

October 14, 2005

2006 BOND
REFERENDUM

Spring Lake Park Yesterday
EDUCATION TODAY
School District 16 Tomorrow

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UPDATE ONE

High Expectations, High Achievement For All. No Excuses.



After ten months of study, the District 16 citizen-staff Facilities Task Force will make final recommendations on a facilities improvement plan in November

A District 16 Facilities Utilization Task Force is about to complete its work and provide a final report and recommendations to the School Board. Update 1 provides a glimpse of what will likely be included in the task force's final report.

Since that time, the task force has toured and reviewed all district sites, prioritized current and future facilities needs, reviewed enrollment and demographic data, and reviewed state guidelines related to renovation and new construction.

"We can't throw good money after bad and simply renovate. Some new construction is going to be necessary."

--task force member

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Recommendations in the final facilities improvement plan will be presented to the School Board on November 8. The Board is expected to approve a plan by mid-December and to set a date for a 2006 Bond Referendum election.

More detailed communication to district residents will occur after the Board approves a facilities improvement plan.

The present

The task force began to share major aspects of its findings in a preliminary report at October 6, 12, and 24 community meetings. These meetings are being rebroadcast on cable channel 19 (Comcast in Blaine, Spring Lake Park) and channel 14 (Time-Warner in Fridley). Excerpts from the presentation as well as a substantial number of other updates are available on the home page of the district's web site:

www.springlakeparkschools.org

This Update 1 will highlight major points from the presentations.

Brief History: 2004

In March 2004, Spring Lake Park Schools began an extensive process to review all of its facilities and their needs. A study, conducted by architects and engineers with input from district staff, included research into the adequacy of facilities for grade level configurations and class size equity in the years to come. It resulted in a detailed review of mechanical systems, academic programming, technology, and expandability of existing facilities. It also included a review of all district sites, including buildings, driveways, parking lots, play fields, and grounds. In addition, it addressed significant deferred maintenance items such as roofing and window needs.

Key task force points and preliminary conclusions

- Significant deferred maintenance needs, totaling over \$30 million, are necessary in the district's 35 to 50 year-old facilities.

Nearly 2,000 new housing units are projected in the northern part (Blaine) of the school district. Projected enrollment increases of over 800 students (a nearly 18 percent increase) have already begun to occur, leading to the need for additional classrooms and upgraded facilities.

Brief History: 2005

In January 2005, a citizen-staff Facilities Utilization Task Force began meeting.

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*"We cannot continue to put on band-aids. Long-term, we need to consider doing best for taxpayers."
-task force member*

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- From fall 2004 to fall 2005, the district has 200 new students.
- Land-locked school properties are too small for today's state guidelines and greatly limit district renovation options and choices.
- In 1995, \$60 million in facilities improvements were identified, but less than half were part of a Bond Referendum. These needs are still there as are ten years of additional needs.
- When the cost "of renovating or improving a school facility approaches or exceeds 60% of the cost of new construction, a school district needs to replace the facility" is one of the many state guidelines. (See MN Dept. of Education web site.)
- The Department of Education has said that there is too much activity at the high school complex site, that additions or significant improvements could be made to Kenneth Hall Elementary or to the high school, and that both should not be on the same site. This has led to only one viable alternative: reconfiguring and expanding Spring Lake Park High School and closing Kenneth Hall.
- The district should purchase additional land and build a multi-purpose 750-student new elementary school in Blaine. Virtually all new and projected enrollment gains have been in Blaine. Current figures show 61.4% of district students reside in Blaine, 21.7% in Spring Lake Park, and 16.9% in Fridley.
- Major renovation and new construction is necessary in the 50 year-old sections of the high school.
- Task Force fine-tunes Facilities Improvement Plan, utilizing community feedback and survey results: **Prior to Nov. 8, 2005**
- Task Force presents its final, completed Facilities Improvement Plan recommendations to the School Board: **Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2005**
- School Board decision on Facilities Improvement Plan, decision on 2006 date for Bond Referendum. Decision made: **Nov. 22, Dec. 6, or Dec. 13, 2005**
- District prepares and conducts an informational campaign to inform residents of the Facilities Improvement Plan and the Bond Referendum vote: **December 2005 – February 2006**
- Probable date for 2006 Bond Referendum: **Feb. 28, 2006**

Task force guidelines

The task force agreed that its facilities improvement plan, when completed, must:

- *improve safety and security at all sites*
- *provide for the correction of all health and fire safety issues*
- *complete all deferred maintenance issues that are crucial in the next five years*
- *provide for the actual and anticipated enrollment growth at all grade levels*
- *provide for the population growth in the north portion of the school district*
- *comply with federal, state and local statutes, regulations, and guidelines in order to receive a favorable Review and Comment from the Minnesota Department of Education*
- *be cost-effective and academically sound, to provide the district with facilities that can meet its present and future needs in a rapidly-changing environment*

The immediate future

Task force research and findings will not become recommendations until November 2005. The school board will then review and discuss the recommendations, eventually deciding upon a facilities improvement plan to bring to district voters in 2006. Remaining activities and their timeline are:

Some of the projects and proposals in the task force's preliminary plan:

Spring Lake Park High School

- All structural and mechanical repair projects that must be completed within the next 2-5 years in order to maintain the integrity of the school.

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- Take down some of the oldest areas of the high school.
- Construct a two-story addition for high school classrooms and programs with a link to the existing two-story section.
- Construct an expansion for the physical education/athletics and fine arts areas.
- Expand the boiler rooms, mechanical, and electrical systems.
- Move the District Office, districtwide support staff, Community Services, and Learning Alternatives programs to the first floor of the existing two-story section to become the District and Community Services Center. This would free up space in the district's schools and would allow high school students to occupy areas of new construction.
- Prepare existing science classrooms for Early Childhood Family Education, Preschool, and Early Childhood Special Education programs.
- Reconfigure the site layout to comply with state guidelines, improve parking and traffic flow, and to improve and expand athletic fields and green space.

Kenneth Hall Elementary

- Take down the existing facility as part of the overall plan to reduce activity on the "Spring Lake Park High School complex" site, as State officials have stated that this district's high school and an elementary school should not exist on the same site.
- Retain the gymnasium (for use by Early Childhood programs, Learning Alternatives, and the community) and cafeteria, and upgrade the entrance.

Further changes to the High School, District Office, Maintenance Garage

- Take down the existing facility as part of the overall plan to comply with state guidelines requiring the district to significantly reduce the activity on the site of the "Spring Lake Park High School complex."
- Relocate the District Office to the first floor of the existing two-story area of the high school, along with other districtwide programs and services. Create a new

high school main entrance on the east side with improved security, bus transportation drop-off area, traffic safety, and accessibility, and additional parking. It would also allow for expanded and improved physical education and practice fields and green space as per Minnesota Department of Education guidelines.

- Relocate maintenance garage and gas storage tanks to a more appropriate site; improve safety.

Westwood Elementary & Westwood Middle School

- All structural and mechanical repair projects that must be completed within the next 2-5 years in order to maintain the integrity of the school.
- Improve security, expand elementary and middle school lunchroom by infilling the area between the elementary and middle school. This would also relocate both the middle school and the elementary main offices to the entrance to facilitate accessibility as well as security.
- Add classrooms to accommodate increased enrollment.
- Reconfigure the site layout to add parking space and to improve the parking and traffic flow, including the addition of another entrance/exit road, if possible.

Park Terrace Elementary

- All structural and mechanical repair projects that must be completed within the next 2-5 years in order to maintain the integrity of the school.
- A former "open school," all classrooms are in the center of the building and utilize portable walls. The school will be turned "inside-out" with classrooms moved to the outside and corridors moved to the inside. Improve student learning and efficiency of space, create new classrooms, greatly increase natural lighting to classrooms.
- Expand and renovate the kitchen and lunchroom and gymnasium to update the site for today's students and to accommodate increased enrollment.
- Reconfigure the site layout to improve parking and traffic flow.



"When I first saw what it would cost, I had sticker shock. But I took the time to understand the needs. I fully support this plan."

--task force member

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Woodcrest Elementary

- Address all structural and mechanical repair projects that must be completed within the next 2-5 years in order to maintain the integrity of the school.
- Expand and renovate the lunchroom and gymnasium areas to update the site.
- Reconfigure the site layout to improve parking and traffic flow.

New Elementary School

- Purchase property and construct a new elementary school in the northern high growth area in Blaine.
- Elementary school with capacity of 750 could be ready to open in September 2008.

Tentative cost by site

These estimates include all deferred maintenance projects (excluding Health & Safety items), renovation, and new construction:

High School Complex (includes Spring Lake Park High School, Kenneth Hall Elementary, District Offices, maintenance garage, Learning Alternatives Community School, Community Services, and Early Childhood programs) \$41.9 million

Westwood Complex (includes Westwood Elementary and Westwood Middle School) \$19.5 million

Park Terrace Elementary \$9.6 million

Woodcrest Elementary \$2.4 million

New Elementary School (includes purchase of land, site development, and construction.) \$20.1 million

Projected 2006 Bond Referendum amount based upon Task Force preliminary plan \$93.5 million

Anticipated range of an eventual 2006 Bond referendum \$88 – 95 million

Preliminary, estimated cost of investment in schools for taxpayers

These are preliminary figures showing the affect of a \$90 million Bond Referendum for homes with the following *assessed values*. This is the value, assessed by the county, that homeowners use to pay taxes. This is almost always significantly less than the *market value*, or what homeowners would price their homes if they were to sell.

\$150,000 assessed home value
\$12/month \$144/year

\$200,000 assessed home value
\$16/month \$192/year

\$250,000 assessed home value
\$20/month \$240/year

\$500,000 assessed home value
\$39/month \$468/year

How to find out more

You can find out more about facilities improvement plans in the ways listed below. These and other means will be utilized over the next four to five months prior to a Bond Referendum in 2006.

- a series of mailings to all district residents and businesses, over the next four months, such as this one
- continually updated information on the home page of www.springlakeparkschools.org
- a question-and-answer feature soon to be on the web site above
- local and metro newspapers
- local cable television channels: Comcast channel 19 serving Blaine and Fridley; Time-Warner channel 14 (each Wednesday evening as this is a shared channel.)
- community and neighborhood meetings
- school officials, school newsletters
- administrators and School Board members
- Minnesota Department of Education website: <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>



Spring Lake Park School District 16

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