



REFERENDUM 22

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Why are you asking for a referendum now?

Like many districts in the state, the School District of North Fond du Lac has been dealing with ongoing budget challenges. Over the next five years, we are forecasting a shortfall averaging \$800,000 each year.

Additionally, between 2017 and 2027, the District is projected to grow by more than 300 students (a 23% increase) driving capacity issues at the Bessie Allen Middle School and Horace Mann High School.

2. What happens if the referendum does not pass?

If the referendum is not supported by taxpayers, the operational and maintenance costs do not go away. The District will need to change programs, course offerings, and/or daily expenses.

Since the District cannot make the necessary building improvements without borrowing funds, the next step would be to seek additional feedback from the community to determine what amount would be supported to alleviate capacity issues. If interest rates and construction costs continue to rise, the result would be getting less for a future investment.

3. What will the referendum cost me?

Due to an increase in our District's equalization value (total estimated value of all taxable property), our projected District tax mill rate will be lower than the current value.

- \$9.20 - Current 2022 Tax Mill Rate
- \$8.15 – Projected 2023 Tax Mill Rate if voters support both referendum questions

If passed, the referendum will have the following impact on the District's projected 2023 Tax Mill Rate:

- Question 1: \$0.32
- Question 2: \$0.43
- Combined: \$0.75

This means that for each fair market property value of \$100,000 the portion of your property taxes that are allocated to the School District of North Fond du Lac would increase by the following over the projected 2023 Tax Mill Rate.

- Question 1: \$32.00 per year or \$2.67 per month
- Question 2: \$43.00 per year or \$3.58 per month
- Combined: \$75.00 per year or \$6.25 per month

4. How is the tax impact calculated?

The tax impact is calculated as the estimated change in the mill rate for referendum debt payments over the projected 2022-23 mill rate for debt of \$4.52. The financing plan assumptions include repaying the referendum debt over 21 years at planning interest rates of 4.50%-4.75%, and using the District's 2021 equalized valuation with annual growth of 1.00% thereafter.

5. Is the estimated tax impact subject to change?

Our financial consultant, Baird, has continued to update the estimated tax impact based upon available data from the bond market, the DPI, the Department of Revenue and the District's planned levy for debt prepayment. Early on in the process, Baird takes a very conservative approach when determining estimated tax impact. When new data is available, they update the impact estimates. The primary assumption that may change is the district's equalized valuation growth. The growth assumption in the estimate today is 1.00%. If the growth is higher, the rate would decrease accordingly. For more detail on the financing plan and tax impact, please contact the district office.

6. When would the projects be complete if the referendum passes?

If the referendum passes, the design phase would begin immediately. There will be continued staff and community input opportunities while the detailed design is developed. Construction is projected to begin in early Spring of 2024 and to be complete according to the following:

- Early Learning Center and Treffert Way completed for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Bessie Allen Middle School additions and renovations completed before the start of the 2025-2026 school year.
- Horace Mann High School additions and renovations completed before the 2025-2026 school year.

7. What is the role of C.D. Smith as a Construction Manager?

As the Construction Manager (CM), C.D. Smith’s role is to oversee the entire referendum project budget and schedule from planning through completion. The CM is responsible for bidding the project to all trades. Any portions of the project that C.D. Smith is able to self-perform, the firm would competitively bid along with all other contractors with bids going directly to the District. C.D. Smith will encourage involvement by all available and qualified local contractors.

8. What will the proposed new middle school addition look like?

If the referendum is successful, a 10-month design effort will follow which will include many opportunities for staff to offer input into the design. District representatives will tour other recently completed middle and high schools to see collaborative learning spaces and to understand the design process. Much like the Friendship Learning Center project, the process will be collaborative and reflect the educational needs and goals of the School District of North Fond du Lac.

9. Is the District’s enrollment growth/capacity challenges only due to open enrollment?

Currently the School District of North Fond du Lac is open enrollment positive. This means, we open enroll more students into the District than the number that open enroll out of our District public schools. If we remove open enrollment numbers from our projections, we are still projecting growth. Additionally, if we do not increase our capacity, we may need to turn away open enroll students in the future.

Learn More:

Informational Meetings

Horace Mann High School at 6:00 PM
October 10, 19 and 27

Have Questions?

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