

## Referendum Question #2

Question two on the upcoming referendum asks voters who reside in the School District of Shell Lake to approve 3.5 million dollars for the construction of a multi-function gym/performance area. This cost includes several elements, in addition to the gym area, to address space, security and the performing arts needs.

One element of the addition would include a new security entrance and lobby. This would provide increased security by incorporating a vestibule area that allows visitors in from the elements after buzzing into the building, then directs them to a reception area as an additional screening. The process with the redesigned entrance to the building and lobby area would provide a higher degree of security than what currently exists.

A need for an additional gym has existed for quite some time, as our current gym is shared between High School, Middle school and Elementary school athletics. Currently, the district manages this space need by renting space from the Arts Center. While this has alleviated some space shortfall, several needs remain unmet. Throughout the sports season, games occur simultaneously at the Arts Center and the school gym. This has added further challenges for our school, as well as visiting schools, in arranging transportation between both locations with students participating in overlapping events at each location. This results in a conflict as parents, officials, and players struggle to coordinate games.

As the popularity of sports increases among our younger children in elementary grades, it presents an added challenge to provide the adequate gym space required. Our Community education program which currently hosts open gym sessions have continued to grow. Our gym is always bustling with activity. An additional gym would provide flexibility in scheduling games, practices and community events, as well as ease the strain on limited resources for transportation. It would enhance the experience of students, parents and visitors by providing additional gym space under one campus.

Question #2 also addresses the needs of our performing arts. The gym would include space and acoustical treatments to showcase the performing arts that are so richly steeped into the Shell Lake community. Multiple times throughout the school year, our high school, middle school, elementary and primary schools have music concerts. Due to the size of the groups and the audience, these events are held in the 3-12 gym. Because of this, gym classes must either be cancelled or held outdoors weather permitting. The limited access to the gym also results in our performing groups having very limited rehearsal time to set their equipment up and get familiar with the acoustics. The audiences for these performances sit on backless wooden bleachers for the duration of the performance. The new facility would have an area of more comfortable seating with backs, conducive to this type of venue, and be designed with acoustics and sound as a focus. Again, the area would be air-conditioned, allowing doors to remain securely closed while providing a more comfortable experience for both performers and audiences.

While question #2, adding a gym/performance space, is independent of question #1, the addition of a new primary wing, passing both questions would result in savings to the community, as it would be more economical to complete both projects at the same time. With the heightened awareness of security in our schools across the nation, it is important to note that question #2 also includes some significant improvements in security.

An additional gym would provide flexibility in scheduling games, performances, practices and community events, as well as ease the strain on limited resources for transportation. This would enhance the experience of students, parents and visitors by offering activities to take place on one campus.

Finally, the new addition would allow all games to be played at one site and allow our students to rehearse in a performing arts space multiple times prior to their concerts. Detailed presentations will take place on Wednesday, March 7 at 4:00pm and 7:00pm at the 3-12 building and again on Tuesday, March 13 at 4:00pm and 7:00pm at the primary school.