

Vikings Vision Project Summary

Cook County Schools

SF 1617 (Hauschild)



November 2024 Bond Referendum:

- Question #1 = \$24.17 million PASSED
- Question #2 = \$9.16 million FAILED
- Question #3 = \$3.45 million FAILED

Cook County Schools is seeking a construction sales tax exemption (SF 1671) which, if passed, will provide reimbursement for sales taxes paid for materials throughout the project resulting in over \$600,000 in savings to reinvest back into the project and to help address increases in construction costs and possibly some of the important items that did not pass in referendum question #2. These items may include - if funds allow - updates to the performing arts auditorium and outdoor facilities for track, softball, and baseball.

Cook County Schools encompasses all of Cook County, MN in the far NE corner of MN along the shores of Lake Superior and surrounded by the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area to the west and north. The district serves approximately 470 students in one preK - 12th grade building in Grand Marais, MN that was originally opened in 1952. Multiple expansion and remodel projects since then have served the district well yet a full assessment of the facility in the fall of 2023 revealed a need to update the building to meet current education and ADA compliance needs and to expand the building to improve security and provide much needed athletic and community use facilities.

The passage of the \$24.17 million bond referendum in November 2024 has launched the design phase of the a large construction project that includes the following and more:

- A new secure entrance and student services area housing the school office, counseling, mental health, and school health office services. Updating all security cameras and installing an automated lockdown system and access control system.
- A central commons area including the secondary media center and a flexible space for studying, gatherings, and overflow space for school meals.
- Updating and adding single stall, private bathrooms throughout the building that are ADA compliant and family friendly.
- Updating special education learning spaces to better serve students with high needs.
- Updating the current locker rooms with private showers.
- Adding an auxiliary gym, a fitness center and two new locker rooms with changing areas for officials and a private mothers room.