



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please note this is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all questions the District has received. Rather, these are questions received frequently.

What is the square footage difference between a new building and the remodel/renovation?

HSR plans a 72,000 square foot new elementary building. The last information the district had from FEH Design projected a 71,851 square foot building for the existing elementary, including an addition.

Didn't the voters just approve an elementary building referendum? Why are we having another?

Yes, voters in November approved an \$11.92 million renovation and addition to the existing elementary building. Following the election, School Board members heard from constituents wishing a new elementary building was on the ballot. The Board held a community forum in December and placed the April 2 resolution on the ballot in January.

Why couldn't both a new building and a renovation be on the November ballot to see which the voters preferred?

Legally, the District could only ask a maximum of two questions on the ballot. Because the District needed the \$325,000 for recurring district operations, that left only one question regarding an elementary building option.

Why couldn't the district ask voters for just the difference in cost between the two projects instead of asking for the entire cost of a new building?

The legal referendum language used in November was specific for the location of the current elementary school. Therefore, none of that money could be used for any work at the existing middle/high school site, which is where a new elementary would be constructed.

What happens if the April referendum fails?

The School Board voted that, if the April referendum for a new elementary school fails, the District would default back to the successful November referendum vote to renovate and expand the existing elementary. Therefore, if someone were to vote no in April, it isn't a vote to do nothing. The district will either be building a new elementary building, or renovating/expanding the current one.

If the April vote is successful, does that nullify the November vote?

Legally, the School Board would have authority to borrow both the \$11.92 million and the \$19.5 million. Five years from November 2018, the \$11.92 million would legally not be able to be borrowed. The School Board stated at a recent meeting it plans to draft a resolution to state its pledge to not touch the \$11.92 million, if the \$19.5 million is successful.

What is the District's plan for the old elementary school, should the referendum be successful?

At the March School Board meeting, Board members each discussed some suggestions for possible future use of the current elementary building. Students would still be using the current building for two years while the new building is being constructed.

What is the mill rate impact?

The referendum questions that passed in November did not impact the school's portion of property taxes for this current school year. Next year, the mill rate for the school's portion of your property taxes will increase from the current level of \$11.33. With the successful November elementary addition/renovation referendum and recurring operational referendum, that tax impact, when factored over a 20-year loan, will average an increase of \$2.52 per year. If the April referendum for a new elementary is successful, combined with the recurring operational referendum from November, the tax impact, when factored over the same 20-year period, will average an increase of \$3.45. All three of these numbers represent a per thousand increase. On a \$100,000 home, the increase would be \$252 or \$345 respectively. The difference is, on average, \$93 per year for 20 years.

The elementary school seems fine. What is wrong?

- The original part of the elementary was constructed in the late 1960s with an addition approved by voters in 1991. Although well maintained by our custodial staff, the building is showing its age.
- A majority of the infrastructure is original to the building, past its useful life, some is not compliant with current codes and regulations, and replacement parts are almost impossible to obtain. The long-term investment will create energy efficiencies.
- The lack of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility in the school limits access and creates equity issues.
- There is ground level settlement, partially due to water infiltration.
- Many classrooms, including the gym, do not meet national size standards.

The elementary was fine when I, and/or my child, attended school. What's changed?

- Education continues to evolve to best serve our many diverse populations. The number of special education, occupational and physical therapy, and English Language Learners

continues to increase. Physical spaces for students to receive these services is very limited in the current building and has been occurring in old locker rooms, closets, and in hallways.

- Today's classrooms require greater flexibility for both large and small group instruction and student collaboration, as well as greater electrical capacity to meet technology demands.
- Special education requirements and needs have increased. Multiple classrooms are now being used for special education instruction.
- Competition for multi-purpose space is fierce. The gym is a classroom during the school day, but also needs to serve as a cafeteria, performance venue for music events, and be accessible to the community for events and athletic practices. It is undersized by national standards for these uses.

Why can't these facility needs be paid by the regular school budget?

Wisconsin school districts have been subject to State imposed revenue limits since 1993. Mineral Point, like most school districts in the State, works hard to balance the budget on an annual basis and keeps spending within these revenue controls. However, it is difficult to fund large-scale capital projects, including renovations and additions to facilities, within the constraints of the normal operating budget. This creates the need for referendum approval by the taxpayers of a school district.

What is the architect's fee?

The School Board signed a contract with HSR at its March meeting stating the fee to HSR would be 6.7% on an addition/remodel project and 5.3% on new construction. Renovation projects often have a higher fee because there are more unknowns.

Has the middle/high school building been paid off?

Yes. The middle/high school debt has been paid.

Will the elementary project come in over \$19.5 million?

Legally, it cannot. If the bids come in under \$19.5 million, the district does not need to borrow all of that money.