

# *Building a Thriving* **FUTURE!**

Central Public Schools 2021 Referendum Guide



VOTE NOVEMBER 2

“ New families have moved into the Waconias and Carvers and Glencoes, in part because of our school facilities issues. Good schools contribute to a thriving community and attract new businesses. A strong school is very important to the valuation of your house.

*Stan Werner - Central Parent,  
Bus Driver, Former School Board Chair*

# WHEN SCHOOLS ARE STRONG, COMMUNITIES THRIVE!

Our focus is on building a vibrant environment that embraces every student. Our central goal is energizing each and every student to learn. This is a challenge when our facilities are holding us back. While our schools are still a great source of pride for the community – and we strive to live up to that reputation in our academics, athletics, and activities – our building age is showing. We think our district is a great place to live and raise our families, but our facilities are providing challenges to our work.



*The community and the school correlate hand in hand. Family and student lives revolve around our school. If our facilities are aging, when families see the other options only 10 minutes away it moves people out of our community. Less people in the school, less people in the community.* Brady Wachholz - Central Graduate, 2019 Board Student Liaison

## CENTRAL SCHOOLS ARE A SOUND INVESTMENT

### Fiscally Responsible, Academically Competitive

- Financially conservative with a strong, A+ Standard & Poors credit rating
- 94% graduation rate – ten percent above the state average (83.8%)
- ACT scores average 22.6 – also higher than the state average (21.3)

### Striving for Excellence

- Launched a five-year strategic plan, rebranded our district, completed a curriculum review
- Established a trades partnership with Sackett-Waconia and 1:1 technology initiative
- Audited our facilities and engaged a community task force for guidance
- Automated substitute teacher process, adopted mental health awareness policy

### Top Quality Academics, Athletics, and Activities

- Dedicated staff members teach both academics and social-emotional skills
- Four-Star Parent Aware Program prepares Pre-K students for kindergarten
- Personalized instruction provides individual growth plans, as well as reading and guided math groups
- 54% of our students participate in college courses – 31 credits that can help save on trade school or university tuition
- Numatic Ninjas qualified for State, eight Trap Team participants went to Nationals, Technovation Team recognized nationally

### Students Give Back

- Students play an active role in service projects – from cell phone recycling to food drives to work programs – to keep our communities strong
- Alumni become successful members of our communities – graduating from college, earning masters and doctorate degrees, serving in the armed forces – some even returning and raising their families here





## A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION INVESTMENT

### Dear Central Public Schools Community,

Our school district has a lot to be proud of. Our students are thriving with excellent programming, dedicated staff, and great community support. Voters supported an operating levy and capital project levy referendum in 2019 to strengthen our district's programming and technology, but it is clear our facilities need attention.

**We Took a Hard Look.** Over the last year and a half, our district has taken a hard look at our buildings through a long process where we engaged community members, industry professionals, and the teachers and staff who are in the buildings every single day. Throughout this process, we worked extensively to identify the needs and review possible solutions and ultimately voted unanimously to put a two-question referendum on the ballot for a November 2, 2021 special election.

**We Need to Strengthen Our Buildings.** Our evaluation found issues with safety, security, and accessibility; aging, inefficient facilities; outdated learning spaces; and worn-down outdoor educational facilities. Our proposed plan not only utilizes our existing buildings and strengthens them for decades to come, but it focuses on learning in the modern world and preparing our students to thrive. This plan will be a once-in-a-generation investment that will touch nearly every space in our school buildings and will update, renovate, and innovate our facilities.

**Take a moment to read this referendum guide.** It will answer your questions about the needs in our district, the referendum plans, and the extensive process that led to this election. Please reach out to Superintendent Tim Schochenmaier or any member of the school board to get your questions answered before casting your vote.

*Thank you for your dedication to our community.*

Sincerely,  
Your School Board at Central Public Schools

  
Sara Eischens, Chair

  
Nicole Evenski, Vice Chair

  
Rich Schug, Clerk

  
Kyle Strickfaden, Treasurer

  
Elroy Latzig

  
Shelby Erickson

  
Sarah Lehrke

# WHY NOW? OUR AGE IS SHOWING

Portions of our high school were built in 1935 during the Great Depression – that's 86 years ago. Many systems are long past the end of their expected life span.



**DEFICIENT SAFETY, SECURITY, ACCESSIBILITY:** Our school entrances, restrooms and auditorium don't meet security standards and are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The buildings have inadequate video surveillance, and backup generators are needed for emergency power.

**OLD, INEFFICIENT FACILITIES:** Our school building walls, windows, roofs, doors, ceilings, and cabinetry are at the end of their useful lives.

**OUTDATED LEARNING SPACES:** Our educational spaces for student work and special education don't meet current standards.



**WORN-OUT PHY ED FACILITIES:** Our track is unsafe due to a sink hole; the stadium can only be used a few times each year due to poor field drainage and the seating mixes home and away crowds. The wrestling room is inadequate, gyms are overbooked causing student practices to start very early in the morning and go late into the evening. Parking, stands, and fences are limited at our ballfields.

*Similar to home maintenance, our classrooms, cabinets, floors, ceilings and leaky roofs need repairs after decades of use.*



## The Needs Won't Just Go Away

Our facilities were built to last, but they need improvements to continue serving our students and meet modern educational standards.

## Waiting Could Cost Millions

Interest rates are at historic lows and construction costs are increasing. Waiting even one year to complete this work could increase project costs by \$8 million (\$2 million construction inflation, \$6 million if interest rates increase by 1% in a year.)

If the referendum is not approved, our school board will have no other option but to return with another referendum until needs are met.

Door is not  
handicap  
accessible

# WHAT WILL IT COST ME?



We strive to manage taxpayer dollars wisely, and have been intentional and careful in our planning. Our community has a history of being strong supporters of the school district and we thank you for your dedication to our students.

**Based on an average home valued at \$225,000:**

- If Question 1 is approved, taxes would increase by \$11.49 per month.
- If Question 2 is approved, taxes would increase by \$7.47 per month.

**If both questions are approved, the total tax increase would be \$18.96 per month.**

## Tax Impact on Three Home Values

Home Value	Q1/mo	Q2/mo	Both
\$100,000	\$ 3.97	\$ 2.58	\$ 6.55
\$225,000	\$11.49	\$ 7.47	\$18.96
\$300,000	\$16.01	\$10.41	\$26.42

**\$18.96** per month based on a \$225,000 home

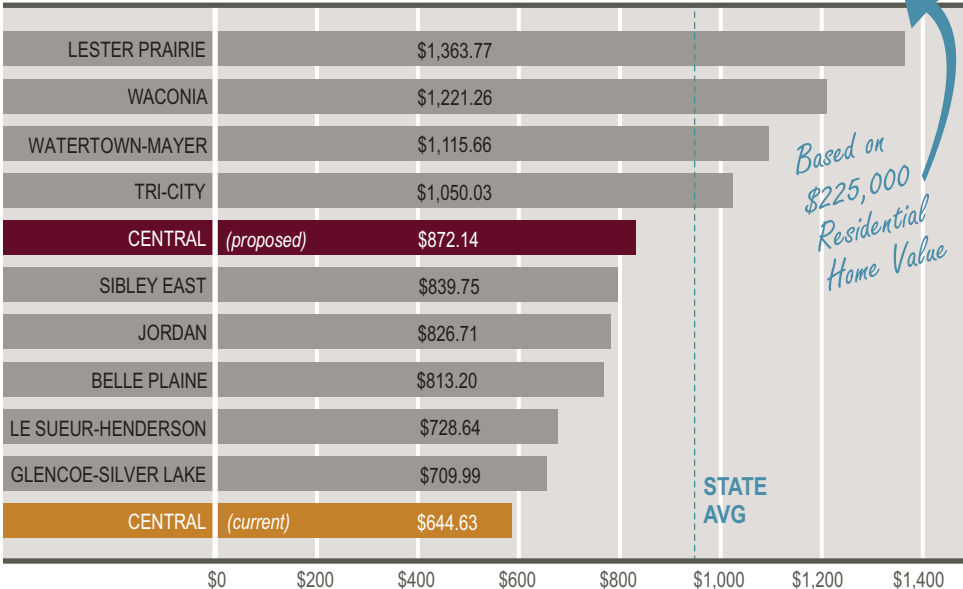
### Visit [CentralFuture.org](http://CentralFuture.org) to:

- ✓ Access the tax calculator (provided by our financial advisor) to determine your tax impact.
- ✓ Review samples of the tax impact on residential, commercial, and agricultural properties.

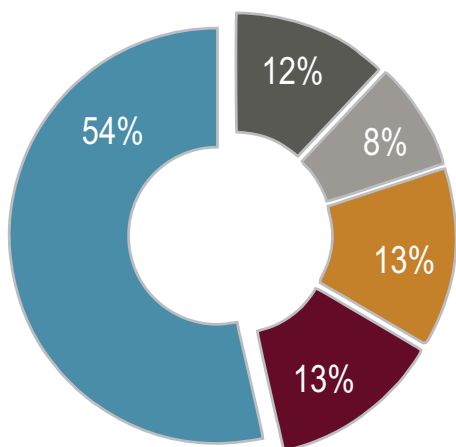
# HOW DO WE COMPARE TO OUR NEIGHBORS?

We have the lowest school taxes in our area for residential properties, and if the questions are approved, our school taxes will be right in the middle of the pack and still remain under the state average.

## School Portion of Property Taxes Payable in 2021



# WHO PAYS FOR THE REFERENDUM?



- Residential
- Ag2School Credit
- Agricultural
- Other
- Commercial

## Bonds are for Buildings. Levies are for Learning.

Bond levies fund new construction, updates to existing facilities, and other additions to school properties. Each fund remains separate and cannot be used for other purposes. Funds from the 2019 operating levy can only be used for school district operations, not building improvements.

# DOES FARM PROPERTY RECEIVE SCHOOL TAX RELIEF?

## Yes. 12% of the Referendum Cost is Covered by the Ag2School Tax Credit

- Minnesota's Ag2School Credit provides agricultural landowners tax relief on school bonds, and will increase to 60% in 2022 and then 70% in 2023 and beyond.
- This tax credit is permanent law enacted by the Minnesota Legislature in 2017 to lessen the impact of school building projects on farmers.

AG<sup>2</sup>  
School  
CREDIT

“ A school system that is safe and efficient for our students and teachers is very important to our community. In the past, landowners paid a larger percentage. Now there is an automatic tax credit for farmers and landowners that is a more fair system.

Paul Lano - Parent, Norwood Young America Resident, Co-Owner of Lano Equipment

## WHAT IS THE PLAN?

### A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION INVESTMENT

The support we received from the community in 2019 greatly improved our financial situation and established an innovative technology program, but now our facilities need attention.

Our buildings were built to last, but they need improvements to be able to continue serving our students effectively, and especially to meet modern educational standards. On November 2, voters will be asked to update learning environments and address needed building repairs, as well as improve safety, security, and accessibility in our schools.



*When I hear school security is not up to code it greatly concerns me. It is a harsh reality that school shootings happen. No one is excluded from this tragic fact.* **Melissa Miller** - Parent, Norwood Young America Resident

#### Question 1:

Addresses safety, security and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility; modernizes learning spaces, and repairs aging buildings and systems.

#### Question 2:

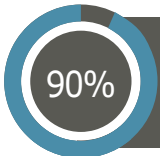
Creates a multi-purpose educational and athletic space with a new stadium, upgraded fields, and makes the site more accessible.

**Question 2 cannot pass unless Question 1 is passed.**

## DOES THE QUALITY OF A SCHOOL REALLY AFFECT PROPERTY VALUES? **YES.**

According to a National Alliance of Business report, "The second most often cited reason for a business selecting a particular location is the quality of the schools."

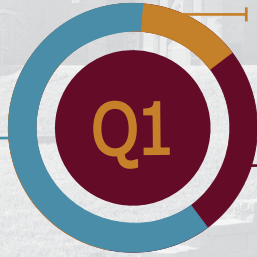
Good schools are also shown to attract and retain families. A community that attracts families and businesses tends to have a stronger tax base, higher home values, and a tax burden that is spread more widely.



*Ninety percent of Central survey respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that high quality school facilities increase homeowners' property values!*

# HOW WILL THE MONEY BE SPENT?

64% **MODERNIZING**  
Learning Spaces



11% **IMPROVING**  
Safety, Security,  
& Accessibility

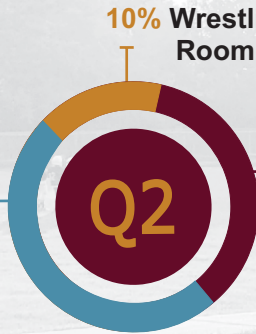
25% **REPAIRING**  
Aging Buildings



*I like the idea that learning environments are adjusting to how kids learn and focusing on giving parents and students opportunities to learn the way they learn best.*

John Hendel - Parent, Cologne Resident, Member of Fire Department

49% **Gym Addition**



10% **Wrestling**  
Room

41% **Stadium & Fields**



*We are constantly battling to find time that works for practices. Our kids end up going to other districts to find places to practice.*

Joe Kley - Parent, Norwood Young America Resident, Central Teacher, Coach

## How Will Our Students and Community Benefit?

This comprehensive plan enhances the safety, security, and accessibility of our buildings. It also improves instructional space for our children as well as sporting, recreational, and event space for our community members for years to come.





# QUESTION 1: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAN

## Update Safety, Security, & Accessibility

- Renovate restrooms to meet ADA requirements
- Install backup generator
- Increase video cameras and surveillance software
- Upgrade phone system

## Repair Buildings (Interior)

- Ceilings
- Flooring
- Cabinets
- Walls
- Paint and Signs
- Kitchen

## Modernize Learning Spaces

- Remodel media center with more space for collaboration
- Right size Special Education classrooms and Early Childhood wing
- New flexible furniture for classrooms
- Add Community Education areas
- Add classroom A/V

**UPDATE. RENOVATE. *Innovate.***



# QUESTION 1: MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PLAN

## Update Safety, Security, & Accessibility

- Build secure entrance
- Renovate restrooms to meet ADA requirements
- Update auditorium
- Refurbish elevator
- Upgrade phone systems and increase video surveillance

## Repair Buildings *Inside & Out*

- Ceilings
- Flooring
- Cabinets
- Paint and Signs
- Walls
- Elevator
- Roofing
- Exterior Walls
- Plumbing Systems
- Kitchen

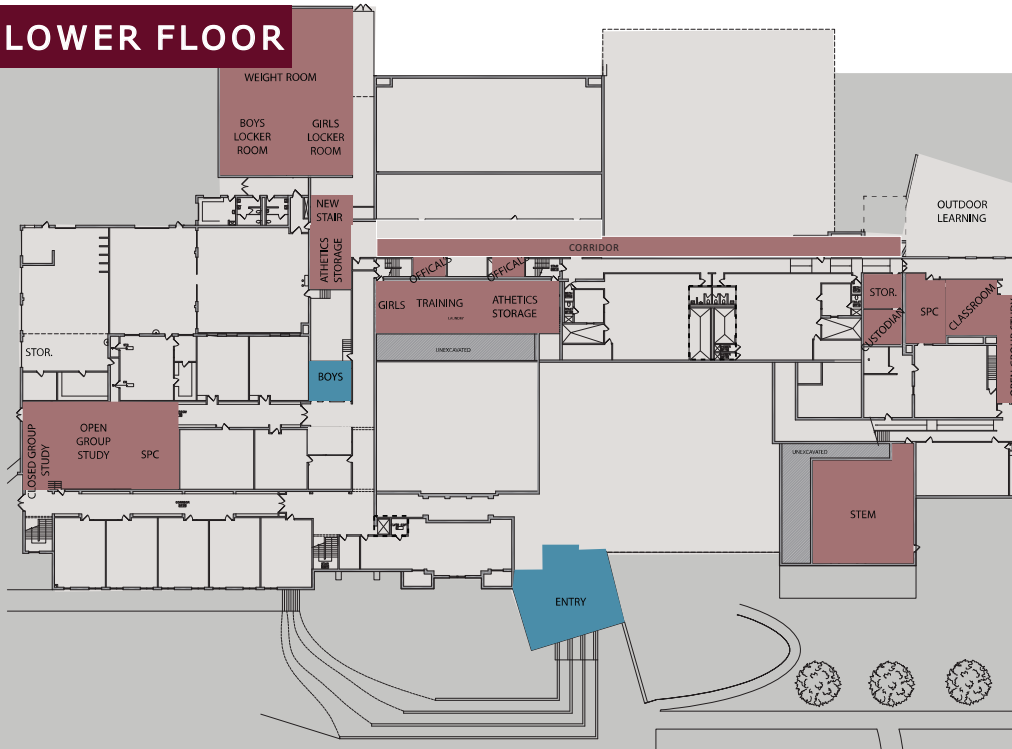
## Modernize Learning Spaces

- Renovate media center, music and art rooms, computer labs, home economics, and cafeteria for more collaboration spaces and flex rooms
- New Special Education space, plus more open study, staff collaboration and flex spaces
- New flexible furniture for classrooms
- Add classroom and auditorium A/V
- Locker room, weight room, and fitness center
- **Question 2 includes the new wrestling room and a two-court gymnasium**

*Our Middle/High School was built in 1935 – with multiple additions over the years – but it’s been nearly 27 years since it last had significant renovations.*

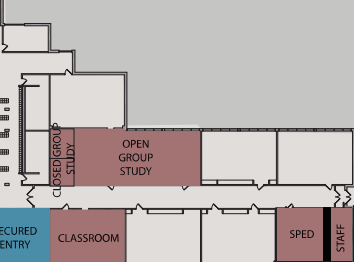
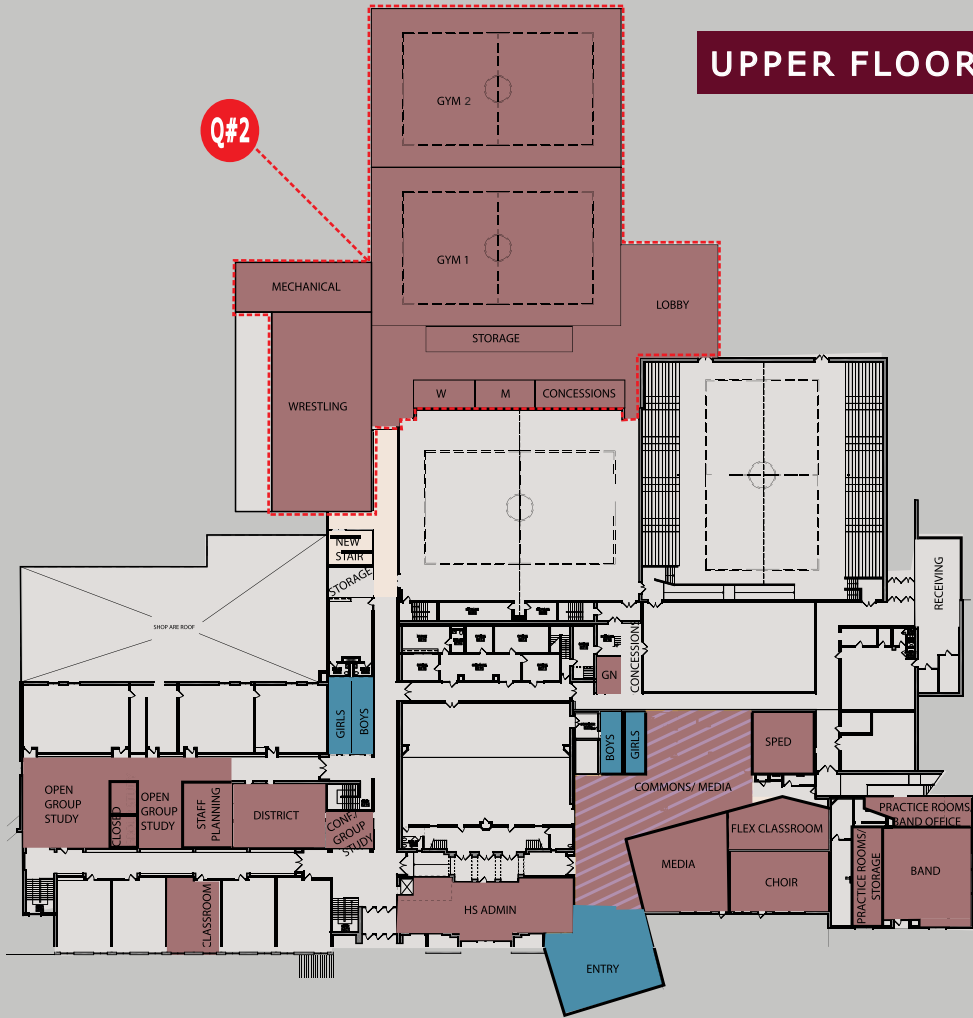
**UPDATE. RENOVATE.** *Innovate.*

## LOWER FLOOR



# UPPER FLOOR

Q#2



- Learning Space Modernizations
- Building Repairs
- Safety, Security, & Accessibility Updates

“Aging facilities cause students to be less invested. When they have a new up-to-date place to do their learning and their work, they are more energized and engaged.”

Melissa Miller - Parent, Norwood Young America Resident

# QUESTION 2: MULTI-PURPOSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ATHLETIC SPACES

Our physical education and athletic facilities have greatly deteriorated and are in need of attention. The proposed plan creates multi-purpose physical education and athletic spaces with a new gym, stadium, wrestling room, as well as improvements to baseball and softball fields.

- 1 New Practice Fields
- 2 New Parking
- 3 High Jump
- 4 Ticket Booth
- 5 Home & Visitor Bleachers
- 6 Reconstructed Parking

## New Practice Fields

*North of baseball field*

- Add new softball field
- Add foul line and outfield fencing
- Enclose dugouts
- Add home plate bleachers, concrete pad, and concession stand
- Create two gravel parking lots with walking paths to and from fields

## New Athletic Stadium

- Support track, football, and soccer programs
- Include concessions, visitor seating, ticket booth, fencing, west parking lot
- Add synthetic turf

## Additional Site Work

- Reconstruct north parking lots
- Repair concrete



“ Our stadium is not useful outside of the football world. The grass gets torn up and muddy and is susceptible to puddles because of poor drainage. In the springtime, when the baseball and softball teams go out to practice catching fly and ground balls, the stadium is not usable. We end up inside the gyms where it is crowded and too small. It’s difficult for spring sports to work in such a confined space.

Joe Kley - Parent, Norwood Young America Resident, Central Teacher, Coach

# WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

## 18 Months of Planning, Development, & Community Engagement

We sought to include community voices throughout the process of determining options for solutions to our district's facility challenges.

Since January of 2020, we have completed a facilities study, surveyed students and staff on facilities inadequacies, sought feedback from a community-based facilities task force, and conducted a community opinion survey to determine needs and solutions.

### This process involved:

- **Assessing our facilities** with a focus on improving student learning through connectivity, community integration, agility, and collaboration.
- **Working directly with staff** who are most familiar with the day-to-day operations to address how our facilities are impacting student learning.
- **Engaging an independent facilities planning firm** to assess every aspect of our facilities. (*Visit [CentralFuture.org](http://CentralFuture.org) to view the full report.*)

All of this work helped inform the School Board's final decision to pursue a bond referendum on November 2, 2021.

1

### Strategic Planning

Finalized Strategic Plan with guidance from community – *Ready. Set. Thrive!*

2

### Facilities Planning

Assessed conditions of each school with the help of an independent consultant.

3

### Community Engagement

Held staff and community input sessions, and conducted workshops and surveys to identify priorities.

4

### Facilities Task Force

Reviewed facility planning and community engagement data, then proposed a plan to the School Board.

5

### Referendum Resolution

School Board reviewed plan and voted unanimously to put two bond questions on the November 2 ballot.



# YOUR VOTE COUNTS

## Election Day is Tuesday, November 2

Polls are open from 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

### Combined Polling Place:

Norwood Young America City Hall  
310 Elm Street, West  
Norwood Young America, MN 55368

This combined polling place serves all communities in Independent School District No. 108 located in the City of Norwood Young America; City of Hamburg; City of Cologne; Benton Township; and Young America Township in Carver County, Minnesota. Any eligible voter residing in the School District may vote at said election at the polling place designated above.



### What happens if neither question is approved?

If neither of the questions are approved, our buildings and outdoor facilities will continue to be in rough shape. In order to take on major projects like what is currently required, school districts need voter approval.

Our classrooms would still be outdated and unable to meet today's educational standards and student learning would be impacted every day. Outdoor facilities will still require replacement, and would be deemed unusable at some point. Another proposal would most likely be brought to voters down the road and due to historic low interest rates currently, it would almost certainly be more expensive to make these same improvements in future years.

By law, the district is required to provide factual information about the referendum. This mailer was prepared and paid for by Independent School District ISD #108 (Central Public Schools), 531 Morse Street, Norwood Young America, MN 55368

# SAMPLE BALLOT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 108  
(CENTRAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS), MINNESOTA

November 2, 2021

Cost based on average home value of \$225,000 would be \$11.49/month.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT QUESTION 1 APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS

Shall the School Board of Independent School District No. 108 (Central Public Schools), Minnesota (the "School District"), be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds in an amount **not to exceed \$25,475,000**, for the purpose of providing funds for the acquisition, betterment and equipping of school sites and facilities, including but not limited to, safety and security enhancements, the completion of various deferred maintenance projects, environmental systems improvements, energy efficiency upgrades, technology infrastructure improvements, parking expansion, expansion and modernization of special education spaces, a new boys and girls locker room, weight room, fitness center; and, modernization of classrooms, including the creation of flexible learning spaces, STEM labs and new furniture?

Yes  
 No

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION,  
YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

Cost based on average home value of \$225,000 would be \$7.47/month.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT QUESTION 2 APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS

If School District Ballot Question 1 is approved, shall the School Board of Independent School District No. 108 (Central Public Schools), Minnesota (the "School District"), be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds in an amount **not to exceed \$13,380,000**, for the purpose of providing funds for acquisition, and betterment of school sites and facilities, including but not limited to, construction of an additional two-court auxiliary gymnasium at the High School; construction of a new athletic stadium for track, soccer, and football with concessions, visitor seating, synthetic turf, and parking; construction of a new wrestling training room; and creation of a new softball field with bleachers?

Yes  
 No

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION,  
YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

Question 2 cannot pass if Question 1 does not pass.

If both questions pass the cost to an average homeowner of a \$225,000 home would be \$18.96/month

# *Building a Thriving* **FUTURE!**

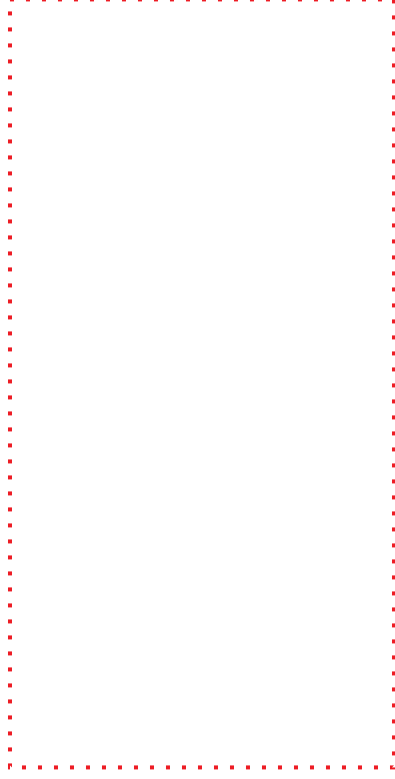
## **Central Public Schools 2021 Referendum**

531 Morse Street, PO Box 247  
Norwood Young America, MN 55368



Learn More at [CentralFuture.org](https://CentralFuture.org)  
**VOTE NOVEMBER 2**

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US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #32324  
TWIN CITIES, MN



“ Highway 212 was recently approved to become four lane all the way to Norwood Young America and will have a great impact on our growth. With open enrollment, people will choose a school district with up-to-date facilities.

John Hendel - Parent, Cologne Resident,  
Member of Fire Department