Aitkin Community

Referendum Information

Aitkin Public Schools

Empowering Students to be Life-Long Learners

July 27, 2016

Aitkin Public Schools
Empowering Students to be Life-Long Learners

Bernie Novak

Superintendent

Aitkin Public Schools

Aitkin Public Schools
Empowering Students to be Life-Long Learners

Welcome!

August 9th Referendum to Vote on:

- Rippleside Elementary School Remodel
- New Grade 5-12 Middle School & High School

  Includes: New District Campus & Community Center

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Voting Information

Election Day: August 9, 2016

- **You vote at your regular polling location. You can register to vote at your polling location if you are not already registered.**
- **You can vote early by completing an absentee ballot application. Residents wishing to vote absentee can either vote in person at the Aitkin County Auditor's office or call the auditor's office and request an absentee ballot request form.**

To find out more:
Visit http://www.co.aitkin.mn.us/departments/auditor/elections.html
Or
Call the Aitkin County Auditor at (218) 927-7354

Meeting Agenda:

- Community-led decision process
- Community task force recommendation
- What's in the plan?
- What needs does the plan address?
- What are the benefits of the plan?
- Costs of solving problems
- Questions & Answers

FOSTER JACOBS & JOHNSON, INC.
LISTEN + PLAN + DESIGN + EXECUTE©

Jon Paul

Director of Business Development

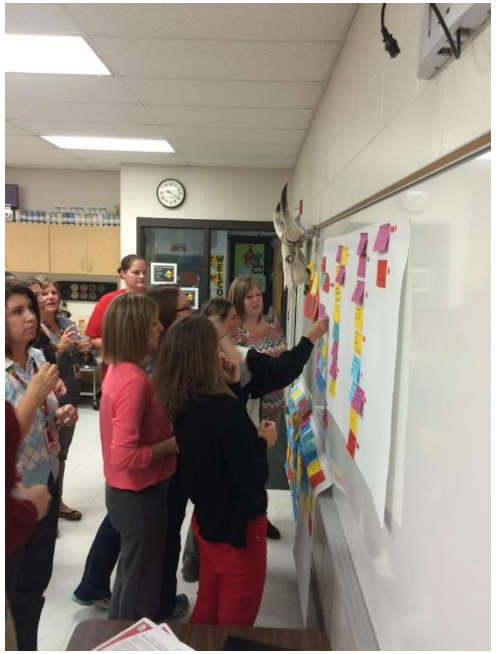
Foster, Jacobs & Johnson, Inc.

Who We Are: FJJ

- Foster, Jacobs & Johnson, Inc. (FJJ) is a trusted partner in planning, design, and construction management services for educational customers throughout this part of Minnesota
- We are currently working with 22 public school districts in Minnesota
- Including: Mora, Hinckley-Finlayson, Northland Community Schools, and Deer River

Aitkin's Community-Led Decision Process

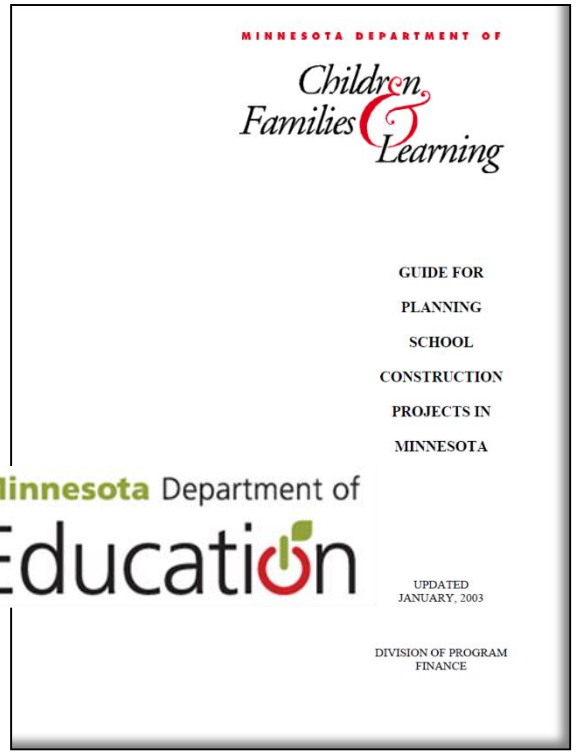
- Held 22 listening sessions during Fall 2015
- Meetings included:
  - Open Community Meetings
    - Aitkin
    - Palisade
    - Glen/Kimberly
  - Civic/Service Groups
  - Teachers & Staff
  - Students



Measuring Quality of a School Building

- Minnesota Department of Education classroom standards
- State Health and Safety guidelines
- Adequate amount of space inside and outside buildings
- Security
- Parking and traffic flow
- Building and site condition
- Energy usage

	CATEGORY	ELEM	HS
1	General Purpose Classroom Size/Suitability	R	R
2	Cafeteria/Serving	Y	Y
3	Security/Supervision	R	R
4	Main Office/Nurse/Support Services	Y	R
5	Science	G	R
6	Art	G	Y
7	Music	G	R
8	Teacher Planning Areas/Lounge	R	R
9	Student Break Out/Small Group Areas	R	R
10	Gymnasium	Y	Y
11	Site Suitability-Playground/Green Space	G	R
12	Parking/Parent & Bus Drop Off	R	R
13	Technology	Y	Y
14	Media Center	G	G
15	Special Education	R	R
16	Auditorium/Performance Area	NA	Y
17	Career & Technical Education	NA	Y



Needs At High School

- Inadequate air ventilation in classrooms
- Lack of safe and secure building entrances
- Spaces are not ideal for 21st Century Learning
- Limited space for after-school and community activities
- Deferred Maintenance: Roofs, Windows, Flooring
- Spaces are dated and need updating throughout the building
- Not connected to outdoor spaces and athletic fields

Needs At Elementary

- Lacking space needed for today's enrollment
- Unsafe pick-up/drop-off areas and undersized parking lots
- Inadequate air ventilation in classrooms
- Lack of safe and secure building entrances
- Fire sprinkler system does not meet today's code requirements
- Gymnasium and lunch room spaces are inadequate
- No space to expand popular early learning programming

Aitkin's Community-Led Decision Process

- Task Force with 30+ community members
- Over 400 volunteer hours during Winter 2015
- Developed a recommendation to the board

Aitkin Public Schools

Empowering Students to be Life-Long Learners

Steve Wilson

Community Task Force Member

Task Force Consensus

“WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING”

Task Force Recommendation

- New Grade 5-12 Middle/High School Campus with community center, auditorium, outdoor learning environments, and athletic fields

- Remodeled Rippleside Elementary School for Early Learning through Grade 4

OUR PLAN SOLVES
Needs At High School

- ✓ Inadequate air ventilation in classrooms
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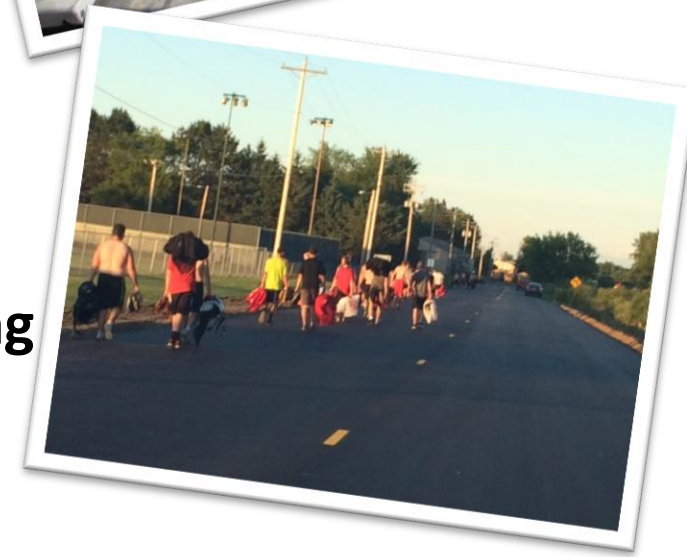

OUR PLAN SOLVES
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Why Build New Grade 5-12 School, but Remodel Rippleside

- **High School is in a land-locked location with limited options**
  - *High School built in current location in 1936 before Hwy 210 traffic*
  - *Community task force says that Repair/Remodel Plan will not address the high school's needs*
  - *Expensive to add additional land, as Aitkin has built their homes and businesses around the school*
- **On the other hand, Rippleside is already in a good location and a better building to remodel**
  - *Significant upgrades to building in recent years*

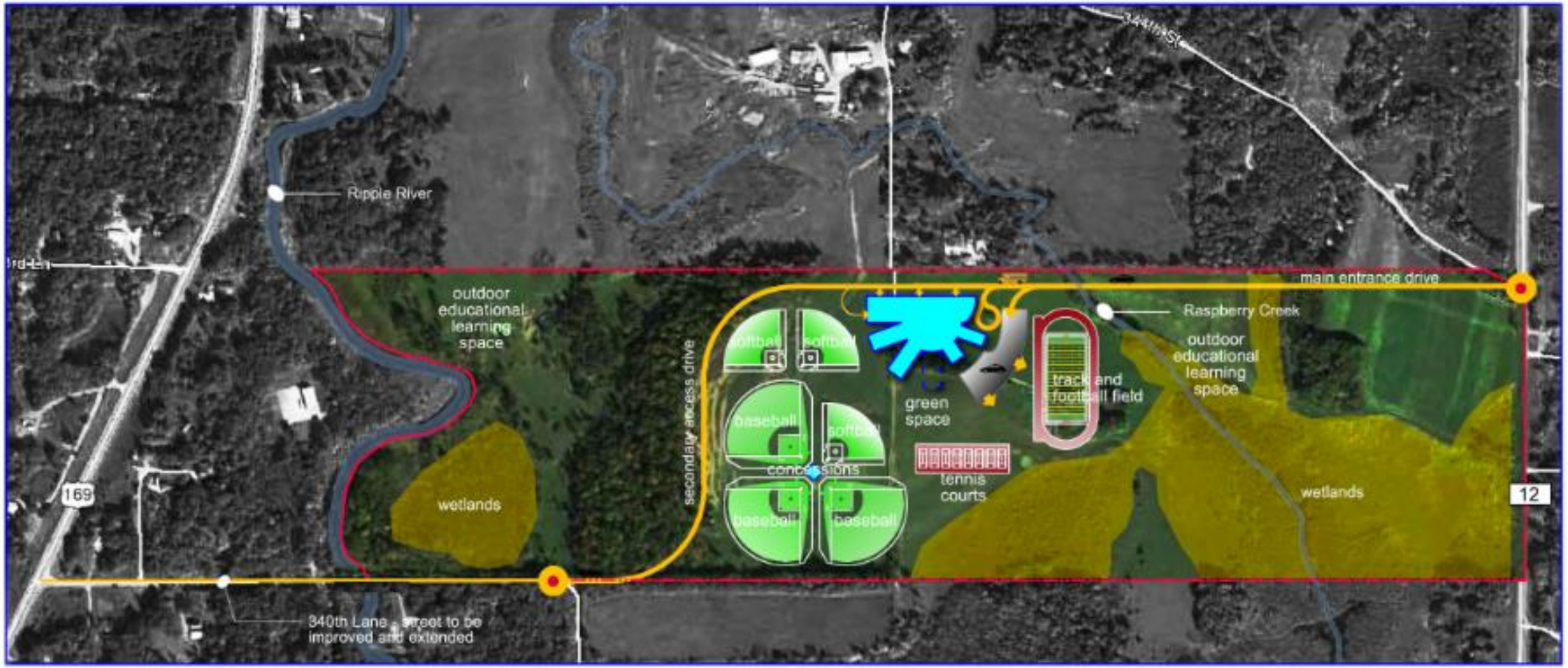
Lindsey Fetzik

Architectural Resources, Inc.

Who We Are: ARI

- Architectural Resources Inc. (ARI) has a team of nearly three dozen architects, engineers, designers and other professionals
- Has designed many other schools, including Moose Lake, Thief River Falls, North Woods, Cherry, Tower, North East Range, South Ridge, Duluth East High School, Hibbing
- Offices in Hibbing and Duluth

New Grade 5-12 Campus



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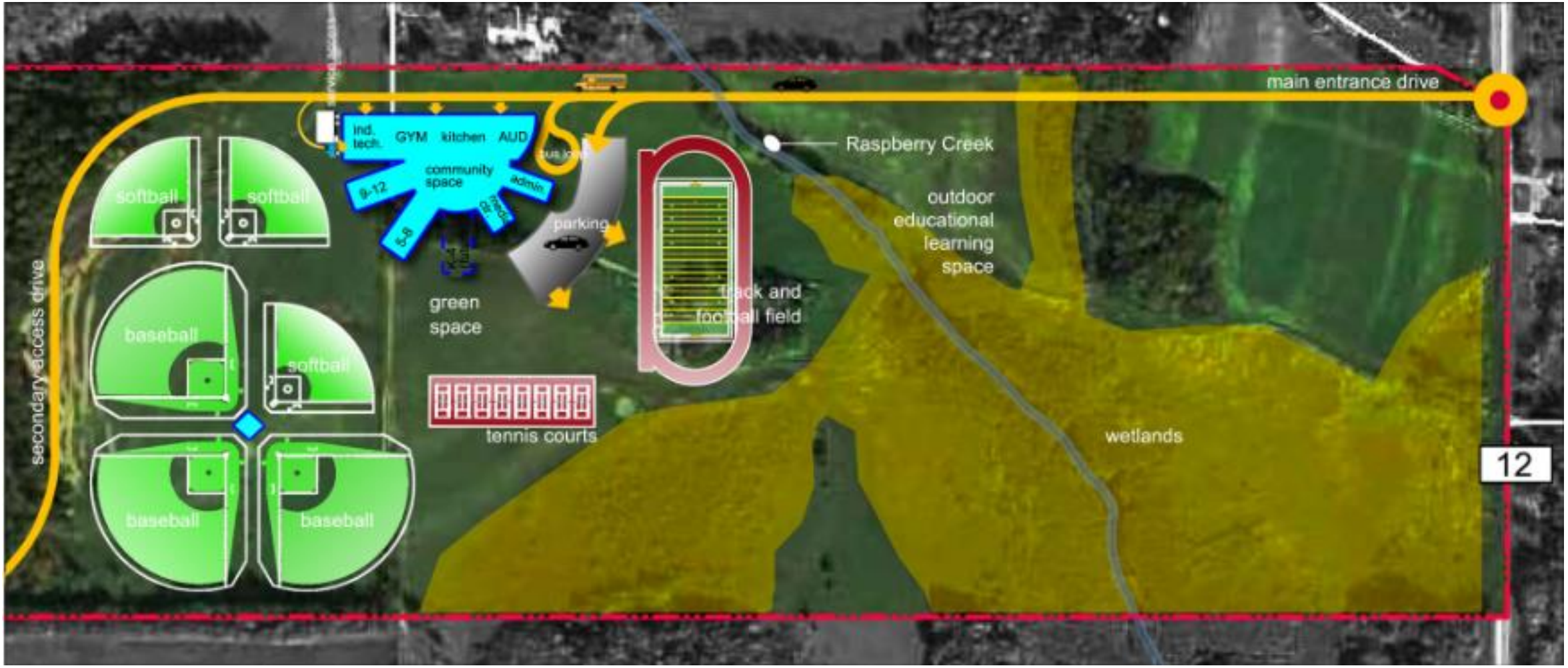
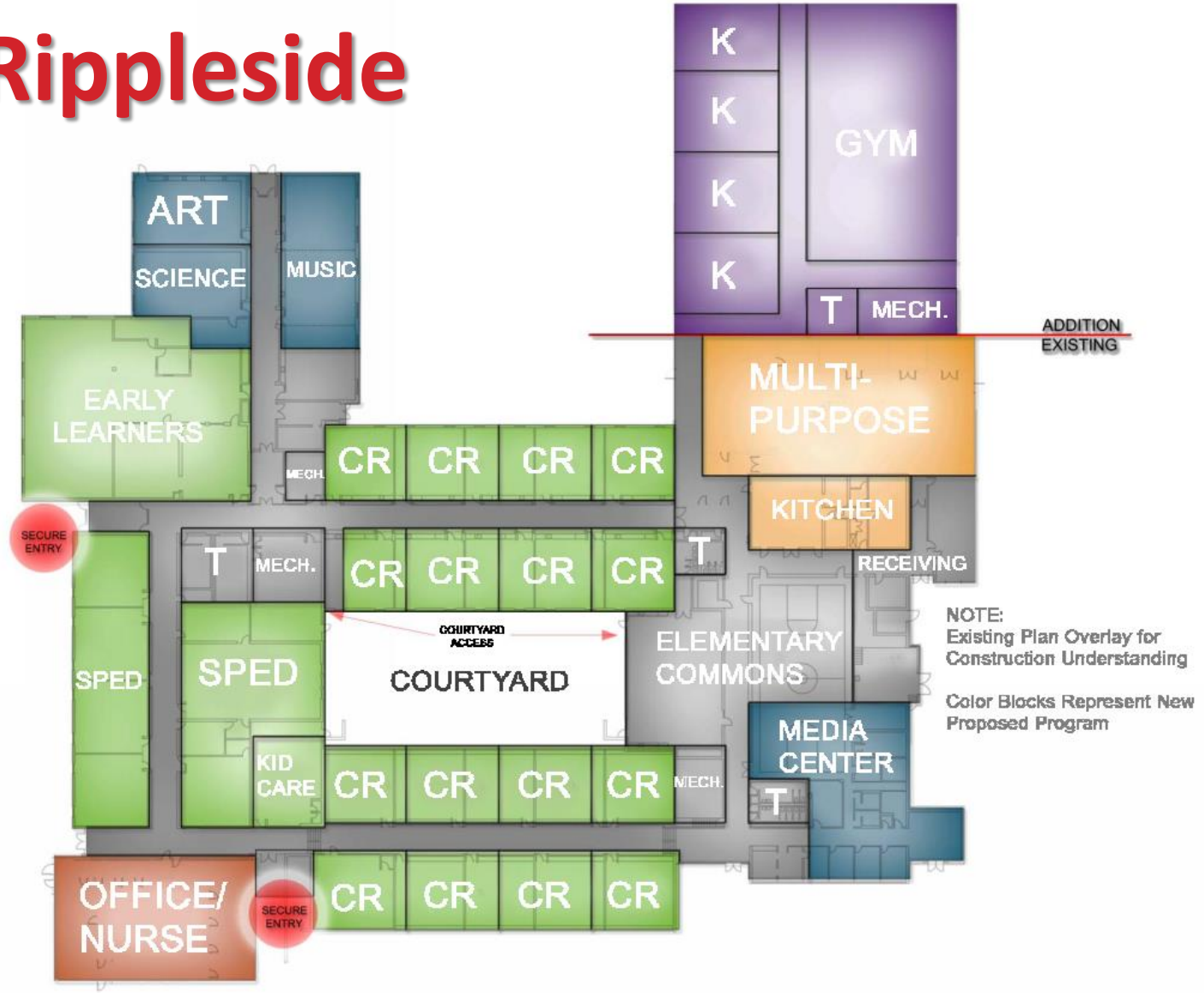
New Grade 5-12 Campus



Remodel Rippleside



Proposed Site Reconfiguration
Rippleside Elementary School

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Tiffany Gustin

Business Manager

Aitkin Public Schools

Cost of Meeting Our Needs

School improvements can be paid for by:

- **Bond referendum with voter approval?**
- **Increase the school district tax levy using financing tools that don't require voter approval?**
- **Fund balance?**
  - ***The District's savings account***
- **Operating budget?**
  - ***Money for that could be used in the classroom or for costs of operations***

Cost of Meeting Our Needs

Task Force Plan

- The school bond referendum asks voters to approve a $68,500,000 plan, to be repaid over 20 years

- The estimated tax impact on a home valued at $100,000 is $19 a month

Aitkin Public Schools — ISD #1

Analysis of Tax Impact for Possible
New Debt Options August 2016 Election

Review and Comment

Bond Issue Amount		$68,500,000
Number of Years		20
Estimated Debt Service Tax Capacity Rate Payable 2017 with Proposed Bond Issue		32.38%
Type of Property	**Estimated Market Value**	**Estimated Monthly Property Tax Increase**
Residential Homestead	$100,000	$19
	$150,000	$34
Commercial/Industrial	$100,000	$41
	$500,000	$250
Seasonal	$100,000	$27
Agricultural Homestead	$300,000	$46
Agricultural Non-Homestead (dollars per acre)	$4,000	$1

Source: Ehlers, April 2016

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Scott Miller

High School Social Studies Teacher

Aitkin Public Schools

Questions?

Is the land included in the referendum?

No, the land will be paid for with existing district funds.

Questions?

Is the cost of utilities for the new site included?

Yes, all site utilities are included in the project costs.

Questions?

Is the cost of the Referendum $68.5M or $103M?

The total project cost is budgeted at $68.5M. Much like a mortgage on a house, the bonds will be paid back with interest – current rates are between 2 and 3 percent.

Questions?

Is the enrollment declining?

According to the enrollment projection study, there will be a slight decline over time in our enrollment. This is consistent with what we have seen in our district over time.

Questions?

Do we gain or lose students to open enrollment?

We have been fortunate over the years to see a gain from open enrollment, which we believe is due to our excellent teaching staff. However, in recent years it is almost even.

Questions?

Will a new school increase open enrollment?

There is no way of predicting the future, but we feel that putting excellent teachers in an improved facility will help to bring more kids into Aitkin Public School.

Questions?

Is the new school building smaller than our existing building?

Yes. We have completed a study that shows we do not maximize the space that we currently have, and we can reduce the square footage while retaining the flexibility in case our enrollment grows.

Questions?

Is the new school going to be more efficient than the existing building?

The existing energy usage of the High School is very low. The new school will be bringing in more fresh air to the classrooms -- this may use more energy but will provide a healthier environment.

If the referendum doesn't pass, the existing HS would need a similar system.

Questions?

Will the new property be annexed into the City of Aitkin?

The school board hasn't taken a position on annexation. Preliminary discussions with the City of Aitkin have taken place. Now that the purchase agreement has been finalized, further planning will take place.

Questions?

Will you have the land prior to the election?

Yes. A purchase agreement is now in place.

The purchase agreement is for 221.73 acres of land owned by Gary and Mary Lindgren in Section 36 of Aitkin Township.

Questions?

What will you do with the existing building?

The property will be offered for sale to interested parties.

If that is not successful, we will clear the site and sell the land.

Questions?

What is included in the Referendum?

We have brochures and concept renderings available at the tables in the lobby showing the complete list.

Questions?

How much do we have in the fund balance?

Per the most recent audited financials (as of June 30, 2015), the District has an unassigned fund balance of $5,891,639.

Questions?

Find out more

- Visit with us at our tables and take a building tour!
- Visit www.isd1.org
- Call the Aitkin Public Schools Superintendent's office at 927-2115

BUILDING TOURS AFTER MEETING!!!

Questions?

Bernie Novak
Tiffany Gustin

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Jon Paul

ARI

Lindsey Fetzik

EHLERS
LEADERS IN PUBLIC FINANCE

Jodie Zesbaugh
Greg Crowe