

February 14, 2016

Mapleton Community Members:

The School Board of the Mapleton Public School District is reaching out to residents in the district to obtain opinions on the Mapleton Public School District's effort to build a new school. The current building is 92 years old. Updating this building will not provide any additional classroom space and costs over \$5 million dollars. The bond referendum to build a new school that meets 21st century education standards will only be \$7.2 million.

Included in this packet of info is information related to the tax impact on residential property in the Mapleton School District. You can find additional information related to other types of property on the school website:

www.mapleton.k12.nd.us in a document labeled, "Tax Estimate". If you need assistance in understanding the document, please contact the Mapleton business manager, Kenneth Steiner. Also included is a survey related to the district's option for a new school. You can complete the survey manually and return it to the district office directly, by mail, or by e-mail (kenneth.steiner1@k12.nd.us). You are also welcome to simply complete the survey online by going to this link: <https://mapletonschool.typeform.com/to/xvEFaG>

The results of the survey will be presented to the community at a meeting on March 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Mapleton Community Center (note – not in the school gym). Along with the survey results, the meeting will provide the community with the opportunity to request any additional information necessary prior to the bond referendum scheduled for **March 29, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. in the school gym (access via the east door).**

Accommodations can be made for anyone that is unable to access the facility due to the stairs. Absentee ballots are currently being put together and will be available upon request. Due to the absentee ballot process, we are unable to give more than one ballot to any single person. We can mail them out upon request.

Here is a summary of the bond referendum information and the ballot. The ballot will have two questions on it. The first question will be related to the bond referendum amount of \$7.2 million dollars. The Mapleton Public School District can only raise so much in revenue due to the value of property within the school district. The second question is granting the school district permission to raise its debt limit from 5% to 10% of the taxable valuation. That increase allows the school district to reach the \$7.2 million amount. If Question #1 was approved and Question #2 was rejected, the school district would be unable to build a new school, as the district would be unable to take on the level of debt necessary to build the school. Two yes votes gets the new school built.

The district is still deciding on the exact facility to build. The options are K – 5, K – 6, or K – 8. Obviously, the larger the building, the more it will cost. However, the \$7.2 million debt limit is the maximum the local residents will be responsible for paying via property taxes. Any amount above that will be achieved via non-tax impact options.

Why doesn't the school district build the new school with non-tax impact options? School districts can only access \$4 million in non-tax impact funds. That amount will simply not allow the district to build even a K – 5 facility. The other important note related to property taxes is that as new houses and business are built within the Mapleton School District, the tax impact on a per property basis goes down. Mapleton currently has 150 houses plotted to be built in the next 2 – 5 years. Each of those properties will reduce the tax impact of the bond referendum. Over the next several years, this new school will not impact your taxes in the same way as at the start. A new school, especially an elementary, has a positive impact on communities.

The Mapleton Public School District wants to partner with the local residents to build a new school. Three possible options in the school may be available to community members: 1. A high school sized gym - which will be accessible by the community. 2. A fitness facility – we understand Mapleton is close to the Fargo-Moorhead area and fitness facilities there area available. This option would permit community members to access a fitness facility for a low annual fee

(probably about what you would pay monthly in the Fargo-Moorhead area). 3. A media/library facility – we understand most everyone has internet access on their phones and in their homes. The school will need the facility for students and making it available to the community as needed just makes sense.

The bottom line question related to the bond referendum is **“What will happen to my taxes?”** That information is available on the Mapleton Public School District (above) and City of Mapleton website (http://www.mapletonnd.com/index.asp?SEC=AD70C064-231F-4C13-B950-BA8720392EC1&Type=B_BASIC) in a document titled **“Future Taxes”**. The document provides an explanation of taxes in West Fargo, Casselton, and Mapleton currently compared to the second page of what taxes would be **IF** the bond referendum is passed in Mapleton. The Mapleton Public School District talked to both West Fargo and Central Cass about option of becoming part of either of those districts. Neither district felt the timing was ideal and did not think voters would approve. If a bond referendum is passed, the Mapleton Public School District will still have lower taxes than West Fargo. Central Cass is considering a bond referendum in the future so their taxes would likely increase. For cropland, the increase will be \$3.84 per acre per year. For non-cropland, the increase will be \$1.17 per acre per year.

Additional information related to the meetings and the information presented at each of the meetings is available on either of the websites mentioned above. As mentioned above, the next meeting has been scheduled for **March 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Mapleton Community Center**. Any information you need prior to that meeting can be requested from the district office. We will present the survey results at that meeting.

Please complete the survey online or return the manual copy of the district office by March 3, 2016. All surveys will require a name of a current resident of the Mapleton Public School District. Full survey results will be presented, but a note will be made of all surveys not properly signed (manually or electronically).

The Mapleton Public School District is requesting your participation in completing the survey and returning it in a timely manner. Thank you for your time and support of the Mapleton Public School District. We have obtained a mailing list of all property addresses from Cass County. We hope that list is inclusive of every address. To be sure, please feel free to share this list with your neighbors and other contacts within the district.

Angie Michaelsohn, President
Mapleton Public School District

MAPLETON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEW BUILDING SURVEY

02/01/2016

This survey can be completed online by going to the following website:

<https://mapletonschool.typeform.com/to/xvEFaG>

1. Do you support the Mapleton Public School District in building a new school? If you vote NO, you do not need to complete the rest of the survey. Please provide your name and signature. Thanks.

YES

NO

2. If the following options can all be built for the \$7.2 million bond referendum, which would you choose? K-5, K-6, K-8?

K – 5

K – 6

K – 8

3. If the decision to build K – 8 has no tax impact, do you support the Mapleton Public School District in building a K – 8 facility?

No tax impact will only be **BEYOND** the \$7.2 million already included in the bond referendum.

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY,ST, ZIP _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____