



# Lake Mills Leader **eNEWS**

Wednesday, September 17, 2008

## School Board Picks Referendum Financing Package

**Heidi Freymiller**

Contributing Writer

Wednesday, September 17, 2008

If approved, the \$15.6 million referendum the Lake Mills Board of Education is asking voters to consider in November will initially cost taxpayers approximately \$1.25 per \$1,000 of home value and decrease over the duration of the loan.

After considering the options prepared by a financial adviser from Robert W. Baird, board members decided at a special meeting Monday night that they would employ the financing plan that minimizes total interest payments.

The referendum funds will be used to completely renovate and add on to the existing middle school. While all of the buildings in the district are in need of upgrades, the needs at the middle school are most dire.

The electrical wiring at the middle school is residential grade and not code compliant and security at the entrances is a concern. Proposed improvements will include aspects of "green building," the implementation of geothermal energy and additional instructional spaces that will give the district flex room for changing student populations.

While exact numbers are not known yet because interest rates and the district's assessed value are assumed at this point, the average increase in the mill rate is estimated to be about \$1.11 over the 20 year loan. The district's assessed value will not be known for sure until October.

Based on the adviser's estimates, at the end of the repayment term, the mill rate will drop to approximately \$0.86 per \$1,000 of value. District administrator Dean Sanders noted that while the numbers are assumed at this time, they are not likely to increase because, generally, assessed values increase over time.

"Front-loading" the increase in the mill rate is expected to save the district approximately \$400,000 in interest payments. The \$1.25 per \$1,000 estimate is inclusive of the district's remaining debt from the previous \$2.5 million referendum, which was used to build the new high school auditorium.

That debt will be paid off in 2014.

Members of the board are also in the process of drafting a long-range plan to address other facility improvements in the district.

Board members will begin reaching out to civic groups, community members and governmental boards in order to provide information about the district's needs and to answer questions if needed.

"We want to make sure that everyone fully understands the impact and the scope of the project to make an informed decision," said board president Mike Johnson.

## Related Links

---

Content © 2008  
Software © 1998-2008 **1up! Software**, All Rights Reserved