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School Funding Decision in Hands of Voters

On May 24, residents in our community will be asked to make a very important decision regarding our schools through a referendum funding request. As Superintendent, I am not allowed to tell you how to vote – but I can provide you with important facts so you can make an informed vote.

- **We are growing.** We are a popular school district with lots of housing growth; with that growth comes families with children. We are already exceeding our projections to welcome more than 250 new students each and every year from now through 2021.
- **More students means more needs** throughout our district, particularly in three areas: space for students, technology for teaching and security for schools.
- **Existing funding will not address these needs.** State law allows school districts to request additional funding from local voters for building additions and repairs, technology and security – which is what is included in our May 24 referendum.
- **We listened to our community.** The School Board and District leadership spent the last year studying the district's growth and facility needs before finalizing the referendum request. We gathered staff and community input through information sessions, emails, comment cards, many informal discussions and a community survey.
- **Our School District is fiscally responsible and accountable.** Based on what we learned from staff and community members, we reduced the original project proposal and used a range of financial tools to save money and be more efficient with tax dollars. We are proud to have an excellent credit rating, assigned by an outside objective service. We have also received financial awards for transparent and conservative management of financial resources.
- **School security is a priority.** The world is a different place today than 25 years ago, and our schools must be, too. This includes making sure we have secure entrances, visitor screening systems and other means for providing a safe environment for learning – projects that would occur with referendum funding.

- **We are a leader in innovative technology use in classrooms.** Our strategic plan includes integrating technology to ensure students have 21st century skills and can compete with the best and brightest when they graduate. Referendum funds would support technology while freeing up other funds to operate a new elementary school.
- **If the referendum does not pass,** class sizes would increase, growth would continue to add pressure on schools, elementary attendance boundaries may need to change due to school crowding, our ability to maintain classroom technology and innovative programming would be limited, and we would not be able to improve security at all buildings.

Our goal has always been to match our school district's needs with what our community can support. Please learn the facts (visit www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/referendum for more) and make an informed vote on May 24 that will impact our students, our schools and our community for years to come. My door is always open if you want to talk. Thank you!