

USD 444 Little River-Windom Board of Education **Approves Bond Resolution**

Enclosed in this week's edition of the Monitor is a Notice of Intent to File an Application for Permission to Vote and Issue School Bonds in Excess of the District's General Bond Debt Limitation from the July 22nd Board of Education meeting. USD 444 Board of Education members voted 7 to 0 to call for a resolution to file an application with the Kansas State Department of Education, with the intent of having a bond election to improve and update facilities. The decision from the board came after the building steering committee made a formal recommendation to the board of education at the July 8th special board meeting. The intent of the board is for patrons to vote at the general election in November.

Administration, board of education members, and the steering committee have spent the past year evaluating facilities with the help of outside experts. The steering committee was formed last fall to assist the board and administration in evaluating our facilities. After many hours of research and discussion, it was determined that USD 444 had a need to upgrade schools to maintain the high quality schools that our community can be proud of for the next two generations. It was also determined the only way to do the necessary upgrades is to ask the community for support in passing a bond. A community meeting was held last May to gather input and a survey was sent out last spring to solicit input. All information was helpful and assisted the committee and the board in formulating a plan of action. A campaign committee is being formed to help educate and inform patrons about the project. I would highly encourage you to contact myself at the district office or one of the following steering committee members with questions you have regarding the proposed project. Plans of the project and a Q & A document will also be shared with patrons upon request and in future publications of the newspaper.

Committee members are: Jon Paden, Kyle Huxman, Audrey Farmer, Betsy Lafferty, Audrey Herbst, Cory Dieball, Austin Neufeld, Shayla Grasser, Dan Stephenson, Shane Cordell, Eric Kratzer, Kay Mullen, and Beau Boughman. These members spent many hours in the building and can explain the process taken to formulate the final project.

The proposed project includes at the Little River Jr./Sr. High School: new classrooms in the main wing, vo-ag and technical education shops and classrooms, storm shelter, auxiliary gym, proposed community and school weight room, general remodeling of all classrooms and corridors, lighting and new ceilings, HVAC upgrades and replacement as appropriate, fire sprinklers throughout existing building, security updates as needed, and new roofing where necessary.

At the Windom Elementary School: complete remodel of the existing building , new classrooms (replace old classrooms on the north end of the building which is currently the Kindergarten and 3rd grade area), a storm shelter, remodeling of office area with a secure vestibule, fire sprinklers

at existing building, HVAC replacement at existing building, security upgrades, and roof replacement on areas needed.

The district will continue to update patrons of the plans and the tax impact associated with the project. Facility videos were shared at the meeting and will be posted on the school's Facebook pages again for your review. Upcoming meetings will be announced and will be held once approval is received from the Kansas State Department of Education to inform patrons of the final project designs and plans. Thank you for your support of our schools and hope that you will become educated and informed as to why this is a critical decision for our community and the future of Little River and Windom.