

February 23, 2016

Dear Community Members,

As many of you have heard, the Board of Education has passed resolutions putting a referendum on the April 5, 2016 ballot. Information was presented at a general meeting held in the high school gym on February 8. We have since presented information at both Goodman and Armstrong Creek Town Board meetings, both meal sites, and the Lions Club.

The administration and the Board have made significant cuts in anticipation of a future referendum since 2002. At present, there are just no more cuts to be made without having a detrimental effect on the education of our children.

A referendum is needed because of two things: loss in state aid and declining enrollment. The district has lost over \$600,000 in general aide since 2004. The fund balance is proposed to be \$750,000 at the end of this school year. Without a referendum, projections show the fund balance running out in 2 ½ years.

Many schools in the surrounding area have passed a referendum in recent years. Laona(2015, \$1,866,000), Wabeno(2014, \$2,250,000), Pembine(2015, \$2,500,000), and Florence(2014, \$2,700,000). In fact, 344 out of 424 schools in Wisconsin have proposed a referendum in the last 20 years for increased revenue. 38% of the school districts are going to referendum this year.

The referendum will be for \$550,000 each year for three years. The district is seeking this amount of money to provide the same level of support and to maintain our high quality education here at Goodman-Armstrong Creek School District.

If the referendum does not pass, the district will have three options: another referendum in November, consolidation, or dissolution. Both consolidation and dissolution are a two year process. Remember, if the district dissolves or consolidates, your taxes do not disappear. You will pay taxes at the mill rate of the district your students attend. Currently, the mill rates of our neighboring school districts are similar or higher than the mill rate would be in our district with the referendum.

The choice is in the hands of the taxpayers. The district is at a point where tough decisions have to be made. To make these decisions the board must ask the taxpayers. The facts have been given in multiple meetings in both communities. If you feel like you need more information, please seek out administration or school board members.

If you still have questions that you would like answered, please plan to attend the next regular school board meeting on March 21 at 6:00 pm in the high school library.

Thank you for your continued support of the Goodman-Armstrong Creek School District.

Laura Klescewski  
Board President