Board and District researched the educational benefits for a combined middle school and high school option?

A. Yes, this plan is not only cost effective but also will benefit students. Combining middle schools and high schools is a grade reconfiguration often used to boost student achievement.

- It ensures easier an transition from Middle School to High School
 - Students are already familiar with the school, other students, and teachers.
 - Research shows students who transition fewer times have higher rates of achievement.
- There will be opportunities for Middle School students to take High School classes.
- When Middle Schools and High Schools collaborate on the curriculum, the students benefit.
- Mentoring and leadership opportunities will be available for students.
- Middle school students are reminded of concrete goals like playing varsity sports or getting into college.
- A combined facility allows the district to maximize staffing resources
- It provides continuity for parents. Many parents have students in both middle school and high school.
- This configuration increases a sense of community in the school

Q. How will the combination of the middle school and high school affect traffic?

A. The circulation of traffic to and around the combined high school / middle school site is being carefully studied so existing traffic issues are address. Multiple options exist for how traffic can be handled on the site allowing the design team and the District flexibility to adjust traffic as needed. The total net traffic on Metomen will be unchanged and traffic that used to turn to the middle school site will not continue down to the combined school site a few blocks away.

Q. How will taxes change? How will it affect property values and ability to sell?

A. If the facilities referendum passes, taxes would increase monthly by \$9.92 per a \$100,000 property value. This is \$119.00 annually. If the operational referendum is approved to continue, the tax rate would not change. Typically, good schools correspond with higher property values and increased desire

to live in the district.

Q: What is the cost of doing nothing?

A: The Board of Education cannot let the buildings fall into disrepair. This plan will address the current building issues and improve educational spaces overall. Each year that the repairs and renovations are delayed, construction costs could increase significantly. The projected inflation estimates an increase of \$1.7 M if the project was delayed a year.

Q. The Luther Hill area has had water issues in the past. Has any environmental or Phase I been conducted on the property? Will a bigger building and additional parking lead to increased hardscape and runoff?

A. There will be additional hard surface area as a result of the expansion of the existing high school building. Storm water management systems will be added to the site to handle the load imposed by the building and the associated paved areas.

Q. Does the referendum include funding for additional street, sewer, water, etc. maintenance?

A. Yes, these are covered in the \$29.1 million asked for by the referendum.

Q. Will there be any lighting or noise effects on neighboring properties?

A. Site and building lighting will be carefully designed to provide adequate illumination for safety but not create a nuisance for neighbors. Athletic fields and other outdoor activity areas where most noise issues may originate will not be located closer to residential areas than they are currently.

Q. How will traffic flow on the new, combined facility?

A. If the referendum passes, a traffic study will be conducted. Bus routes and Student Drop-Off will be reconfigured to ensure a safe, organized, and efficient traffic pattern. Several options will be generated, and then we will work through each possibility to find which traffic route will work best for the community.

Q. What will happen to the soccer fields on the Middle School lot?

A. The Middle School lot will be converted to additional parking and tennis courts. There will also be green space that remains. Additionally, Murray Park and Barlow Park will also have space available after school for youth football teams and other recreational programs.

Railroad Safety Questions:

In a meeting with Wisconsin Southern Railroad, the City of Ripon Police Chief, CG Schmidt and the Business Manager from Ripon Area School District, there was an in depth discussion of the impact of the railroad tracks and their proximity to the high school with the new proposed project in the upcoming referendum. The WS Railroad brought their operational staff and leadership and answered all of the questions the RASD and City of Ripon had very openly and in a very cooperative manner. The following is a brief summary of the discussion, specifically addressing what will be commonly asked questions by constituents.

Q. What is the condition of the tracks near the high school?

A. The railroad right of way and tracks near the high school are actually owned by the State of Wisconsin who recently invested nearly \$2 million in improving the line that runs through Ripon. There is a federal

agency that regulates and rates all tracks and dictates the speed at which trains can travel based on many safety criteria. The track in Ripon is in very good condition. It is rated for a top speed of 25 mph; a relatively low speed not prone to catastrophic derailment. In addition, due to the number of businesses that the line serves in Ripon, this top speed is seldom achieved in the area of the high school. Typical train speeds are 5-10 mph when operating through Ripon.

Q. How often is the track inspected?

A. Wisconsin Southern Railroad who operates this line inspects this length of track twice a week to make sure it meets all the regulatory safety requirements including switches, rail and base.

Q. How many trains go through Ripon?

A. Currently, only one train uses the track daily but it runs northbound and southbound daily. In addition, because it services several businesses in Ripon, it pulls loads up and down the track as it switches cargo for the businesses in Ripon. When the trains are in this switching and transfer operation, they rarely come close to the top speed allowed on the tracks. Also, there is a curve on the north end of Ripon that has a speed limit of 10mph for all portions of the train which also limits the speed on other sections of the track.

Q. What materials or cargo are shipped on this line in Ripon?

A. Generally, anything that is hauled on the highway can be hauled on railroad tracks. Currently, however, there is no ethanol or petroleum hauled on this line. Other sensitive materials like this are rare, but, current regulation doesn't preclude the use of these tracks for those materials. The vast majority of the materials hauled are bulk materials such as sand, grain and aggregate.

Q. Even though accidents on railroads are extremely rare, what can be done to improve safety beyond the extensive work that has already been done to improve and maintain the safety of the tracks?

A. Some of the very infrequent accidents (per the AAR 99.9% of cargo reaches its destination without incident) are caused by trains and pedestrians or vehicular traffic interacting with trains within the train right of way. Some of the improvements focus on eliminating those potential interactions, while others focus on increasing safety if such interactions should occur. It is important to note that the train tracks are not public property per the agreements that exist for their use and should not be trespassed for any reason.

Pedestrians- To mitigate the potential for pedestrian interaction on the tracks there are two steps that could be taken whether the referendum is passed or not. 1) Fencing on either side of the tracks to restrict trespassing on the right of way and crossing of the tracks could be implemented, and 2) further education of the students and residents using the existing training programs that exist for this purpose called "Look listen, live" could be reinitiated and presented by the private firms that do this or facilitated by the Office of the Railroad Commissioner

Vehicles – If a referendum is passed, the impact on the two key intersections close to the school could be studied and submitted to the State for consideration for upgrades at the crossing including signals

and gates. These requests would be made formally through joint request with the City of Ripon and the School District. The Office of the Commissioner of Railroads manages these requests and reviews whether the improvement is necessary by the standards they have established and if there is available funding for the improvements. It is likely that the traffic pattern particular at the crossing on Sullivan Street may change. A traffic study is anticipated if a referendum is passed to assess and resolve any traffic issues created by the new configuration.

Q. What else can be done to make this site safer for the staff and students?

A. There are a number of other steps that could be taken. A regular planned drill for evacuation can be implemented for the very outside chance that something does happen requiring precautionary relocation of the school occupants. More education about avoiding the interaction of pedestrians and trains can be implemented. These programs already exist and are typically focused on younger students but could be revisited for middle and high school students. Finally, other physical features such as berms along the railroad right of way could be considered to help divert a spill away from the high school. All of these steps would be proactive approaches to improve the safety of the overlap of the railroad with the neighborhood around the high school and some steps could be taken sooner than the project timeline itself.

Referendum

Q. When is the referendum?

A. The vote will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2014. You will be able to vote at all poll locations within the Ripon district.

Q. Where can I vote?

A. On November 4th, the following polling locations will be open from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm:

- City of Ripon: City Hall
- Town of Metomen: Town Hall
- Town of Ripon: Town Office
- Town of Rosendale: Town Hall
- Town of Springvale: Town Hall
- Village of Fairwater: Civic Center

In-person absentee voting will take place at Ripon City Hall (100 Jackson Street). It is available from October 20th – 24th and October 27th-29th from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm and October 30th – 31st from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Q. Where can I get more information?

Visit the Ripon Area School District website at www.ripon.k12.wi.us and click on the Community Header and select the Facility Planning drop down menu. You will find everything from enrollment projections, facility reports, to the Power Point presentations from the community engagement sessions. Please direct your questions or comments to Dr. Mary Whitrock, Ripon Area School District Superintendent at whitrockM@ripon.k12.wi.us . Watch for the Submit a Question feature on the website.

SECTION 8: MEDIA OUTREACH



In August, we met with the local paper to discuss the referendum process. The Ripon Commonwealth Press (RCP) is a very popular and qualified newspaper in the area on which many residents rely. In our meeting, we wanted to ensure the staff at RCP understood the process and importance of covering the events leading up to voting on November 4th. We also answered any questions they had on school funding and the proposed plan.

As a result of our meeting, we were able to ensure objective and factual information was published to the community. Throughout the process, RCP covered advantages and disadvantages, and they published nearly all of the Letters to the Editor they received on the topic. This allowed readers to be well-informed as Election Day approached.

AUGUST 2014

SECTION 9: SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



Our team maintained and updated Facebook and Twitter pages with referendum information on a regular basis. We followed a guideline of “Twitter Tuesdays” and “Facebook Fridays” to encourage weekly posts on each social media platform. Additionally, all key informational pieces were also posted on the Ripon Area School District website.

As social media becomes more prevalent in our lives, it becomes increasingly important to provide information on these platforms. Our posts sometimes were as simple as encouraging followers to visit the district website to learn more about the referendum. Other times, we posted charts and infographics discussing district needs and how the proposed plan would resolve the issues with our aging facilities.

AUGUST 2014

SECTION 10: EVERY DOOR MAILER

Where can I find referendum information?

Public Information Sessions

September 30
Ripon College,
4:00 - 5:00pm, Heritage Room in Pickard Commons

October 8
Ripon High School (includes a tour),
6:30 - 7:30pm, Room 167

October 10
Ripon Senior Center, 11:15am - 12:00pm,
Lower Level of City Hall

October 14
Ripon City Hall,
5:30 - 6:30pm, Council Chambers

For the most comprehensive and up to date information, please visit the district website:
www.ripon.k12.wi.us

Visit a school: All schools have site plans and fact sheets available for review at the main office.

Watch your mailbox: More referendum information will arrive in the mail this fall.

What is included in this referendum?

\$29.1 M Facilities Referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructing addition and renovating high school to create a combined middle school/high school. Demolishing the existing middle school and converting the lot to parking and tennis courts. Safety and security upgrades to all schools. 	\$500,000 Continuation of Operating Referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating curriculum Updating technology Performing maintenance Replacing vehicles
---	---	--	--

A 7x11 inch direct mail piece was distributed to every door in the district. It was designed larger than a typical postcard to catch the resident's attention over typical mail. Pertinent referendum information was included such as the dates of information sessions, project details and links to more information.

SEPTEMBER 2014

Ripon Area School District
1120 Metomen Street
Ripon, WI 54971

Non-Profit
Organization
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 197
Ripon, WI 54971



Residential Customer

BE INFORMED

for the
November 4 Referendum.

Attend a referendum
information session
and take a **school tour.**

Where can I find referendum information?

Public Information Sessions

September 30

Ripon College,
4:00 - 5:00PM, Heritage Room in Pickard Commons

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Ripon High School (includes a tour),
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What is included in this referendum?

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--	--	--	--

SECTION 11: REFERENDUM BUSINESS CARDS



Referendum Business Cards were distributed throughout the community. They were passed out at our speaking engagements, various District events and other community functions. The cards served as reminders to vote as well as providing links to more information on the referendum.

SEPTEMBER 2014

SECTION 12: COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS



To provide opportunity for discussion and questions on the referendum, we hosted several community engagement sessions. We strategically placed them in the school buildings that the referendum proposed making changes to, such as the Middle and High School. In addition to the sessions at district buildings, we scheduled various speaking engagements with different community organizations. Our team presented to the Ripon Education Foundation, Rotary, Kiwanis, City Council and the Senior Citizen Center among other groups.

By communicating with so many different organizations, we were able to ensure all residents had the opportunity to hear accurate, firsthand information.

SEPTEMBER 2014

Facility Improvement Referendum Referendum Fact Sheet

Facility Improvement Referendum



Ripon Area
School District

Building Our Future

Vote November 4!

Visit the District website for more information. www.ripn.k12.wi.us

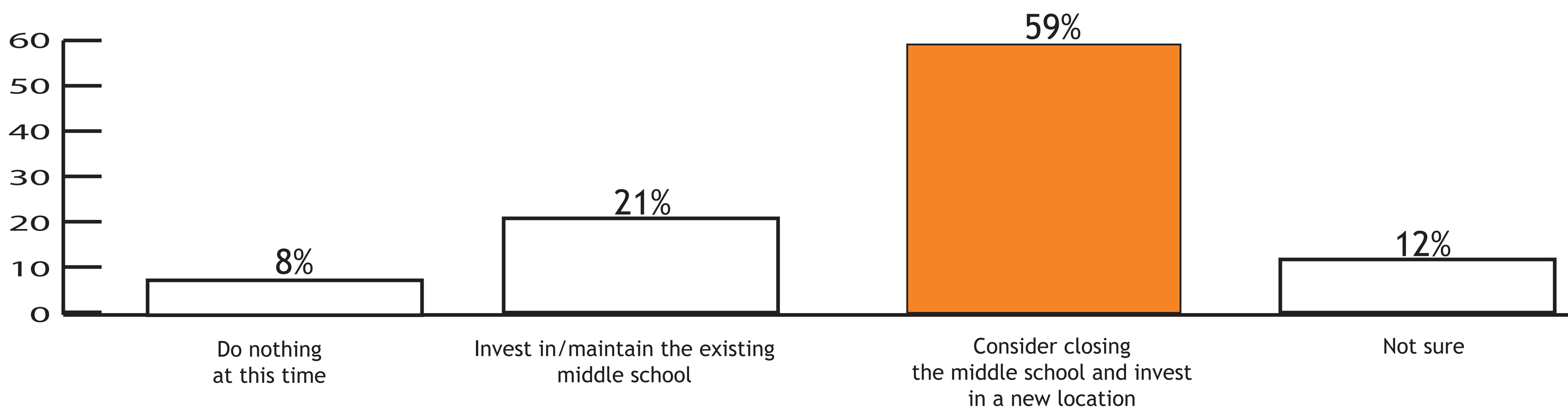
Two referendum questions to appear on the ballot:

Question 1

Question 1: requests permission to borrow funds not to exceed \$29.1 million for paying the cost of constructing additions to, renovating and remodeling the high school to create a combined middle school and high school on one campus; demolishing the current middle school to convert the space into a parking lot and tennis courts; undertaking safety, security and other improvements at the elementary schools; and acquiring furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

Question 2

Question 2: requests the continuation of the existing \$500,000 operational referendum for the 2015-2016 school year through 2020-2021 for non-recurring purposes consisting of updating curriculum, updating technology, performing maintenance and replacing vehicles.



When residents were asked how the Board should proceed with planning for the Middle School...

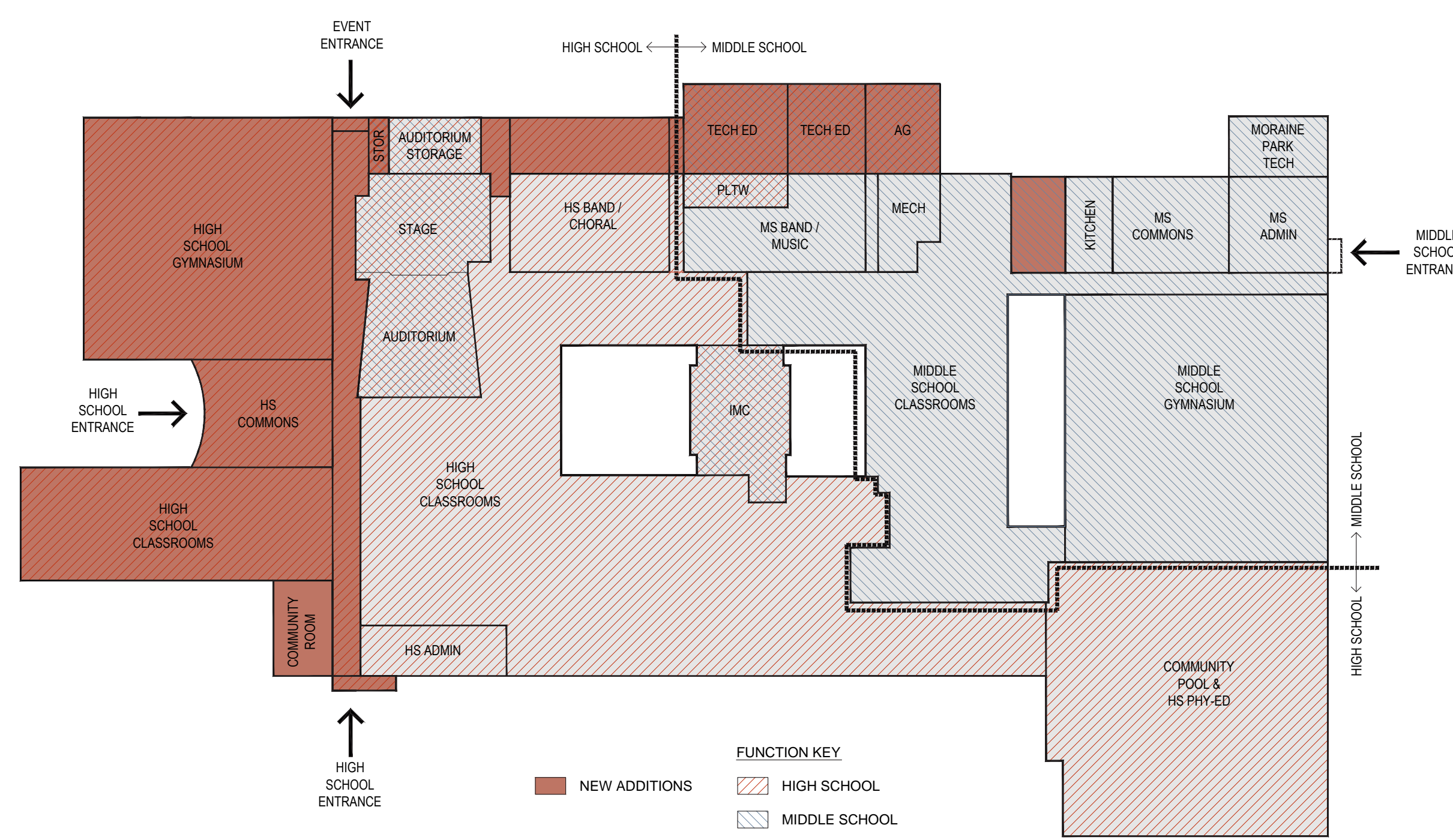
59%
support closing
the middle school.

Why this plan?

Both the Middle School and the High School are inefficient and outdated. Combining these schools into a single facility is a more cost effective way to address these facility deficiencies. Moving forward, it is also more cost effective to operate a single facility instead of two.

What is included in this plan?

- ✓ Increased Safety and Security
- ✓ Updated HVAC Systems
- ✓ All Schools Meet ADA Regulations
- ✓ Improved Annual Operating Budget
- ✓ Flexible/Adaptable Learning Spaces
- ✓ Energy Improvements and Savings
- ✓ New and Improved Middle School and High School Facility
- ✓ New Gymnasium
- ✓ Buildings Operate More Efficiently
- ✓ New Tennis Courts
- ✓ Expands School and Event Parking
- ✓ Access to Latest Technology
- ✓ Updated Pool and Locker Rooms
- ✓ Proximity to Ingalls Field
- ✓ MS Students Have Access to HS Programming
- ✓ Spaces for Community Use
- ✓ Reconfiguration of Under Utilized Spaces



What is the tax impact?

NOT TO EXCEED TOTAL Project Cost: \$29,100,000	Estimated AVERAGE ANNUAL Property Tax Impact:	Estimated AVERAGE MONTHLY Property Tax Impact:
Increase per \$100,000 of property value	\$123.00	\$10.25
Increase per \$200,000 of property value	\$246.00	\$20.50
Increase per \$300,000 of property value	\$369.00	\$30.75

Principal repayment & borrowing of funds extended over 20 years at 4.5% interest rate.

SECTION 14: BANNERS



We posted banners featuring our logo and a link to the district website in highly visible locations around the Ripon community. Our team hoped to encourage community members to visit the website to better understand the referendum and to vote on November 4th.

SEPTEMBER 2014

SECTION 15: NEWSLETTER INSERT

Referendum Section
Fall 2014 Issue

Ripon Area School District
Building Our Future

Vea el dorso para español **Vote November 4**

On November 4, two referendum questions will appear on the ballot:

Question 1 is a \$29.1M Facilities referendum to:

- Construct addition and renovate high school to create a combined middle school/high school
- Demolish the existing middle school and convert the lot to parking and tennis courts
- Safety and security upgrades to all schools

Question 2 is the continuation of a \$500,000 operational referendum to:

- Update curriculum
- Update technology
- Perform maintenance
- Replace vehicles

Final Building Tours of the Middle School and High School

Monday, October 27, 4:30-5:30pm
Tuesday, October 28, 4:30-5:30pm
Wednesday, October 29, 4:30-5:30pm

City of Ripon: City Hall
Town of Metromen: Town Hall
Town of Ripon: Town Office
Town of Rosendale: Town Hall
Town of Springfield: Town Hall
Village of Fairweather: Civic Center

Absentee Voting
In-person absentee voting takes place at:

October 20 - 24, 8:00am - 4:00pm
October 27 - 29, 8:00am - 4:00pm
October 30 - 31, 8:00am - 5:00pm

Ripon Equalized Tax Rate
The 1993 school tax rate was \$1.93 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The 2013 school tax rate in Ripon has decreased to \$1.14, which is a 40% decrease from the 1993 tax rate.

The website includes:

- Tax Impact Calculator
- Referendum Questions
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Fact Sheet
- Latest Press Releases
- More information

We prepared a special referendum insert in the October edition of the District newsletter. This four page spread compiled all the information we had communicated through presentations and digital and print media in one location. One of our goals was to be provide district residents with the all of the information needed to make an educated decision on election day. This insert helped accomplish our objective and exemplified complete transparency.

OCTOBER 2014

Referendum Section

Fall 2014 Issue



Ripon Area School District

Building Our Future

Vea el dorso para español

Vote November 4!

On November 4, two referendum questions will appear on the ballot:

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Final Building Tours of the Middle School and High School

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Vote November 4

Polling Locations

City of Ripon:	City Hall
Town of Metomen:	Town Hall
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Town of Rosendale:	Town Hall
Town of Springvale:	Town Hall
Village of Fairwater:	Civic Center

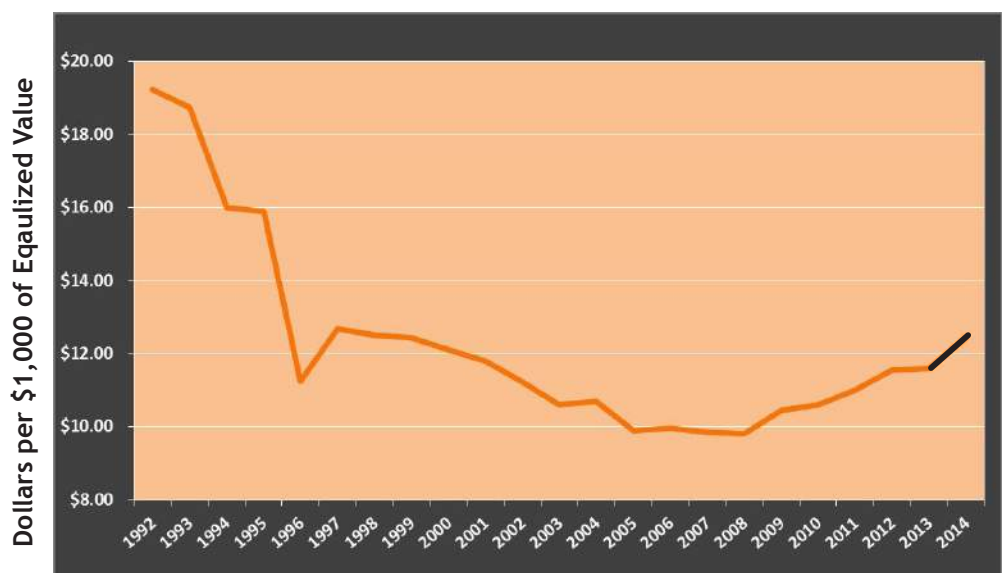
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- October 20 - 24, 8:00am - 4:00pm
- October 27 - 29, 8:00am - 4:00pm
- October 30 - 31, 8:00am - 5:00pm

Ripon Equalized Tax Rate

The 1993 school tax rate was \$19.23 which was \$1,923 for a \$100,000 home. The 2013 school tax rate in Ripon has decreased to \$11.58 which is \$1,158 for a \$100,000 home. The following graph shows the steady decline in the Ripon school tax rate during the past 20 years.



The black line indicates what next year's projected tax rate would be if both referendums are approved by voters. The new 2014-2015 school tax rate would be \$12.62 which represents \$1,262 for the owner of \$100,000 home. That is a 34% decrease from the 1993 tax rate.

For the most comprehensive and up to date information, please visit the district website: www.ripon.k12.wi.us

Visit a school: All schools have site plans and fact sheets available for review at the main office.

Watch your mailbox: More referendum information will arrive in the mail.

The website includes:

- Tax Impact Calculator
- Referendum Countdown
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Fact Sheet
- Latest Press Releases
- Voter Information

Question 1: Facilities Referendum

The following will appear on the ballot as Referendum Question 1:

“Shall the Ripon Area School District, Fond du Lac, Winnebago and Green Lake Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to issue pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$29,000,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of constructing additions to, renovating and remodeling the high school to create a combined middle school and high school on one campus; demolishing the current middle school to convert the space into a parking lot and tennis courts; undertaking safety, security and other improvements at the elementary schools; and acquiring furnishings, fixtures and equipment?”

YES

NO

Why this plan?

Both the Middle School and the High School are inefficient and outdated. Combining these schools into a single facility is a more cost effective way to address these facility deficiencies. Moving forward, it is also more cost effective to operate a single facility instead of two.

Average Life Expectancy of a School Building:

40 Years

Renovations help to extend the building's life, but the Middle School has been in use for 75 years, 35 years longer than the average expectancy.



Leaking A/C units & windows



Dilapidated lockers



Deteriorating vents & floor

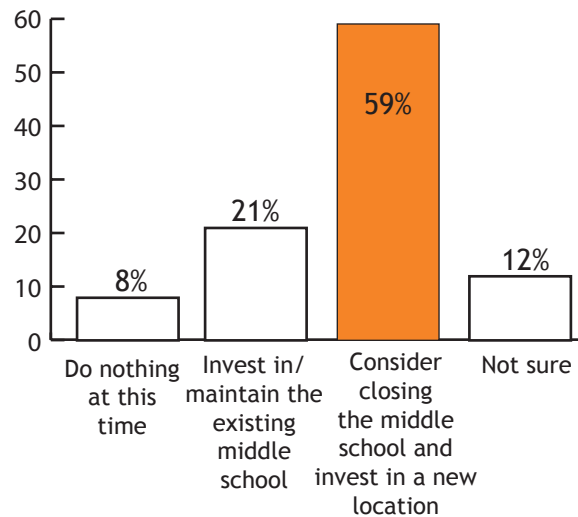


Leaky sinks & peeling casework

What is the Updated Tax Impact?

NOT TO EXCEED TOTAL Project Cost: \$29,100,000	Estimated AVERAGE ANNUAL Property Tax Impact:	Estimated AVERAGE MONTHLY Property Tax Impact:
Increase per \$100,000 of property value	\$123.00 \$119.00	\$10.25 \$9.92
Increase per \$200,000 of property value	\$246.00 \$238.00	\$20.50 \$19.83
Increase per \$300,000 of property value	\$369.00 \$330.00	\$30.75 \$27.50

Principal repayment & borrowing of funds extended over 20 years at 4.5% interest rate. The updated tax impact reflects the 2014 property values released on October 2, 2014 by the Department of Revenue.



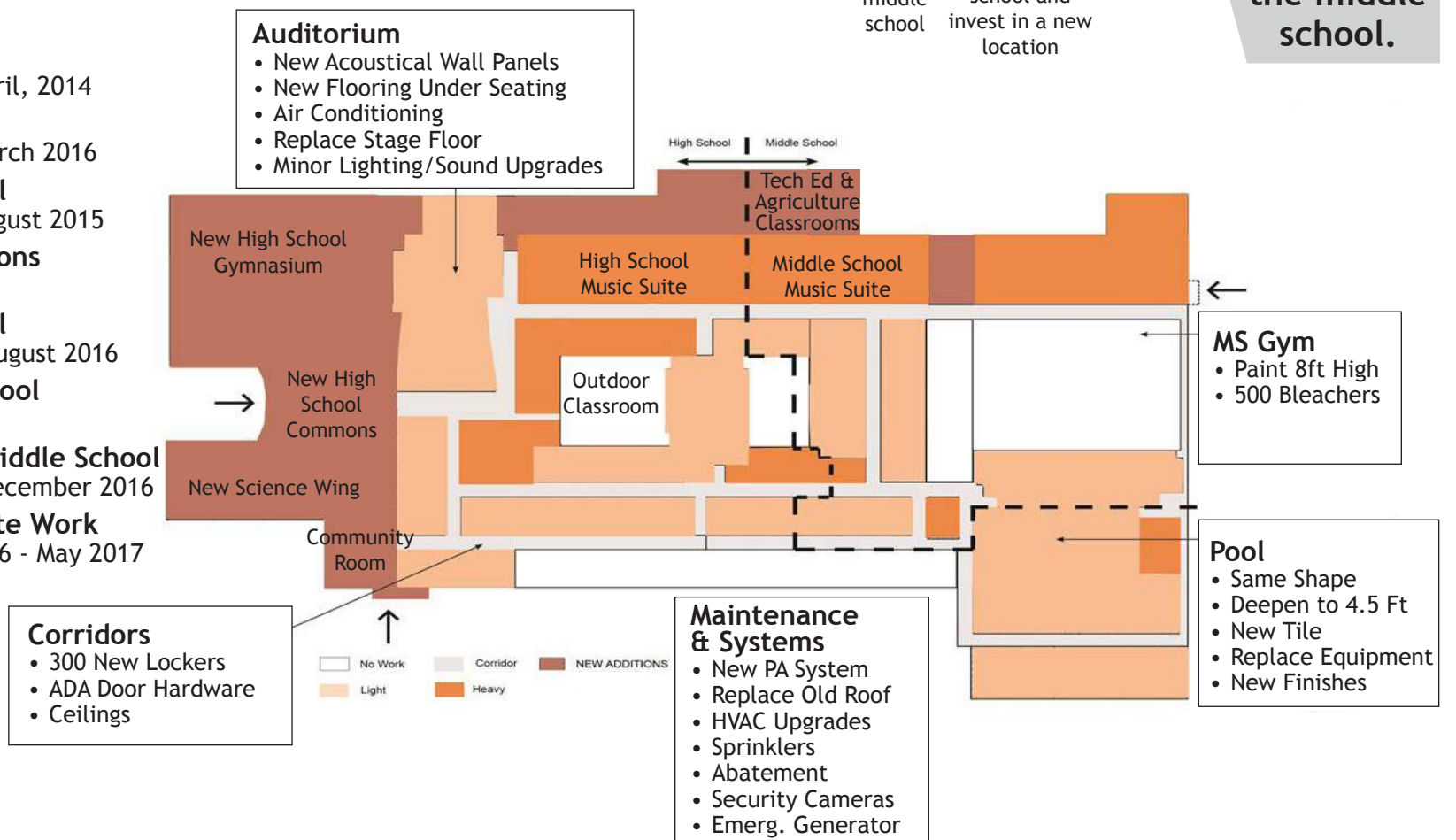
When residents were asked how the Board should proceed with planning for the Middle School...

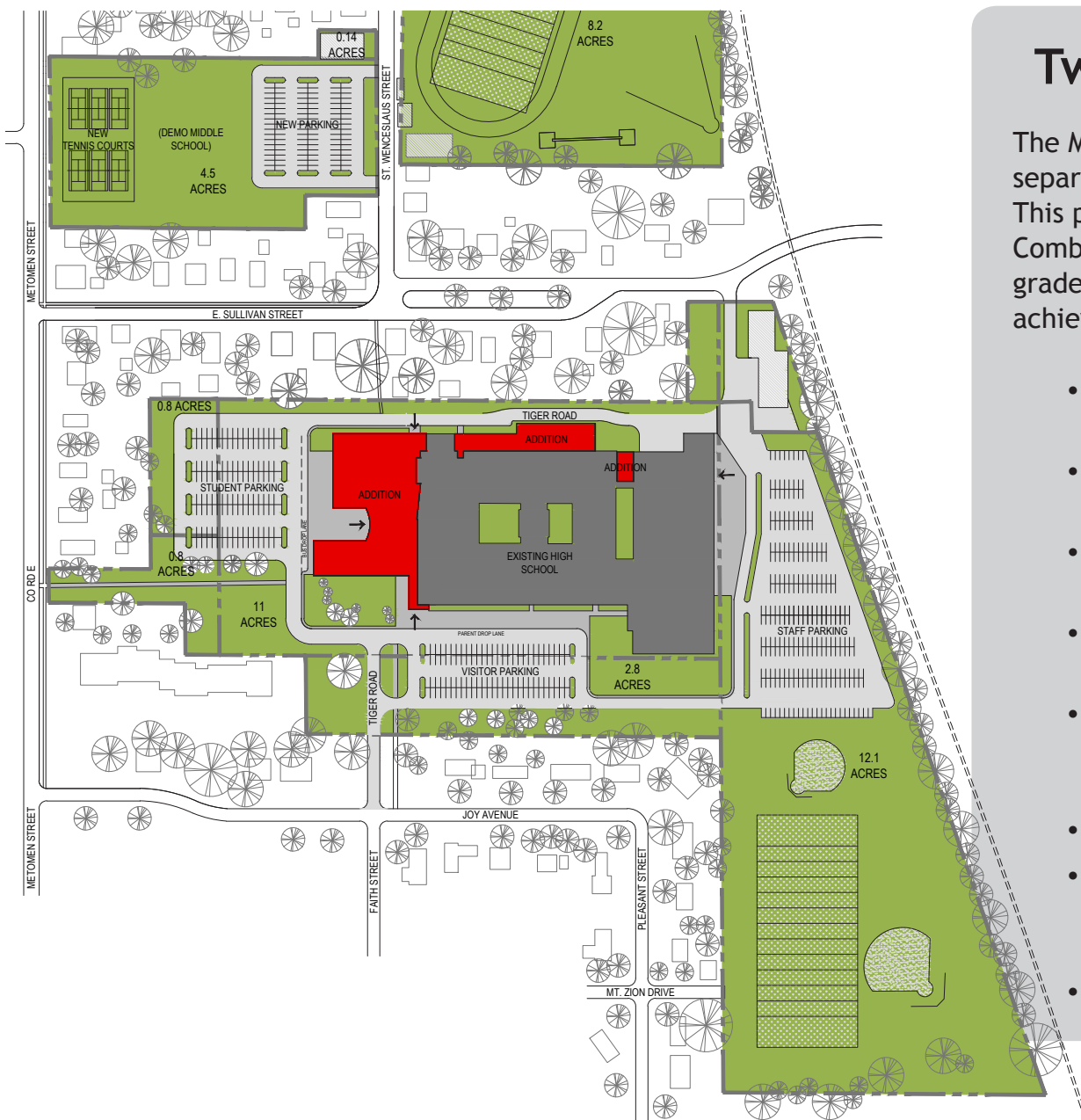
59% support closing the middle school.

What is Included?

Proposed Schedule Milestones

1. Design
November - April, 2014
2. Additions
April 2015 - March 2016
3. Phase 1 Remodel
June 2015 - August 2015
4. Move Into Additions
Spring 2016
5. Phase 2 Remodel
March 2016 - August 2016
6. Move Middle School
August 2016
7. Abate & Demo Middle School
September - December 2016
8. Middle School Site Work
September 2016 - May 2017





Two Schools, One Building

The Middle School and High School will have separate entrances, cafeterias, and gymnasiums. This plan is cost effective and will benefit students. Combining middle schools and high schools is a grade reconfiguration often used to boost student achievement.

- Ensures easier transition from Middle School to High School
- Opportunities for Middle School students to take High School classes
- Middle Schools and High Schools can collaborate on the curriculum so students benefit
- Mentoring and leadership opportunities for students
- Middle school students are reminded of concrete goals like playing varsity sports or getting into college
- Maximizes staffing resources
- Continuity for parents - many parents have students in both middle school and high school
- Increases a sense of community in the school

Question 2: Operational Referendum

The following will appear on the ballot as Referendum Question 2:

“Shall the Ripon Area School District, Fond du Lac, Winnebago and Green Lake Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$500,000 a year for the 2015-2016 school year through 2020-2021 for non-recurring purposes consisting of updating curriculum, updating technology, performing maintenance and replacing vehicles?”

YES

NO

What is Included?

- ✓ Updated Curriculum
- ✓ Updated Technology
- ✓ Performance Maintenance
- ✓ Replacing Vehicles

What is the Tax Impact?

If this question is approved, taxes will not change. Instead, it will merely be a continuation of the current tax rate.

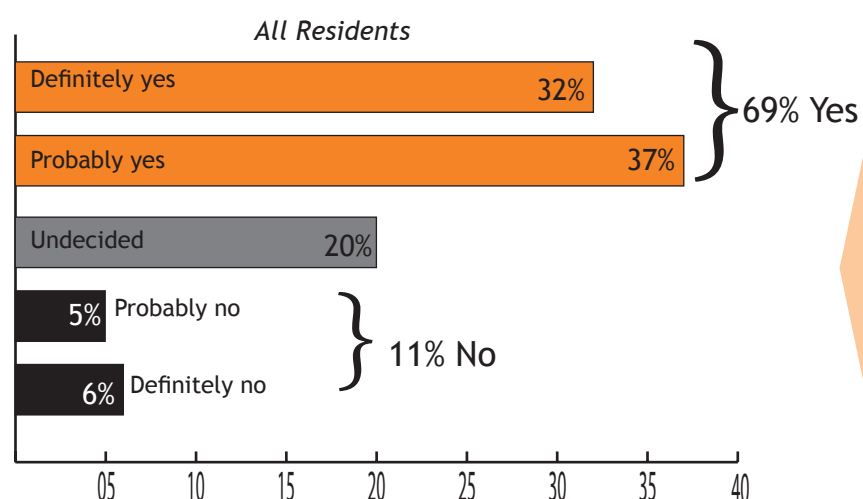
Ripon spends

\$401 less per student

than the Wisconsin average

The State of Wisconsin’s 1993 revenue limits law restricts how much the budget can be increased by the school board. Ripon was spending less than the state average in 1993, and has been held to that requirement ever since. In the past, Ripon Area School District has been forced to cut annual operating expenses to comply with state law.

Passage of a voter referendum is the only way to exceed the state imposed revenue limits.



69%

of district residents indicated they would likely support the continuation of the \$500,000 operational referendum.

How do we compare?

Districts in Our Conference	Facilities Status
Berlin	Combined Middle and High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently passed referendum, currently under construction.
Campbellsport	Combined Middle and High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently surveying the community to explore facility update options
Kewaskum	Separate Middle and High School
Plymouth	Separate Middle and High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently constructing a Food Science and Agriculture facility
Waupun	Combined Middle and High School
Winneconne	Combined Middle and High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently completed referendum and construction of facility maintenance projects.

4 of the other **6** districts in our conference have combined middle and high schools

- Berlin
- Campbellsport
- Waupun
- Winneconne

4 of the other **6** districts in our conference recently completed construction or are planning to make facility improvements

- Berlin
- Campbellsport
- Plymouth
- Winneconne

Dos preguntas del referéndum aparecerán en la boleta de votación:

Pregunta 1:

Solicita permiso para prestar fondos que no excedan los \$29.1 millones para pagar el costo de las adiciones a construir, renovar y remodelar el edificio de high school para crear un campus combinado de high school y middle school; demoler el edificio actual de middle school para convertir el espacio en un parqueo y canchas de tenis; la tarea de seguridad, seguridad y otros mejoramientos en las escuelas elementales, y adquirir muebles, instalaciones y equipo.

¿Qué se Incluye en este Plan?

- ✓ Aumento de Seguridad y Vigilancia
- ✓ Actualización de los Sistemas HVAC
- ✓ Todas la Escuela Reúnen las Regularizaciones de ADA
- ✓ Mejorar el Presupuesto Anual de Operaciones
- ✓ Espacios de Aprendizaje Flexibles y Adaptable
- ✓ Mejoramiento y Ahorro de Energía
- ✓ Nuevo y Mejoramiento de las Instalaciones de Middle School y High School
- ✓ Gimnasio Nuevo
- ✓ Más Eficientemente la Operación de los Edificios
- ✓ Nuevas Canchas de Tenis
- ✓ Expansión del Parqueo de la Escuela y para Eventos
- ✓ Acceso a lo Último de la Tecnología
- ✓ Piscina Actualizada y Cuartos para Casilleros
- ✓ Cercanía a Ingalls Field
- ✓ Los Estudiantes de MS Tienen Acceso a Programación de HS
- ✓ Espacios para el Uso de la Comunidad
- ✓ Reconfiguración de espacios Menos Utilizados

¿Cual es el Impacto del Impuesto?

NOT TO EXCEED TOTAL Project Cost: \$29,100,000	Impacto del PROMERDIO Anual Estimado del Impuesto de la Propiedad:	Impacto del PROMERDIO Mensual Estimado del Impuesto de la Propiedad:
Incremento por \$100,000 del valor de la propiedad	\$123.00 \$119.00	\$10.25 \$9.92
Incremento por \$200,000 del valor de la propiedad	\$246.00 \$238.00	\$20.50 \$19.83
Incremento por \$300,000 del valor de la propiedad	\$369.00 \$330.00	\$30.75 \$27.50

El pago del Principal y el préstamo de fondos extendido por más de 20 años es de 4.5% de la tasa de interés.

Pregunta 2:

Solicitar la continuación de los \$500,000 existentes del referéndum operacional para el año escolar 2015-2016 hasta 2020-2021 para proyectos no recurrentes que consisten en actualizar el currículo, actualizar la tecnología, mantenimiento y el reemplazo de vehículos.

¿Qué se Incluye en este Plan?

- ✓ El currículo actualizado
- ✓ El mantenimiento
- ✓ La tecnología actualizada
- ✓ El reemplazo de vehículos

¿Cual es el Impacto del Impuesto?

Si este pregunta está aprobado, los impuestos no cambiarán. En su lugar, será una continuación de la tasa del impuesto existente.

Questions? Want to get involved?

If you have any additional questions or would like to help distribute factual referendum information to the community, please contact Ripon Area School District Superintendent, Dr. Mary Whitrock, at (920) 748-4600 or Whitrockm@ripon.k12.wi.us.

SECTION 16: SECOND EVERY DOOR MAILER

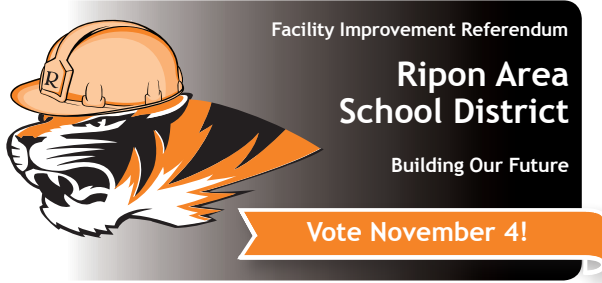
<p>Why this plan? Why now?</p> <p>The Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Addresses our aging and inefficient facilities. ✓ Provides the resources and environment needed for continued success. ✓ Offers affordable and accessible schools for all students and staff. ✓ Reflects the most cost-effective way to best repair and revitalize our schools. 		<p>Final Building Tours of the Middle School and High School</p> <p>Monday, October 27, 4:30-5:30 pm Tuesday, October 28, 4:30-5:30 pm Wednesday, October 29, 4:30-5:30 pm</p>												
<p>What is included in this referendum?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>\$29.1 M Facilities Referendum</p> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing addition and renovating high school to create a combined middle school/high school • Demolishing the existing middle school and converting the lot to parking and tennis courts • Safety and security upgrades to all schools </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>\$500,000 Continuation of Operating Referendum</p> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating curriculum • Updating technology • Performing maintenance • Replacing vehicles </td> </tr> </table>			<p>\$29.1 M Facilities Referendum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing addition and renovating high school to create a combined middle school/high school • Demolishing the existing middle school and converting the lot to parking and tennis courts • Safety and security upgrades to all schools 	<p>\$500,000 Continuation of Operating Referendum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating curriculum • Updating technology • Performing maintenance • Replacing vehicles 								
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		<p>Polling Locations</p> <p><i>Election Day Voting Hours: 7:00 am - 8:00 pm</i></p> <table> <tr> <td>City of Ripon:</td> <td>City Hall</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Town of Metomen:</td> <td>Town Hall</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Town of Ripon:</td> <td>Town Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Town of Rosendale:</td> <td>Town Hall</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Town of Springvale:</td> <td>Town Hall</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Village of Fairwater:</td> <td>Civic Center</td> </tr> </table> <p>Absentee Voting</p> <p><i>In-person absentee voting takes place at City Hall:</i></p> <p>October 20 - 24, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm October 27 - 29, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm October 30 - 31, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm</p>	City of Ripon:	City Hall	Town of Metomen:	Town Hall	Town of Ripon:	Town Office	Town of Rosendale:	Town Hall	Town of Springvale:	Town Hall	Village of Fairwater:	Civic Center
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<p>Ripon Area School District • 1120 Metomen Street • Ripon, WI 54971 • www.ripou.k12.wi.us</p>														

A second mail piece was delivered to District residents at the end of October. The 7x11 inch mailer was designed to draw attention and share information. It outlined project details, building tour dates and times, and voting information. As a result of our abundance of communication, we were able to confirm all area residents were aware of the upcoming referendum and had the resources to make an educated decision for themselves.

OCTOBER 2014

Ripon Area School District
1120 Metomen Street
Ripon, WI 54971

Non-Profit
Organization
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 197
Ripon, WI 54971



Your Vote Counts!

Residential Customer

*You can shape the future
of Ripon on*

November 4



Visit the district website for more
information: www.ripon.k12.wi.us

Why this plan? Why now?

The Plan:

- ✓ Addresses our aging and inefficient facilities.
- ✓ Provides the resources and environment needed for continued success.
- ✓ Offers affordable and accessible schools for all students and staff.
- ✓ Reflects the most cost-effective way to best repair and revitalize our schools.

What is included in this referendum?

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<p>\$500,000 Continuation of Operating Referendum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating curriculum • Updating technology • Performing maintenance • Replacing vehicles

Final Building Tours of the Middle School and High School

Monday, October 27, 4:30-5:30 pm
 Tuesday, October 28, 4:30-5:30 pm
 Wednesday, October 29, 4:30-5:30 pm

Polling Locations

Election Day Voting Hours: 7:00 am - 8:00 pm

City of Ripon:	City Hall
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Absentee Voting

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SECTION 17: SCHOOL TOURS

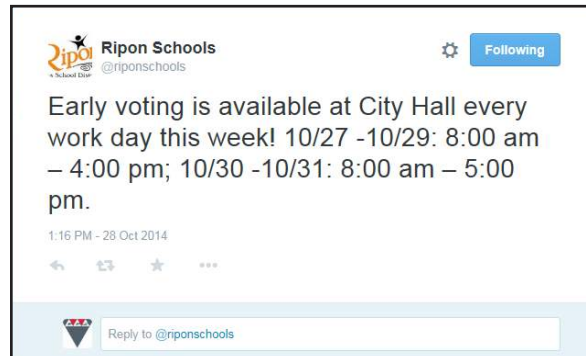


As the referendum election approached, both the Middle and High Schools hosted building tours with their respective principals. Students also helped guide the tours. This opportunity allowed voters to see District needs in person and understand the importance of the upcoming vote. Ripon residents also had the chance to ask questions to industry experts and district staff during these tours.

We hosted the tours a week before the official election day which allowed anyone who was still unsure of their opinion to fully assess the district needs on their own accord before voting.

OCTOBER 2014

SECTION 18: VOTING REMINDERS



An important step of the referendum process is encouraging district residents to vote. We wanted the final decision to accurately reflect what our community wanted, so we needed a strong turnout of voters. For this reason, we provided area voters with information on early voting, absentee voting, and voting locations. We also sent out reminders through our social media accounts and infinite campus.

A press release was also published that outlined the next steps for either result of the referendum vote. Once again, this allowed our community to be completely aware of their influence on the district.

NOVEMBER 2014

For Immediate Release

Monday, October 27, 2014

Contact: Mary Whitrock, Superintendent

WhitrockM@ripon.k12.wi.us

(920) 748-4600

Looking Ahead: Potential Outcomes of the Facilities Referendum

Ripon, WI – As Election Day approaches, Ripon voters have an important decision to make. The School Board and District Administration have worked hard throughout the entire facility planning process to keep the community informed. The next step in this factual campaign is to discuss the events to occur after all the votes have been counted. The public is entitled to be aware of all potential outcomes.

If the facilities referendum passes, there will be a dynamic impact on the community. Detailed planning and finalization of design will begin immediately for the projects approved by voters. Plunkett Raysich Architects and CG Schmidt (Construction Management) will seek final input from the District and community to ensure the best and most efficient layout is used for the combined facility. Construction will begin quickly. The construction of the additions to the high school building is expected to begin spring of 2015. During the summer of 2015 and the summer of 2016, remodeling and renovating the existing portions of the high school building will occur. In August 2016, the middle school will begin instruction in the combined facility. The existing middle school would endure the abatement process and demolition in the fall of 2016. Finally, the remaining lot will be converted for its new purposes with all work expected to be finished by May 2017.

The phasing of the project work is planned heavily for the summer months to minimize disruptions to class time, school events and normal operations. The work areas will be separated from the student areas to maximize safety and security for the students and staff. Project updates will be posted to the district website and shared with staff, parents, and the broader community on a regular basis. As far as finances are concerned, taxes will increase \$119.00 per \$100,000 property value annually. The \$119.00 rate is the most that taxpayers will have to pay. If interest rates are favorable, this value could be lower.

However if the facilities referendum does not pass, the community will still be impacted. The facilities question has been brought to a referendum because Ripon needs to address its aging facilities. The Board believes now is the right time to bring this question to a vote because the current facilities debt is retiring in the district. If the debt retiring in the district is not replaced by additional debt, the overall spending in the district will decrease. Based on the current state funding formula, a decrease in spending will cause a decrease in state aid. Financially, taxes will increase \$56.00 per \$100,000 property value annually despite the decision not to modify any RASD buildings.

The District has a responsibility to provide safe, affordable, and accessible schools for all students and staff. Additionally, the Board of Education cannot let the buildings fall into disrepair. If any portion of a building were to need immediate repair, action would be taken to allow school operations to run normally. Unplanned and unscheduled maintenance can be more costly than planned, routine maintenance. The funds for repairs would need to be taken out of the District current operational budget, impacting other programs, or out of the district's existing fund balance. Decreasing the district's fund balance could change the district's bond rating, which in turn would create higher interest rates on any future borrowing. Furthermore, each year the needed repairs and renovations are delayed, construction costs could increase significantly.

Both outcomes will affect the community, and the final decision is in the hands of the voters in the Ripon Area. The School Board and District Administration encourage the community to use this information, in addition to the many resources available on the RASD website, to make an informed decision when voting. Most importantly, they hope all eligible citizens will take advantage of the opportunity to vote on November 4th.

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SECTION 19: REFERENDUM PASSES!



On November 4, 2014, the voters of Ripon Area School District supported the \$29.1 million facility improvement referendum question. They survey initially predicted it would pass by 50% of the vote. Following our extensive communication efforts, the question passed by 62% voter approval.

Press releases were sent out and local media covered the victory.

Yes: 2,520 votes

No: 1,446 votes

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Facilities Referendum Approved by Ripon Voters

Ripon, WI – Voters in the Ripon Area School District approved a \$29.1 million facilities referendum on Tuesday, November 4, 2014. The “unofficial” results are **2,520 YES to 1,446 NO.** The question asked to borrow funds to create a combined middle school and high school facility on the existing high school grounds. In addition, this money will also fund safety and security upgrades to all schools and the demolition and conversion of the existing middle school lot to be used for parking, tennis courts, and green space. The District has been working with the community for nearly two years to define a long-term Facilities Plan to cost-effectively repair and revitalize our aging facilities. Detailed planning will begin immediately for the combined facility approved by district residents.

“The Ripon School Board and Administration have worked for the last two years to establish our Facilities Plan. We are so grateful to all of the community members, parents, and staff members who provided input and perspective,” commented Board President, David Scott. “Engaging the community in this process has been instrumental to our facilities planning process and we are very excited to be moving forward with a combined middle and high school. We are pleased voters also share our goal of providing an ideal environment for all students and staff.”

The phasing of the project work is planned heavily for the summer months over the next several years to minimize disruptions to class time, school events and normal operations. The work areas will be separated from the student areas to maximize safety and security for the students and staff. Project updates will be posted to the district website and shared with staff, parents, and the broader community on a regular basis.

For more information, please contact Mary Whitrock, Superintendent.