

# Goodridge Forward: The “why” behind the proposed improvements

Submitted by Superintendent Tom Loberg

A new school year is officially underway for Goodridge Public School. As students begin classes, staff settle into an exciting season, and community members attend activities and events, the district moves closer to Election Day. On Tuesday, Nov. 7, district residents will decide whether to invest \$21.35 million to address educational and facility challenges facing the district.

As community members learn more about the upcoming bond referendum, the district would like to highlight the “why” behind

a few key improvements. Visit [goodridgeforward.org/plan](http://goodridgeforward.org/plan) for a complete overview of the plan. Here are some highlights:

- An expanded area to support Career and Technical Education: After high school, not all students decide to attend a four-year college. Many students, including those in the Goodridge area, decide to immediately enter the workforce and require hands-on learning and real-world experiences to best position them for success. An expanded area, built adjacent to the existing shop, would provide adequate space for welding, small engines, robotics and more. These programs would support students that are choosing to enter the workforce immediately after high school.

- Right-sized, adequate classroom space: Providing appropriate spaces to support educating students is important. At the high school, many spaces are undersized when compared to the Minnesota Department of Education’s educational adequacy guidelines, including several classrooms such as science, art, the media center, and others. At the elementary school, spaces for special education and support services and several classrooms are also undersized. Students need appropriate space to grow, and the proposed plan would provide that space.

- Additional gymnasium space to support students, staff, and the community: The cumulative gymnasium space in Goodridge Public School is not adequate. When compared to the MDE’s educational adequacy guidelines, the larger of the district’s two gymnasiums does not have enough space to serve as an elementary school gymnasium. Physical education classes and recess use gymnasium space multiple times throughout the day, and

require adequate space to do so.

The current small gymnasium is the ideal location for a secured, main entrance that is closest to the front of the building for added security. As part of the plan, the small gymnasium would be repurposed to serve as a dedicated, secure entrance and space for administrative offices. Transforming the small gymnasium was the most cost-effective solution for this portion of the project. If approved, a new gymnasium would be constructed on the north side of the existing school and provide space for locker rooms, concessions, and a weight room with community access.

The proposed bond referendum would make several additional improvements, including safety and security, indoor air quality and building systems, restrooms, and more. If the single-question ballot is approved, the estimated tax

impact on a \$100,000 residential home in the district would be approximately \$35 per month starting in 2024. Residents can find their tax impact by logging onto [goodridgeforward.org/cost](http://goodridgeforward.org/cost). Early voting begins Friday, Sept. 22, and residents can vote early either in person or by mail.

Community members are invited to attend an ice cream social Wednesday, Sept. 20, from 7 to 9 p.m., to learn more about the Goodridge Forward bond referendum. Hosted by the district, this informal event will take place at the Goodridge Community Center, and facility tours will be provided at 7:05 p.m., 7:35 p.m. and 8:05 p.m. Those with questions or suggestions should contact Tomas Loberg at [tomas.loberg@goodridgeisd561.org](mailto:tomas.loberg@goodridgeisd561.org) or 218-378-4134.