

GFW Schools Referendum Update
Supt. Lonnie Seifert

With the 4th of July past us, the signs of summer flying past are obvious. It won't be long and we will have students and staff back in the buildings in full swing. I want to provide an update regarding the building proposal for the future of the district. At their regular June meeting, the GFW School board approved a motion to present district voters with a proposal for a PreK-12 building to be located in the City of Gibbon. In addition, at a special meeting on Thursday, June 27th the board approved a motion to have the vote on Tuesday, November 5th, 2019. During the June 27th meeting the board also went into closed session for the purpose of discussing potential sites pending a passed referendum.

There is still a large amount of information to be shared with the public prior to the election in November, which we are compiling and will be sharing with district residents by late August or early September.

Some of these items include:

- Negotiating a land purchase agreement with an owner that would be contingent on positive soil testing and the passing of the referendum. The board has established a committee for this and they continue to move through this process. The board and school administration know we need to share with voters the specific site for the proposed building prior to the election.
- The architect, construction manager and school administration are moving into more detailed floor plan layouts and potential building layouts based on the potential sites. The building will have approximately 174,000 square feet of space, which is significantly less than the 294,000+ the district currently has in our three buildings. This information will be shared at least two months before the election.
- The building square footage drives the cost, so now we are finalizing the dollar amount to be a part of the question. The referendum amount will include the cost of the building, a budget for land acquisition, and either sale or demolition of the current buildings.. The board has decided to take the \$1 million track and football field repair project off this project, as that is something that can be done using long-term facilities maintenance dollars received from the state.
- With all of this information, we will submit a proposal to the Commissioner of Education for Review and Comment. Our deadline is August 7th and the state then has 60 days to provide a response, which will be shared in a public meeting once we have received it.

We, as a district, will work to provide voters with as much information as possible in advance of the election. There will be public meetings in each of the communities to provide community members the opportunity to hear the information and ask any questions they may have regarding this project. Our goal is to provide all district residents with accurate information regarding this important decision for the school district and its communities.