

School District of Holmen

**REFERENDUM 2018**

- HHS Improvement Projects
- HHS Operational & Maintenance Costs

## **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

As of September 28, 2018

*(Italicized text was added or amended per the date indicated)*

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### **SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE REFERENDUM QUESTIONS**

No Supplement Q&A at this time.

### **SECTION II - FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

No Supplement Q&A at this time.

### **SECTION III - THE REFERENDUM QUESTIONS**

No Supplement Q&A at this time.

### **SECTION IV - QUESTION #1 - "HHS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS"**

**Why an addition and remodel at the high school rather than building a new high school?**

The School Board and facility committee studied construction of a new high school as an alternative to additions and remodeling of the current high school. The new high school alternative was rejected for a number of reasons:

1. The current enrollment projections do not justify the instructional space increase of a new high school.

2. Should enrollment projections change to justify more instructional space, the district has long-range site and long-range facility plans for both the high school and middle school.
3. The one-time construction and ongoing operational/maintenance cost (see table below) of the new high school option would be more than four (4) times greater without practical return on the investment.
4. Moving middle school students to the vacated high school leaves the current middle school without indefinable uses sufficient to fill the 193,828 square foot space of building space.

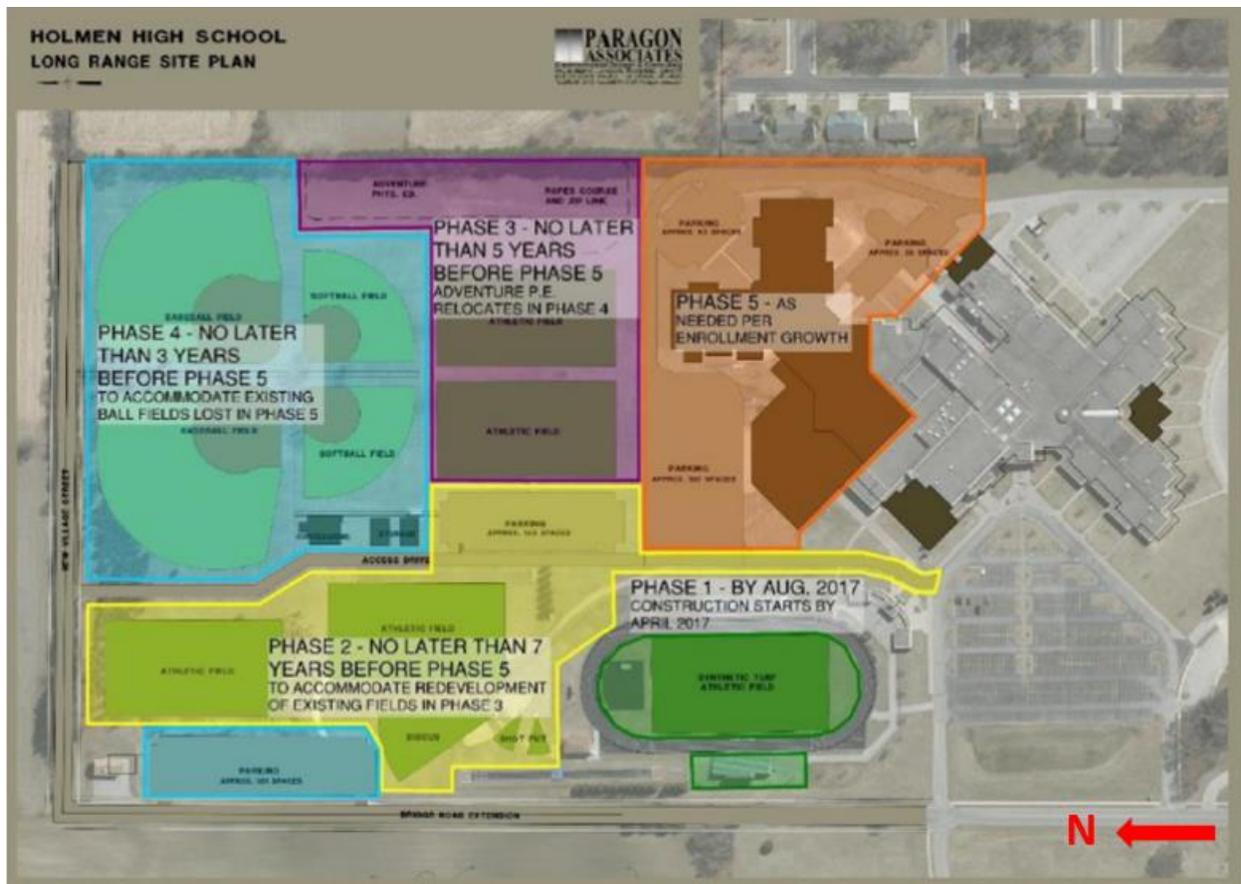
The referendum proposal was determined to be far more: effective in meeting the projected enrollment needs, fully aligned with the long-range facility plans and cost effective.

Cost	November 6 Referendum	Option of Building a New High School	Additional Cost of New High School Option
<u>One-Time Construction and Related Costs</u>	\$23,500,000*	\$97,448,130*	+\$73,948,130
<u>Annual Operation and Ongoing Maintenance</u>	\$460,000	\$1,960,470	+\$1,500,000

\*includes the furnishing, fixtures and equipment cost of approximately \$1,500,000 "November 6 Referendum" and \$5,000,000 "Option of Building a New High School"

**Does the addition and remodel at the high school fit the long-range plan for the high school site?**

Yes, the addition and remodeling to the high school aligns with the long-range site plan for the 75-acre high school site. Below is a long-range concept design for the high school site. This concept design allows for a future academic wing on the north side of the current high school, commonly referred to as "PHASE 5" of the long-range site plan. This addition is not included in the current referendum, but demonstrates the long-range planning should future enrollment require future building expansion.



### What are the current and future enrollment capacities at the high school?

The identified instructional space capacity of the current high school is 1,288 students. This capacity is sufficient to meet instructional space capacity of the projected enrollment. Please note the strong reference to instructional space. While current instructional space at the high school is sufficient, there is insufficient core, circulation and support space. These later space needs are addressed by the referendum.

The district's long-range facility plan calls for a future instructional space addition to the high school should future enrollment necessitate. This instructional space addition is commonly referred to as "PHASE 5" of the long-range site plan shown above. *The addition would increase the instructional space by approximately 196,840 square feet. The current high school is 215,000 square feet. The increase in instructional space would accommodate approximately 1,000 additional students, raising the total instructional capacity to 2,288 students. This would mean grade levels averaging close to 572 students. (The italicized text was updated 10/9/18)*

### Why aren't we building a new middle school?

For many years, a new middle school was projected to be the next facility construction need for the district. This projected need was driven by predicted future student enrollment. The district annually updates these enrollment projections. Current projections suggest middle school enrollment will remain stable over the next four years and then begin to slowly decline and stabilize.

The current middle school has an instructional capacity of 920 students based on the current instructional and scheduling model being used. Middle school enrollment over the next three years may be slightly

over that capacity. To accommodate the temporary peak in middle school enrollment, instructional and technology support staff were moved out of the middle school in 2017. The vacated space was then converted for instructional use. The relocated staff were moved to the recent district office addition, which the district funded without referendum dollars. Following the three-year spike, enrollment is projected to decline to below the 920-student number.

The district's long-range facility plan continues to allow for a second middle school at the Prairie View Elementary site (see image below) should future enrollment increase. The second middle school concept includes a 600-student capacity building. This brings total future middle school capacity to 1,520 (920+600). Current enrollment projections do not justify construction of that facility in the near future.



***Why isn't the current enrollment bubble impact on the middle school being addressed before the future impact of the bubble at the high school?***

*Past actions proactively prepared the middle school for higher enrollment, now it is time to address the high school needs.*

*The preparation at the middle school came in two primary events. First, the community passed a \$8,620,000 referendum in 2004 that: demolished an old section of the middle school, constructed 38,195 square feet of new building space at the middle school, moved central office functions out of the building, eliminated "temporary-portable" classrooms from the middle school, upgraded the middle school HVAC system and remodeled existing middle school spaces. Second, in 2017, instructional support staff were moved out of the middle school. Spaces occupied by these staff members was made available for instruction. The staff were relocated to the district office addition.*

*The spaces needed at the high school are core facilities, circulation spaces and support spaces. These space needs are driven by the enrollment bubble and increased student participation in programs. Increased program participation includes student services, classroom elective programs, co-curricular programs and school lunch program. The high school space needs have existed for a number of years. The needs were first formally reported in a 2012 study of the high school facility. This referendum in 2018 represents the first opportunity to fund these needs with no net increase in the tax rate. (This italicized Q&A item was added 9/28/18)*

### **Why do we need a new Fine Arts Center?**

The need for a new Fine Arts Center (FAC) is twofold.

First, repurposing the space to meet other student needs is the most cost effective and practical solution. The necessary expansion of the kitchen displaces instructional classrooms next to the kitchen. These classrooms need to be replaced. Rather than build additional square footage for these instructional spaces, it is more cost effective to remodel a portion of the existing FAC to classrooms. The cafeteria space is too small for the nearly 400 students during lunch periods. Expanding cafeteria space close to the kitchen is more practical than having students walk through the building to remote dining locations. The only large space available immediately adjacent to the current cafeteria is the FAC. Repurposing a part of the current FAC for cafeteria dining is the most cost effective and practical choice.

Second, the current FAC is too small to meet school and performance needs. The referendum would increase the seating capacity from 494 to 750. The stage and off-stage areas are too small to properly serve the needs of student performance events for parents and community. Storage of staging equipment is currently insufficient for event equipment and props. The added space will promote the future quality of student and guest experiences.

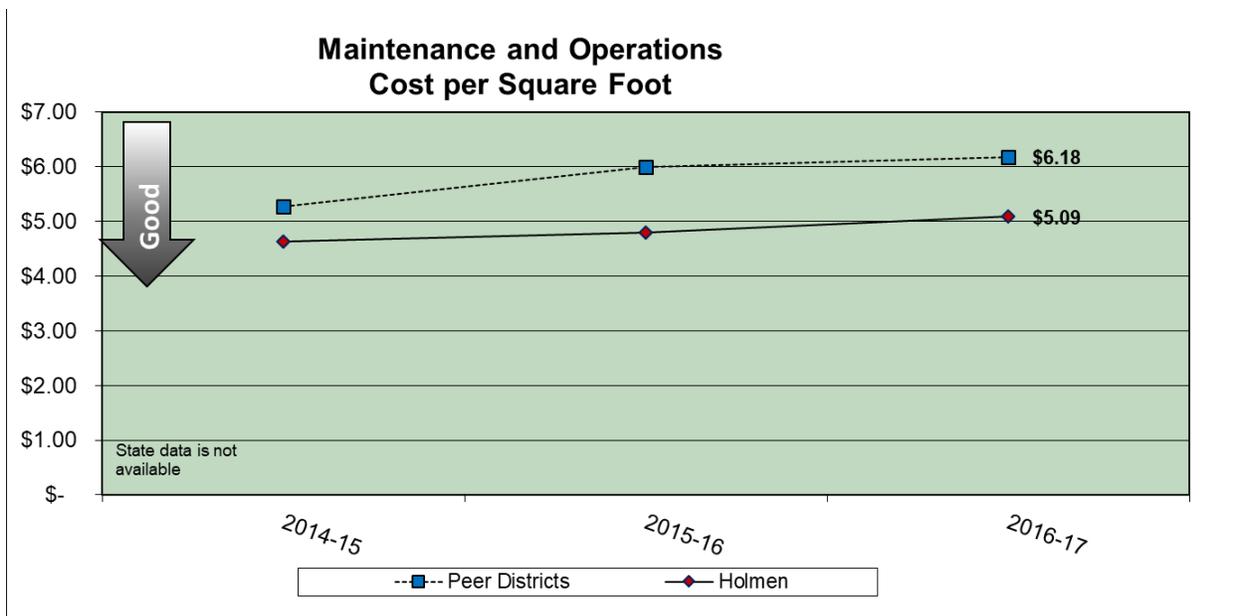
### **Why are there not more specific floor plans and images showing what the addition and remodeling will look like?**

Until the community expresses support for the proposal, the district believes it is unwise to commit the staff time and/or financial resources needed to develop detailed floor plans and images. With limited resources available, it would be a shame to spend money on architectural and engineering services that would never be used if the referendum fails. HSR Associates, Inc., the district's architectural and engineering services partner, is providing limited services at no fee up to the time of the referendum.

## **SECTION V – QUESTION #2 – “HHS OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS”**

### **Is the \$460,000 per year amount consistent with our facilities operational and maintenance cost?**

Yes, the operational and maintenance cost of \$460,000 was developed using our own existing operational and ongoing maintenance cost data. Below is a chart showing the average cost of operating and maintaining district facilities. It is important to note the costs shown is an average of all district buildings. The high school building receives the highest volume of use of all district buildings. While the average cost per square foot is \$5.09, the cost of operating and maintaining a high school is 25% greater than the average, or \$6.36 per square foot. Also, note the cost per square foot in Holmen is 21% below our 11 peer districts. This tight fiscal operation of district facilities leaves no room within the existing budget to accommodate the operational and ongoing maintenance cost of new facilities.



**Is it necessary to include maintenance cost for a new school building?**

Yes. Maintenance costs must cover structural, mechanical and site maintenance over the life of the building. While these costs will be low in the initial years of the building's total life span, the reality of these future costs must be accounted for. The district will set aside the dollars collected in the early years of the building's life to cover costs as the building ages. Without setting these dollars aside for replacement of flooring, roofs, and furnaces, the district would be setting up a fiscal cliff. The district is committed to responsible stewardship and proper maintenance of facilities. The maintenance component of Question #2 promotes stewardship and proper maintenance of facilities now and into the future.

**Rather than asking for more money, could the district use the taxes collected on new houses built in the community to pay the operational and maintenance cost?**

State law imposes revenue limits on our district. These revenue limits do not automatically allow the district to collect more tax money when a new home is built. Instead, the state law requires that public school districts use a referendum to seek permission from the community to increase revenue. This is why Referendum Question #2 is needed. Prior to state revenue limits, locally elected school boards had the authority to decide local school property taxes. Now, school boards must follow the amount prescribed by the state or ask the public for permission to exceed that amount.

**THANK YOU**