

Why This Referendum? Why now?

On March 19, 2019 the Rochester Public School Board unanimously approved the calling of a special election for issuing general obligation school building bonds with a 20-year duration. The referendum vote will be on November 5, 2019.

There will be two questions on the ballot.

The first question will address near-capacity student populations at all elementary and middle schools (98% and 99%), security upgrades at all schools, such as secure entrances and alarm systems, land purchase in conjunction with the proposed new middle school which will allow for future growth, and high school auditorium upgrades at all three high schools to address technology and maintain programs. In the past 5 years alone, the student population has increased by 1,000 students. With the pressures of continued City growth, the capacity issues in the district schools are acute. Investment for the projects included in the first question is \$171.4 million.

The second question, contingent on the first question passing, will eliminate significant annual expense in repair and maintenance for failing and degrading middle school pools, repurpose those pool spaces to enhance building space needs, and build a new district-wide use aquatic center with revenue stream potential on existing land at Century High School. The second question will also address bringing the Mayo High School pool into safety compliance for depth to allow safe diving at the pool. The investment for the projects included in the second question is \$9.5 million.

If questions one and two both pass, the total for both questions results in a \$180.9 million referendum. This fiscally conservative approach includes school reconstruction on land already owned by the district, facilities closures and re-purposing space (middle school pools), enhanced student safety with building security upgrades and depth increase at Mayo high school pool, technology updates at high school auditoriums, and building a district-wide use pool with potential revenue stream at Century High School.

'So What' Question 1?

- Elementary schools in the district are at 98% capacity
- Middle schools in the district are at 99% capacity
- Security infrastructure at all schools is limited
- High school auditorium facilities are outdated and require infrastructure improvements to sustain high school programs

'So What' Question 2:

- Failing middle school pools are a large maintenance expense (hundreds of thousands of dollars in 8 years) and continue to degrade.
- District rents facilities and transports high school students regularly to meet program demands.
- Mayo High School pool is out of depth compliance and must be deepened to allow safe diving

Voting Yes Twice Means

- Reconstruction of 2 elementary schools for increased capacity and building 1 elementary school and 1 middle school
- Land for the Middle school will be large enough for future district school building needs. At the time of this writing the referendum includes the costs of this and the City of Rochester has no financial obligation.
- Security will be enhanced at all schools for more controlled access and alarm systems and locks
- High school auditoriums will receive technology updates for program maintenance (music, drama, assembly, rentals)
- Elimination of significant annual expense for failing middle school pools by closing those (and repurposing the space), then building a new district-wide use pool with revenue stream potential on land already owned at Century High School
- Achieve safety compliance at the Mayo High School pool by increasing its depth.

VOTER IMPACT EXAMPLES

Residential

Question 1: For a property tax valuation at \$200,000, the annual property tax impact will be \$89 annually

Question 2: For the same valuation, the annual property tax impact will be \$7 annually

Total Annual Residential Property Tax increase: \$97 (~\$8/month)

Commercial

Question 1: For a property tax valuation at \$500,000, the annual property tax impact will be \$456 annually

Question 2: For the same valuation, the annual property tax impact will be \$33 annually.

Total Annual Commercial Property Tax increase: \$489 (~\$41/month)

Property tax calculator and more information at:

<https://www.rochesterschools.org/referendum> <https://strongschoolsforrochester.org/>